

LIST & GROUP DETAILS

Before Writing

A pre-write is an organized list of key points and specific details that the writer intends to flesh out into sentences.

A pre-write is essential in crafting a well-organized first draft.

Without this step, a writer's ideas are presented off the cuff and haphazardly, making it hard to follow.

The easiest type of pre-write is a simple list executed in a couple of steps: 1) List details. 2) Group details.

MINI-LESSON:

Encourage students to generate a quick list of topic-specific details. This should include single words or simple phrases only. No sentences.

Compare it to a grocery list of details, meaning a shopper makes his list only with key words. No one writes, "Heinz ketchup in the 32 oz. bottle with the white label and gold and black stripe all around it in aisle 7 halfway down about knee-high on the left" on a grocery list. It's not necessary. Similarly, the only person who sees the pre-write is the writer, so encourage students to write for themselves — quick words and phrases to create a list of details.

Describe the purpose and function of a **grocery list:**

- It is only used by the **shopper**.
- Items are listed in simple words or short phrases.
- Abbreviations are often used; spelling is not essential.
- It often includes numbers to show sequence or priority.

Describe the purpose and function of a **pre-write:**

- It is only used by the **writer**.
- Details are listed in simple words or short phrases.
- Abbreviations are often used; spelling is not essential.
- It often includes numbers to show sequence or priority.

INDEPENDENT WRITING TIME:

Students can create grocery-list pre-writes for multiple topics. Have students practice by providing a list of topics and asking them to make a grocery list of details for each.

