

Morning Writing: Finding Your Voice

The Wow Method includes ten steps. Before we dive into Step 1, we introduce a no-stakes activity that calms students and helps them recognize that they already have a distinctive writing voice. This is the voice they will use in their essay.

Part 1

What did you do this morning from the moment you woke up until you left your home?

In a moment, you will open a new document or a clean sheet of paper, and quickly write down as much as you can recall, using all of your senses. Be specific, but don't worry about making sense or sounding clever. You can write fragments, sentences, lists or run-ons. It doesn't matter, because you are not writing an essay; you are simply capturing details.

Write fast, and do not judge what you write. Don't even read it as you go along. Just keep moving forward.

1. Open a new document, or use a notebook and pen.
2. Set a timer for 10 minutes.
3. Write about your morning.
4. When the timer stops, stop writing, and read the instructions for Part 2.

Part 2

Your writing voice is unique, and often shines through when you relax and write freely. Look back at what you wrote about your morning, and find three segments that truly sound like you. Each one can be anything from a short phrase to a multi-sentence description. They don't have to be exciting or clever; they just have to sound like YOU. For example:

- Something you always say, do or think.
- A description of something that screams "my house!" or "my room!" or "my mom!"
- A phrase you like, a detailed description or something clear and specific that sounds just like you.

When you find your segments, highlight, bold or underline them. These are examples of your writing voice. This is what you sound like when you are not trying too hard to be clever or creative. This is the voice you should write in when you begin to compose your application essay. Keep it in mind as you work on the essay.