

In this unit you will learn:

- How to create clusters and lists
- How to develop your ideas further

You will also have the chance to brainstorm some ideas and create a paragraph using your own ideas.



Task 1: Review

Review what you learned about writing paragraphs in Unit 3. Then look at the sentences below from two separate paragraphs about the English language. All of the sentences are jumbled.

Work with a partner or group. Write T1 and T2 next to each topic sentence. Write S1 next to each of the sentences that support T1. Write S2 next to all of the sentences that support T2. There are also two irrelevant sentences in the list that do not support either of the ideas. Write IR next to those sentences.

- ___ The earliest English (old English) came into use in the fifth century.
- ___ English is the main language for academic research publications.
- ___ The English language has a long and interesting history.
- ___ English grammar is very difficult to learn.
- ___ English is the language of international trade and business.
- ___ The first English dictionary was written in 1755 by Samuel Johnson.
- ___ English is the most important language in the world today.
- ___ I like speaking English when I travel overseas.
- ___ English has taken words from many other languages, especially French.
- ___ Eighty percent of computer data is stored in English.

Check your answers with your teacher when you have finished.

Brainstorming to get ideas for your writing



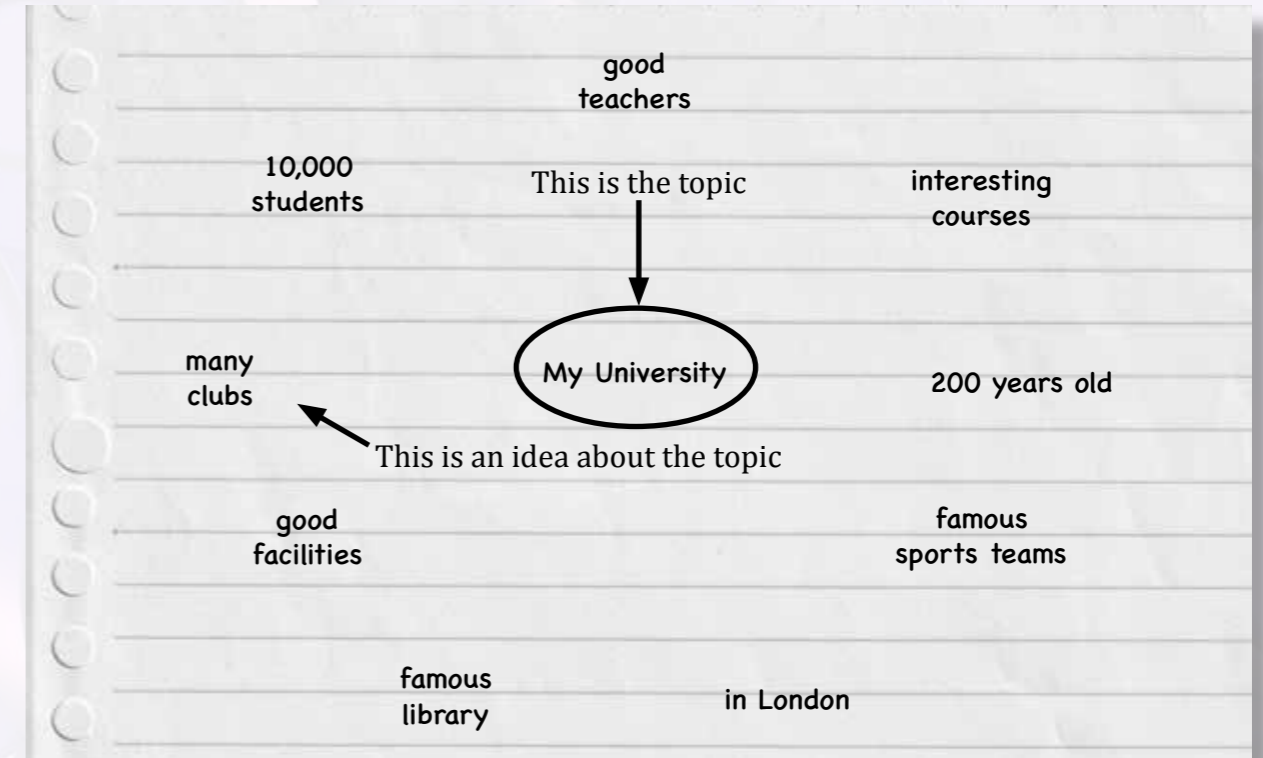
What is brainstorming?

Brainstorming means thinking about a topic and writing down everything you can think of about that topic as quickly as possible. Brainstorming helps you to understand and plan what you want to write about a topic, and to decide what your focus will be. Different people like to see information in different ways. Therefore, you will learn two different ways to write your brainstorming thoughts: **Clustering** and **Listing**.



Clustering

Clustering means writing the main topic in the centre of a page, and then writing your thoughts about the topic in a circle around it. Look at the example below.

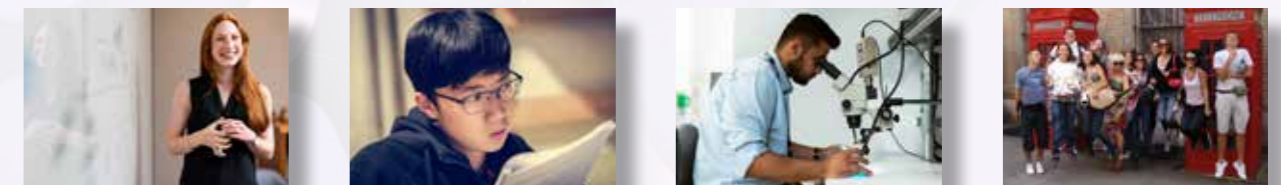


After you finish brainstorming ideas, you can look at your cluster and decide what the focus (the main idea) of your paragraph will be. You can then decide which points about the topic you will put into your paragraph to support the main idea of the paragraph.

Look at the example below. This has been written using ideas from the cluster above. The writer has chosen to focus on why he or she likes the school, and writes about **the teachers**, **the interesting courses** and **the good facilities** to support this idea. You can see that the writer did not use all of the ideas in the cluster. Ideas that are not needed can be thrown away.

My University

There are several reasons why I like my university. Firstly, we have **excellent teachers**. They are experienced and interesting and come from all over the world. Another thing I like are the **interesting courses**. We can choose from a wide range of subjects and the language programmes have more hours of classes with native teachers than most other institutions. I also think we have **great facilities** at the university. For example, there are many computer rooms available for students. Our classrooms are also modern and have state-of-the-art equipment. It really is a great place to study.





Task 2: By yourself

Choose one of the topics below and try to make a cluster as quickly as possible.

- My free time
- My country
- Good ways to learn English
- Being healthy



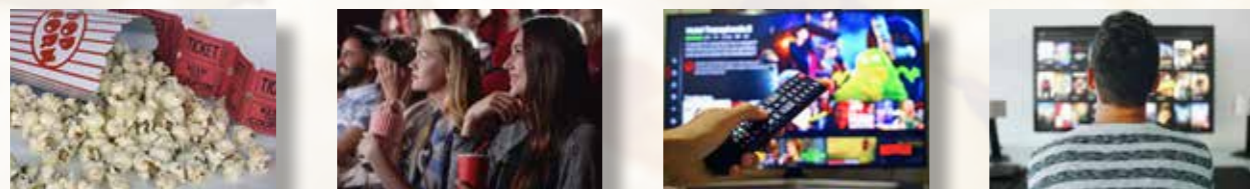
Listing

Another way to write down your brainstorming ideas is in the form of a **list**. Some people prefer to look at their ideas in this format. Look at the example below for the topic of movies.

- Movies**
- Changes at the cinema
 - Discs
 - Expensive
 - Netflix
 - Saturday night
 - TV movies with my brother
 - Popcorn
 - Scary
 - Hollywood
 - Comedies
 - Amazon Prime
 - Action movies
 - Easy to download

Movies

I used to go to the cinema on Saturday nights to watch action movies and comedies, but I hardly ever go to the cinema these days. To be honest, one reason is that I think the **cinema is too expensive** now. The last time I went, the ticket was \$25, and including drinks and popcorn, I spent more than \$35. Another reason is that I have **Netflix and Amazon Prime** at home now. It is cheap and easy to watch so many different movies at home on my TV or computer, or even on my phone. It's also so **easy and cheap to download** movies these days. This means that I can keep them forever on a computer or hard disk and watch them whenever I want. It's a pity because I love the atmosphere in a cinema, but I don't think I will go much anymore.



Task 3: Making lists

Choose one of the topics below and try to make a list as quickly as possible. Then think about the list you have made and decide upon a focus (the main idea) for that topic. You should use three of your ideas to support your focus.

- Work
- Spending money



Quiz 1: Find the incorrect word or phrase

Look at Quiz 1 on the web site. You must decide which word or phrase does not belong in each list.

2 Developing your ideas



Narrowing a topic

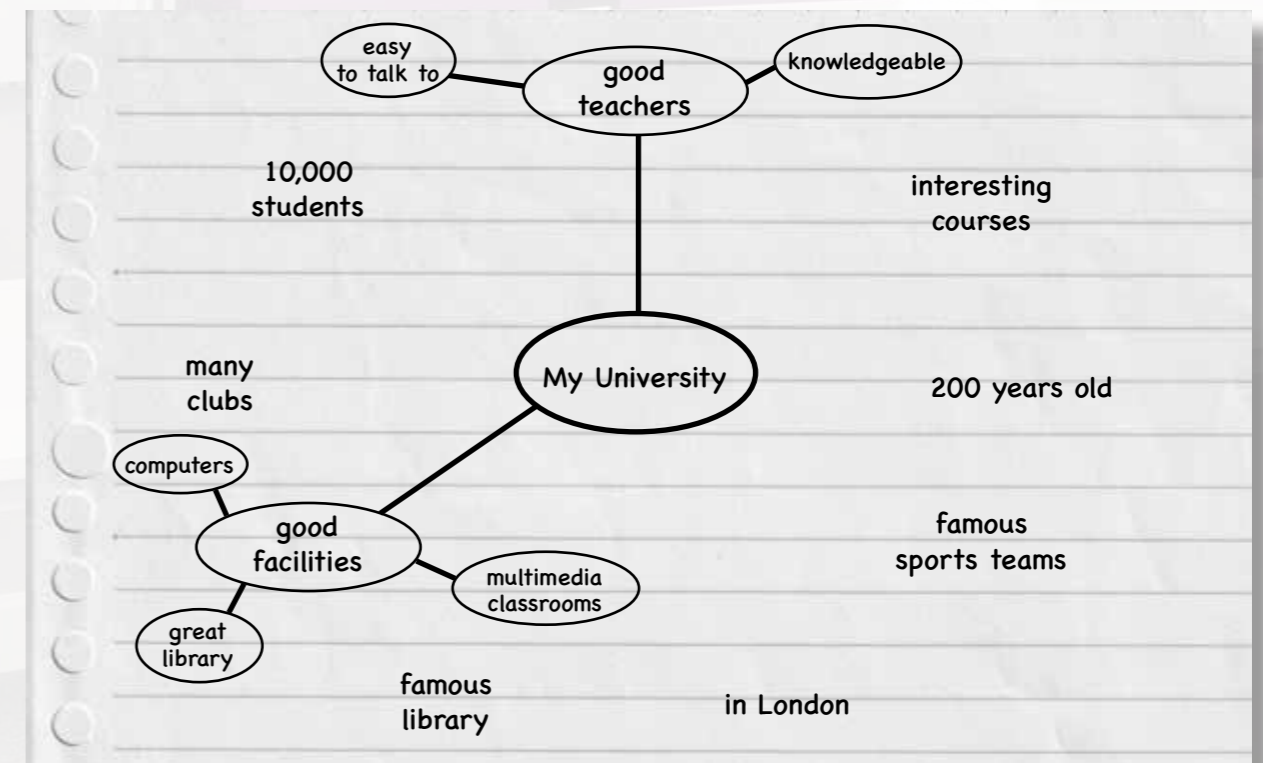
After you have created your cluster of ideas about a topic, it is often a good idea to develop each of your points (or **subtopics**) further in order to **narrow** the topic into something easier to write about. **Narrowing** means looking at only a small part of a topic and trying to write more ideas about that part of the topic.



Spider graphs

When you narrow part of your cluster, you write new ideas around a subtopic and connect them with lines. The cluster becomes a **spider graph**. Look at the earlier example about *My University*. You can see that each subtopic can be developed further. This is often very useful when you need to write an essay about a topic because most topics are too big to write about.

In the example below, we can see that the writer has chosen to narrow the topic down to two ideas (*good facilities* and *good teachers*), and has developed those into a spider graph.



Then the writer chose to write a paragraph about the good facilities at his or her university (which you can see on the next page).



My University's Facilities

The best thing about my university is the fantastic **facilities** that we have. For example, we have one of the best university **libraries** in the country. It is very famous and contains almost one million books. You can find information about anything there. We also have excellent access to **computers** and the Internet, which makes studying much easier. There are seven computer rooms available for students to use at any time. Finally, the university has modern **multimedia classrooms**, which have state-of-the-art educational equipment. All of the rooms are fitted with Internet access, audio-visual equipment, overhead projectors and large-screen monitors. It really is a great environment in which to study.



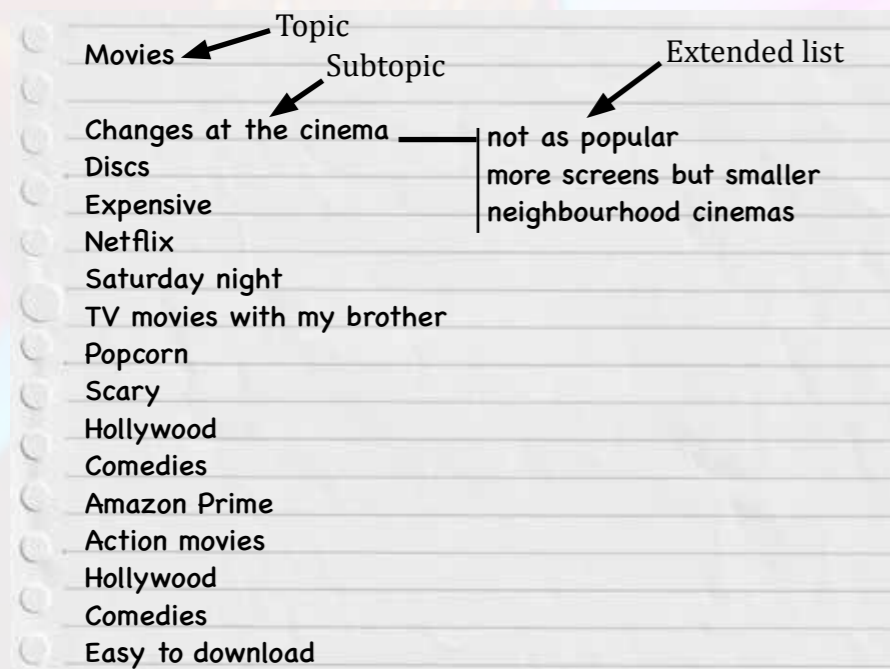
Task 4: Create your own spider graph

Look at the cluster you made for the topic you chose in Task 2 and develop the cluster into a spider graph. Add three ideas to at least two of the subtopics.



Extended lists

In the same way that we develop a cluster into a spider graph, we can also develop a list into an **extended list**. Some people think this format is easier to look at. Like in a spider graph, each subtopic can be extended. Look at the example below. The author has chosen to extend *Changes at the cinema*.



Here is an example of how the subtopic, *Changes at the cinema*, and its extended list can be developed into a paragraph.

Changes at the Cinema

I think that going to the cinema these days is a very different experience to how it used to be when I was a young man. Firstly, I think the cinema is **not as popular** as it used to be, and people don't go as often. I used to go to see a movie every week. In addition, the cinemas have changed a lot, too. Nowadays, they are **big complexes with several small screens**, but in the past, they used to have only one or two much bigger screens. Some of the big cinemas even had balconies. However, the saddest change for me is that there are far fewer places to watch a movie. When I was young, **every neighbourhood had its own cinema**. The nearest one to me was only a five-minute walk. Now, all of the cinemas I used to go to are gone and there is only one place in my hometown. I think that's very sad. I think it's a great pity that things have changed so much. The golden age of the cinema has gone, I'm afraid.



Task 5: Creating your own extended list

Look at the list you made for one of the topics in Task 2. Choose one of the subtopics from the list and create an extended list with at least three ideas.



Quiz 2: Name the mistake

Look at Quiz 2 on the web site. You must choose the correct explanation for why a word or phrase does not belong in each list.



Task 6: Write a paragraph

Choose any of the subtopics that you created as a spider graph or extended list. Write a paragraph about the subtopic which includes the three additional ideas you wrote. This can be done in your workbook, in a notebook or on notepaper, in *The Study Centre* web site, or on a computer or other device.



Task 7: Follow-up

Now go to the web site and complete the exercises for Unit 4.