

An aerial night photograph of a city, likely Los Angeles, showing a dense grid of city lights. In the background, dark mountain ranges are visible against a twilight sky. A thin crescent moon is positioned in the upper center of the frame. The text 'Outlining Your Points' and 'Editorial: Prewriting 2' is overlaid in the center of the image.

# Outlining Your Points

## Editorial: Prewriting 2

# The Three Ingredients

Remember, every essay requires three things:

- A main point or thesis
- Evidence to support it
- Interpretation of the evidence and how it supports your thesis.



# Planning your Points

In writing, it's very important to carefully think through your points and make sure that you find credible information to support them.

In the first prewriting, you listed things you needed to find out to support your idea. Now, it's time to find that information.



# The Importance of Credibility

As you look for information, it's important that you make sure it is credible.

*Merriam-Webster* defines *credible* as “offering reasonable grounds for being believed”

In talking about credible evidence we mean that it should be information that is trustworthy and valid. It can't just be things you've always heard or that you assume; “because I said so” only works for parents talking to kids.



# So, What's Reasonable?

In order for your evidence to be reasonable, you must take a number of things into account:

- Is the source knowledgeable and trustworthy?
- Does the author have education or experience in the field or area?
- Does the website give the sources for the information provided?
- Do the writers or website provide their name(s) or sponsoring organization?
- How recent is the information?
- Is the information on the site easily editable by anyone (e.g.: *Wikipedia*) If so, don't use it.
- If you are doing an interview, what experience does the person have?
- Does the writer or sponsor have a particular bias that may point to obscuring certain facts through omission?



# Your Research

For some topics, the credibility of the research will be easy to evaluate. Other topics will require more investigation. However, if your sources are not credible, then you will not be seen as credible either.



# Where to Find your Information

- The Web
  - Use phrasal searching “put phrases in quotes”
  - Look at the URL before clicking
  - Make sure you know who wrote or sponsors the site
- An Interview
  - The person must have specific knowledge or experience to support his or her credibility
- The Library—question the credibility of these things as well
  - Books
  - Magazines
  - Newspapers
  - Research Librarians



# The Next Step: Prewriting 2

For this prewriting you will outline the ideas and facts you are going to present.

- Use the list of things you need to know that you developed in Prewriting 1 and find out the facts or statistics you need.
- List your main points.
- You may need to add new ideas and omit others.

As you present your facts you need to make sure you note where they come from.



# Sample Prewriting:

## Please Pick Me

- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), dog feces contains twenty-three types of different bacteria, including E. coli, salmonella, and giardia.
- Centers of Disease Control and Protection (CDC) dog waste carries roundworms, whipworms, hookworms, tapeworms and heart worms. Parvo often transmitted by infected dog waste
- Jacinto Rodriguez, contracted employee for the City of El Paso: “When I use the lawn tractor and weed-eater it picks up the dog droppings and scatters them all over, even on my clothes and shoes.”
- “The Connection between Pet Waste and Water Quality,” by the Thurston County Public Health and Social Services Environmental Health Division: “The bacteria in dog waste is often washed down storm drains and into ditches, streams, lakes, and inlets, and they can travel for miles in the water. . . . [B]acteria in pet waste can make it unsafe to harvest [fish], shellfish or swim in our waters.”
- Traci Watson, *USA Today*, article “Dog Waste Poses Threat for Water”: 40% of Americans don’t pick up their dogs feces.
- Andrew Hager, Supervisor at the El Paso Municipal Court: Title 7, Chapter 7.08, Section 7.08.010 states that the fine for animal droppings (owners who have the control of their pets and do not pick up the waste) and animal feces removal (walking an animal in a private or public place and do not pick up the waste) are misdemeanor offences of Class C, and the fine for violating this code is \$105 dollars.



# Prewriting 2 Form

Essay 2: Prewriting 2

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Target Publication  
for Your Essay

Author  
Title

Information

Author  
Title

Information



# Prewriting 2

Now that you've done some initial exploring, it's time to choose your topic and do some searching for information you may need. Look back at your list in the last part of Prewriting 1. What things do you need to find out for this issue? Use your local resources—internet, library, people—to find out.

- Use the form to make notes on your research, and be sure to write down titles, authors' names, and make note of web addresses in case you need them later.

You should have at least two paragraphs worth of notes.