

Composing the Actual Paper

With your outline or "skeleton" of your essay done, it is now time to write the body paragraphs or "add meat to the bones."

Give yourself plenty of time to write multiple drafts of your Literature Review. This might sound crazy but good papers typically go through 4-6 drafts in the writing process.

How does this work?

1st draft: Follow your outline and focus on getting content down. Don't worry about formatting or if you have all the assignment requirements.

Put it in the drawer. Give yourself a minimum of 24 hours before you look at your 1st draft for revisions.

2nd draft: Without looking at your original outline, outline your 1st draft as it is written. Compare this to your original outline. Does it match? Do you need to change your original outline?

Note – you may not need to change your original outline, but writers often find that as they write about a topic their thoughts about it change. Here is a great time to adjust your outline or thinking about the project. Make the needed changes to your draft.

Put it in the drawer. Give yourself a minimum of 24 hours before you look at your 2nd draft for revisions.

At this point you may also need to time to go back and research your topic some more. It is not uncommon for writers to continue the research process while drafting their papers.

3rd draft: Review the assignment and make sure you have met all the requirements. Add or remove sections as required.

Put it in the drawer. Give yourself a minimum of 24 hours before you look at your 3rd draft for revisions.

4th draft: Check grammar and spelling. Check your paper for proper APA formatting

Put it in the drawer. Give yourself a minimum of 24 hours before you look at your 4th draft for revisions.

5th draft: Have someone else look at your paper. All good writers have someone else look at their paper. You've been with this paper long enough that you need another set of eyes on it. Use the Writing Center if you can, if not find someone who will honestly evaluate your work and provide positive feedback. Make appropriate changes based on the feedback

Put it in the drawer. Give yourself a minimum of 24 hours before you look at your 5th draft for revisions.

6th draft: A final review. You will likely be making only small if any changes. Run through and do a final check to make sure you've met the requirements of the assignment and have the paper formatted correctly.

Why Draft a paper this way?

- + It divides the writing process into manageable tasks.
- + You don't have to focus on every detail with each draft
- + By waiting at least one day before you revise a previous draft, you will see things you wouldn't if you didn't wait a day. Waiting gives you a clear perspective.
- + It simple takes time and multiple drafts to create a well written paper.
- + A well written paper is a reflection on how you understand material.