The Writing Process

STEP 1 – PREWRITE
Think about your topic and the ideas you want to include. Make a chart, a list, draw pictures, use a graph, or create an outline to get your ideas on paper and get them organized. You do not need to use complete sentences – getting your ideas on paper is the main goal in this step. You can use “Thinking Maps” to get ideas on some graphic organizers you can use.

STEP 2 – ROUGH DRAFT
This is also known as your “sloppy copy.” Write down your ideas in the format you are instructed: paragraph, essay, or letter just to name a few. Skip lines so that the revision and editing process will be easier for you. Read it from beginning to end and see how it “sounds”. Do not worry about your spelling, punctuation, or word usage at this step – you can worry about that in the editing phase of your paper. The goal is to simply put your prewriting ideas in sentence form. The rough draft is NOT your final copy!

STEP 3 – REVISE
This is the step that you can expand on your ideas/sentences that you wrote during your rough draft. Be thinking about smooth transitions, changing boring or plain words to more elaborate and descriptive words, and making sure your writing flows nicely and makes sense to the reader. A thesaurus is a great tool to finding new and interesting words.

STEP 4 – EDIT
Now is the time for you, a friend, or a family member to check for errors in spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. Use the editing marks page in this handbook to help you with editing. Show your family and friends what these marks mean and how to use them. Be sure to consult a dictionary if you are unsure of how to spell a word. Use this handbook, or other books, to help you make sure that you have used the proper punctuation and capitalized correctly.

STEP 5 – PUBLISH
You can now write your final draft! Be sure to use your best handwriting. Remember to indent the beginning of each new paragraph, stay within the margins (the red/pink vertical lines on your notebook paper), and skip lines if your teacher instructed you to do so. If you have not done so already, be sure that your paper has an interesting title. Of course don’t forget your name and to hand it in!