The Writing Process

The writing process is something that no two people do the same way. There is no “right way” or “wrong way” to write. It can be a very messy and fluid process, and the following is only a representation of commonly used steps.

STEPS OF THE WRITING PROCESS

STEP 1: PREWRITING

THINK AND DECIDE

Make sure you understand your assignment. See Research Papers or Essays
Decide on a topic to write about. See Narrow your Topic,
Consider who will read your work. See Audience and Voice
Brainstorm ideas about the subject. See Prewriting Strategies

STEP 2: RESEARCH (IF NEEDED)

SEARCH

List places where you can find information. See Doing Research
Do your research. See Evaluating Sources and Primary vs. Secondary Sources
Make an Outline to help organize your research. See Outlines

STEP 3: DRAFTING

WRITE

Put the information you researched into your own words. See Paraphrase and Summary
Write sentences and paragraphs even if they are not perfect.
Read what you have written and judge if it says what you mean. See Thesis Statements
Write some more. See Incorporating References
Read it again.
Write some more.
Read it again.
Write until you have said everything you want to say about the topic.

STEP 4: REVISING

MAKE IT BETTER

Read what you have written again. See Revising
Rearrange words, sentences or paragraphs.
Take out or add parts.
Do more research if you think you should.
Replace overused or unclear words.
Read your writing aloud to be sure it flows smoothly.

STEP 5: EDITING AND PROOFREADING

MAKE IT CORRECT

Be sure all sentences are complete. See Editing and Proofreading
Correct spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.
Change words that are not used correctly or are unclear.
Make sure you are using the appropriate Style formatting.
See: http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/resdoc5e/index.htm for examples
Have someone else check your work.¹

¹ Adapted from The five steps of the writing process. lewis.cpsb.org