## Preparation

* Carefully read the DBQ prompt you will be responding to. Be sure to have read and analyzed the documents prior to doing this warm-up activity.
* Make sure you have drafted the thesis/major claim you intend to use in response to the essay prompt.
* Download the [WHP Writing Rubric](https://www.oerproject.com/OER-Materials/OER-Media/PDFs/Teacher-Resources/WHP-Writing-Rubric)

## Purpose

This warm-up focuses on the Organization row of the WHP Writing Rubric and allows you to refine the way you structure your writing to most effectively support your argument and ideas. You will practice skills to use organization strategies and transitions to support your analysis and establish clear, meaningful connections between ideas. These writing skills are essential not just to essay-writing in all your classes, but are applicable to academic, professional, and personal writing at all levels.

## Process

In this warm-up activity, you will learn how to organize your essays to help you create a paper that’s easy for your reader to understand. First, you’ll review the Organization row of the rubric, and then, you’ll work through a three-step process that will help you think about how you’ll organize your essay.

1. Take out the WHP Writing Rubric and review the Organization row with your class.
2. Discuss what you think *organization* is in this context and why it’s important to consider when writing essays.
   * Remember, all arguments should have three components that make up the basic organization: an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. Within those components, writers make choices about the best way to order and present their ideas. Some writers use categories to structure their paragraphs (for example, economic, social, etc.) Others lay out their points in order of importance or move from most general to most specific. When we discuss organization in the context of the rubric, we’re really talking about the existence and effectiveness of the introduction and conclusion, along with the order in which ideas are presented within the body. Additionally, a well-organized essay provides the reader with a roadmap, which should help them follow your argument more easily. So, how do you organize a paper? Well, there is a tool for that!
3. Take out the Organization Prewriting Tool and work through it according to your teacher’s instructions and add the thesis/major claim to the top of the tool.
4. For Step 1, come up with three claims—or reasons—that support the thesis/major claim statement you just wrote.
5. For Step 2, use transition words to help you write your introduction *and* organize your body paragraphs.
6. Now you’re ready for Step 3, your conclusion. First, choose a transition word that will help you start your concluding paragraph. Then, summarize your supporting claims and their significance, describe why your argument is important, and then restate your thesis/major claim. The work you complete in Step 3 will help you write your concluding paragraph later.
7. Once you’ve completed the steps, it’s time to write!

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name: |  | Date: |  |

## Organization Prewriting Tool

**Directions:** First, write the thesis/major claim you will use in your essay. Then, follow each of the steps below to organize your essay.

|  |
| --- |
| My thesis/major claim: |
|  |

## Step 1—Ordering of supporting claims

Consider three supporting claims that reinforce your thesis/major claim and write them in the first column. Then, in columns two and three, reorder your supporting claims. Read through each order and put a star next to the option you think is strongest. Remember, there are many ways to effectively organize your supporting claims: Some ways writers organize ideas are by category, specificity, or importance.

| Order option 1 | Order option 2 | Order option 3 |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Supporting claim | Supporting claim | Supporting claim |
|  |  |  |
| Supporting claim | Supporting claim | Supporting claim |
|  |  |  |
| Supporting claim | Supporting claim | Supporting claim |
|  |  |  |

## Step 2—Intro paragraph

Your introductory paragraph lays out the structure of your argument. This means that the order you outlined above in Step 1 will help you write your introduction *and* organize your body paragraphs. Using your selected ordering of supporting claims from Step 1, add transition words and phrases to emphasize that order and show your critical thinking. Note that these transition words can be used in your introduction, but also in the body of the paper to help you transition between paragraphs.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Example transitions: | My supporting claims with transitions: |
| * For instance… In addition… Furthermore... * On one hand…(reasons against); However, on the other hand… and also…(reasons for) * First… Second… Finally… * In the beginning… Later… Eventually… * (First reason), because of that…, Therefore…” * First of all… More important… Above all… * By comparison… Still… Ultimately… | Supporting claim 1 |
|  |
| Supporting claim 2 |
|  |
| Supporting claim 3 |
|  |

## Step 3—Conclusion

Fill out the table below to help you consider ways to write your conclusion and sketch out some closing thoughts. When you draft your conclusion later, you can incorporate these ideas into your essay’s concluding paragraph.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Example transitions: | My supporting claims with transitions: |
| * For all these reasons… * Taken together… * All of these events show… * In conclusion… * The logical conclusion of these… * Simply put… * In other words… * In sum… * Altogether… * On the whole… | List a transition statement you could use to open your concluding paragraph. |
|  |
| Summarize the supporting claims you presented and their significance. |
|  |
| Describe why your argument is important. |
|  |
| Restate your thesis/major claim. You may choose to use another example transition here. |
|  |