

Generating Ideas

Generating ideas for your assignment might involve three steps:

Observation	Look at the real issues and features of your essay topics. This normally means reading about them.
Representation	Think about what you have read in different way: make notes, draw them, talk about them, etc.
Presentation	Write down your new ideas in as simple and clear way as possible. You might think about where these ideas would fit in a plan or an argument.

Be careful of some of the fears or common issues:

The blank page

Consider:

- Establish a routine in approaching assignments
- Starting with a simple plan that lists the topics from the question (see Read, Think, Write model).
- Not worrying about being ideas being “correct” but being about your personal learning.

Messing about with the steps

Are you creating your ideas from the top of your head, or from *observation* of things that can be evidenced in your assignment?

Are you thinking about what you have read, and coming up with different *representations*? Or just jumping to presentation and not showing your thought?

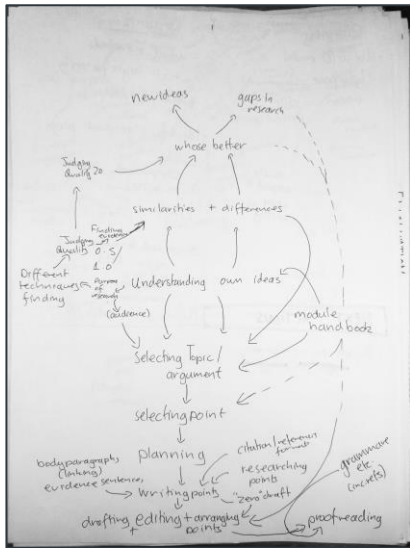
Are you forgetting *presentation* (and word count) and generating too many ideas? Do you remember people have to read and understand your ideas?

There are many ways to do the Representation stage and generate your new ideas. It often involves representing the information in different ways:

- Explain what you have read out loud.
- Write what it means in your own words.
- Imagine you are teaching the material, or presenting it to colleagues/in a meeting.
- Write a flow chart or other diagram of the information.
- Represent what you have learned using only your hands.
- Draw what you have learned.
- Write a poem or piece of music that shows what you have read.

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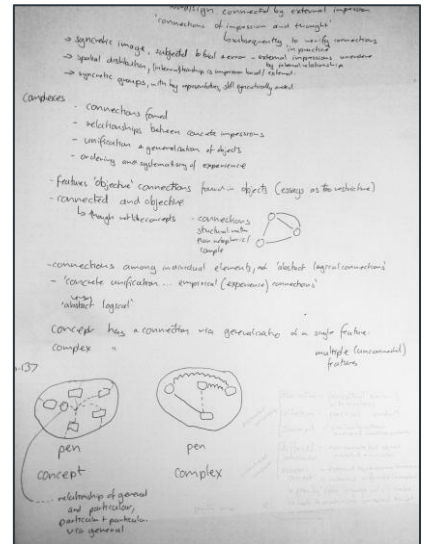
Below are several images showing examples of different ways of generating ideas from your reading.



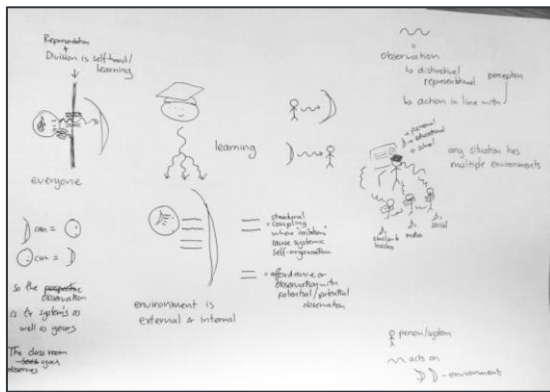
A flow chart of phases of assignment writing



A prioritised list of parts of assignment writing



Notes from reading with some images and re-writing



Notes from reading about theory primarily using images and symbols



An image drawn of a theory's key idea

Check out our workshops on Reading the Question, Reading and Writing an Argument to further:

 <p>Library Portal https://library.arden.ac.uk/</p>	 <p>Study Skills on iLearn https://moodle.blrdi.co.uk/course/view.php?id=921&section=1</p>	 <p>Emails Study-skills@arden.ac.uk and libraries@arden.ac.uk</p>	 <p>Blog https://library.arden.ac.uk/library-blog</p>	 <p>Twitter @LibraryArden</p>
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