**The Anatomy of Writing an Essay**

**Essay Pre-Writing Exercise**

**Step 1: *Prep***

* Prepare your workspace
* Organize your stuff the way you like (pens, notebooks, books, etc.)
* Go to the Library or the Writing Center if home is too distracting.
* Very important: SNACKS!

**Step 2: *Relax***

* Number a blank piece of paper 1-10
* Relax. Take a few deep breaths, doodle, listen to a song you like, take a walk, whatever works for you.
* The key is to reset your mind so it can focus for the next few minutes.

**Step 3: *Think***

* Think. Get out your essay prompt.
* Take a moment to think about your assignment and familiarize yourself with the topic.
* Think about what you know, what you don’t know, any initial thoughts, any concerns you have, and let it be.

**Step 4: *Write***

* Set a timer for 7 minutes.
* Write. Take your numbered paper and write down the first 10 ideas/thoughts about your essay prompt that come to mind.
* Do this without judging or analyzing your work.

**Step 5: *Choose***

* Choose one idea that you wrote down.
* “Pick the one that came to you rather than the one you thought up.”
* Pick the idea you feel you can write the most about.

**Step 6: *Free write***

* Orient yourself with the topic, spend a minute thinking about it, and set a timer for 10 minutes.
* Write about your topic for the entire ten minutes without stopping.
* Don’t think, don’t read over what you wrote, or edit yourself.
* You don’t need to try to connect the dots. Just write!
* If you get stuck, draw something or write out the alphabet, the idea here is to keep your pen moving.