

DAY 1

INTRO:

This is my brainstorming experiment. This is a personal exercise in generating ideas. Every day, I intend to create a minimum 3 pages of writing, but I am not restricted to words; I can incorporate pictures, lists and diagrams if I choose.

There are no rules; there is nothing I cannot do. I am interested in quantity not quality. I am somewhat inspired by National Novel Writing Month (nanowrimo.org), an organization that suggests members write 50,000 words in the month of November. Its goal is to get people off their asses and start writing.

The goal of this exercise is to get me off my ass and start thinking up ideas.

Some people have mentioned that brainstorming can be frustrating if there are no limits or guidelines. I agree with them, but instead of creating limits or guidelines for myself at the outset, I want to find those limits by trial and error. I want to see under what conditions (if any exist) that brainstorming ceases to be useful.

NOW I START FOR REAL:

Turkey

- ▼ turkey
 - ▼ thanksgiving
 - ▼ Food
 - pumpkin pie
 - brussel sprouts
 - potatoes
 - gravy
 - ▼ Relatives
 - Ones you miss

- Ones you don't miss
- Friends
- ▼ TWO Kinds OF THANXGIVING
 - ▼ At home with your family
 - More stressful
 - possibly more satisfying
 - ▼ At your apartment with your friends because you live to far away from your family
 - more booze (depends on you and your friends and/or family)
 - Your neighbors may get mad
 - Something CRAZY might happen
 - More likely to fuck up some of the food
 - More likely to try to cook something crazy
 - ▼ Everyone is probably more or less your age
 - Better chances for coupling
- ▼ Bird
 - Food
 - Grown in factories
 - ▼ Wild Turkey
 - also the name of alchoholic beverage
 - Has wings
 - Cannot Fly
 - Has Waddle
 - Ugly Feet
 - Ugly Head
 - Ugly
 - Less popular than Chicken
- ▼ President Pardons one turkey each year
 - Many other turkies face a young death
- ▼ Death
 - Most people are afraid of it
 - inevitable
 - natural
 - ▼ Skeleton w/ scyth and black robe
 - Bill and Ted's Bogus Journey
 - that Igmar Bergman movie
 - Death anthropormorphised
 - ▼ Disease
 - ▼ Cancer
 - largely out of your control
 - ▼ Bird Flu

- largely out of your control
- Accident
- MURDER
- ▼ Death and Thanksgiving
 - Turkey skeleton with black robe and scyth
 - Choke on your food
 - accident carving the turkey
 - Killing the turkey at the dinner table
 - Ghosts at the dinner table
 - put your head in the stove
 - gas leak -- explosion.
 - Poisoned turkey
 - Poisoned wine
 - Poisoned mashed potatoes
 - Deadly Gravy
 - Food poisoning
 - Terrorists poisoning the turkey supply
 - Terrorists bombing the maceys day parade
 - Terrorists having thanksgiving
 - Hostages performing a humble thanksgiving celebration under extreme duress
 - Radioactive turkey
 - bomb in the turkey!
 - Hide the bomb in the mashed potatoes to get through customs
 - Hide the gun in the pie and sneak it into prison
 - Fall into the mashed potatoes, get knocked out, then you drown in the food
- ▼ Pumpkin soup
 - good when spicey

Cool! That was fun. The hierarchical format worked very well. Occasionally I found myself concerned about how or where I should indent, but towards the end I was really moving. In the "Death and Turkey" section, after "radioactive turkey" I slowed way down. In each of these higher level groups I moved on to a new higher level group before I slowed down. Beyond what little I did after "radioactive turkey," I never pushed myself to produce way beyond what I felt comfortable with. When stopped being able to make associations easily, I didn't push myself very hard to continue. I think tomorrow I will try this and see what happens.

DAY 2

Topic

- ▼ Hamburger
 - ▼ beef
 - ground
 - America
 - McDonald's
 - Fries
 - ▼ Deluxe
 - Fries
 - Lettuce
 - Tomato
 - Pickle
 - ▼ After school date in a 50's soda shop
 - Milkshake with 2 straws
 - My Dad is old
 - Nostalgia
 - ▼ What is the future of the hamburger?
 - ▼ The \$80 Hamburger
 - Kobe Beef
 - Synthetic vat-grown beef
 - ▼ Advanced packaging
 - expressmail a freeze-dried hamburger to your door
 - Pull a tab on the box and chemical reaction heats up your burger
 - Insulated box so it doesn't get cold when delivered
 - ▼ Fancy burgers
 - mushrooms
 - grilled peppers
 - salsa
 - avocado
 - Blue Cheese
 - I'm hungry
 - ▼ Soda pop
 - they say "pop" instead of "soda" in the midwest
 - What is the meaning of this?

Topic

▼ Power Law

- Networked Systems
- Popularity
- Wealth
- Math
- "Success"

▼ Design of products using the power law

▼ Organizing business around participation levels represented by the power law

- Same goes for web sites

▼ " " graphic design

- Adding pictures to text
- ▼ Putting floating quotes in bold in magazine
 - what's the word for this? Talking Points?

▼ Writing

- making the first sentence in a paragraph explain the topic of the paragraph -- this is good for people skimming
- Formatting -- blank lines between paragraphs

▼ What could Power laws have to do with the design of my computer?

▼ Application popularity

- How is this a networked system?
- Can every system which involves popularity be described by the power law?

▼ It's designed for casual users and power users

- OS X aqua vs command line
- Adobe photoshop vs. image ready
- Sketchup is designed for both

▼ How does the power law come into play in a large organization, like NYU?

-

▼ If I wanted to to be more popular I could

- go to every TNO
- post on the list more
- show work even if it's bad
- Try to talk to as many people as possible when I'm on the floor
- Get more friends on friendster
- *****censored*****

▼ 80/20 rule

- 20 percent of tasks are really important
- 80% of tasks are not important
- ▼ What do I do in my day?

- ▼ Read stuff
 - internet
- Make stuff
- Socialize
- Plan
- I do not see how 20% of these things are much more important than the others
- ▼ Maybe I should break down those activities into subgroups?
 - ▼ For Example: Socialize
 - ▼ *****censored*****
 - ▼ I could list all the people at ITP and my relationship with them. That would be interesting.
 - ▼ What could I learn?
- This not getting anywhere fast
- ▼ What about reading?
 - ▼ Various blogs
 - I could do without these
 - ▼ Articles that I find relevant to my life
 - ▼ How do I find them?
 - Mostly by chance, i.e. surfing the web
 - ▼ What if I took a more guided approach acquisition of information. That is, I spend more time working, i.e. making stuff or BRAINSTORMING, and then I go out and seek the information that seems relevant to what I'm thinking.
 - ▼ How is this different from surfing the web?
 - ▼ It feels like I'm being more productive, because I am writing down ideas after I incorporate information?
 - I'm also retrieving information that is directly relevant to what I'm doing at the time
 - Will this make me ignorant? The kind of person who can only talk about his work?

DAY 3

Computers
 IBM
 White Shirt & Ties

Team
Sports
Stock traders
Ups & Downs
happy & sad
mental illnesses
asylums hospitals
institutions
colleges
governments
societies
committees
quorum
enough
not enough
can't get no satisfaction
groupies
english groupies
austin powers
midgets
tall people make more money
business
hierarchy
"sizing someone up"
sex
reptilian brain
id (as in the Freudian id)
identification
Freud
Jung
Archetypes
Wise old man w/ wings
Switzerland
Mountains
skiing
vail Colorado
fur coats
Dick Cheney
Ranches
Helicopters
Air Force
Army
Mountain bunkers
high-tech
Headquarters in extinct volcano crater
plate tectonics

lex luther
louis lane
secret identities
multiple personalities
mental illness

(2 person association. Alternating words)

Wite-out
Corrections
prison
penalties
soccer
sports
TV
weeknights
primetime
marketing
comercials
toys
go-bots
childhood
trauma
therapy
psychology
college
co-eds
pornography
computers
work
offices
daytime
nighttime
bars
beer
frat boys
funnels
filling water bottles
my parents making jam
concord grapes
welches
precocious children
Kix commercials
saturday mornings

Pee Wee's playhouse
shag carpets
my brother's room
summer nights
smoking pot
peter & Jen
elementary school
recess
Bell (Recess is over)
Bell (the one at high school)
church
sunday mornings
sunday school
getting dressed up
prom
limos
courage
nervousness
dates
movies
harry met sally
billy cristal
city slickers
cows
texas
arizona
grand canyon
road trips
my brother's wedding in montana
horses
barns farms

DAY 4

Subway
train
car
lights
pedestrian
tickets
GTA III
Tom Sacks
Video
hackers

lawyers
firms
tom cruise
nicole kidman
ireland
daniel day lewis
last of mohecans
6 degrees of kevin bacon
power law
random # generators
feelings
myres briggs
relatives

DAY 5

I'm going to write a little prose today. I just looked over my brainstorms for the past few days. I was, um, intrigued. This process is a little strange because I'm going to publish the results. Some of the stuff I think of is either crass or a little fucked up or dark. The idea of having everyone else read it makes me a little uncomfortable. This is kinda bad, because part of the process of brainstorming is to suspend criticism. If my critical mind is in high gear while I'm trying to come up with ideas, I'll block ideas that, while they may not be good, could become or lead to good ideas later.

I was just reading part of Blink, by Malcolm Gladwell, and he has this little thing on "priming." In one example they told subjects to write a bunch of stuff about college professors. Afterwards, they were asked questions from a trivial suit game. They answered about 50% of the questions correctly. Then they asked other subjects to write about soccer hooligans. These subjects got close to 40% of the questions right. That's a 20% performance difference!

This reminds me of how some athletes and performers do visualizing exercises before a performance. Apparently there is now some more scientific evidence to support this practice. So, since my ambitions lie somewhere in-between Thomas Edison and William de Kooning, I'll do a

little thinking about them both, and then try to come up with some ideas.

William de Kooning is probably not the best example, on second thought. I read his biography, so I know a lot about him, and a lot of it's depressing. So I'll change it to someone else; someone I know a little less about...Hmmm. How about...Pablo Picasso.

Pablo Picasso is the top ranked artist at artifacts.net. He made a big breakthrough by pretty much inventing cubism. He invented cubism with that other guy...I forget his name...According to Tom Wolf, "that guy" is not as famous because he stuck closer to his bohemian ideals. Picasso had no problem donning a tuxedo and hanging out with celebrities. This other guy would get pissy and prefer to hang out in his dingy studio or something.

Picasso made a lot of paintings. He worked hard I'm sure. I'm sure he had a lot of ambition and self-confidence. There's that Modern Lover's song: "He was only 5'3" and girls could not resist his stare, Pablo Picasso never got called an asshole, not like you"

Thomas Edison invented many things, including the lightbulb, phonograph, and owned an electricity company. I believe it advocated DC power instead of AC. Tesla was all about AC, and AC one out. Yet I think Edison was a better businessman. Today, I get my bills from Con Edison. Edison said invention/creativity was 1% inspiration, 99% perspiration. He worked really hard. I seem to remember that he tried out all sorts of different materials when he was trying to create the filament part of the light bulb. Even different types of hair!

OK. Now, I'm going to do some brainstorming.

▼ My Tag video game

- very simple
- see my "boo" video game
- Kids would like it

- I should work on the design more
- The design will guide the success of the project
- ▼ could old people enjoy it?
 - Nursing homes as potential market
- Group version on large screen, big board
- lots of players
- ▼ people feel like they are running around even if they can't walk
 - A screen version that allows people to identify who they are tagging
 - This would allow for more social interaction
 - ▼ Imagine it a bars
 - this is a little creepy
- Integrate it into phones
- Imagine playing it on amountaintop
- in an airplane
- while hangliding
- ▼ What are some things I don't like about the game
 - ▼ It's very buisness oriented
 - I'm looking for markets in order to define the design
 - perhaps I should look elsewhere for inspiration
 - ▼ I like coming up with practical ideas; I get bored with them quickly?
 - I don't think this is right
 - It was a bitch building the thing last semester. Almost gave me a stroke.
 - Perhaps I just have some negative associations
 - The idea is good. It just needs more powerful presentation.
 - ▼ You know what? I think I know exactly what I need to do next with this, and once I complete the next steps, then this exercise will be more useful.
 - **You know what this means?!? I've brainstormed ENOUGH about this.**
- ▼ This is what I'm going to try to do:
 - Build it into chairs
 - get rid of the wireless element. Maybe later I will re-introduce it, but now I don't think there's need, and it probably is adding cost and work.
 - Simplify simplify simplify?
 - program logic onto microcontroller.

That was a useful exercise. I realized that the brainstorm wasn't that necessary at this point. Part of this project is to remedy the feeling that I haven't given my projects enough thought. I don't know how well the Priming part worked. I suppose if I had wrote some paragraphs on soccer hooligans I might not have done as well.

DAY 6

The stuff on my brain right now:

Blink

brain things

getting enough sleep

crazy lady talking ot herself at the end of the bench

Relationships (esp. w/ my girlfriend)

What I will be doing next year

What kind of stuff I need to do over then next:

 few days

 week

 few months

Why did I have so many interactions with strangers today?

There was:

- The lady who told me they would fine me for drinking my coffee on the subway
- The man next to me who told me that's why he had a sandwich concealed in his jacket. He also told me he sold watches on the street and was a veteran trying to get on disability.
- The guy at the DMV who told me I was "sucking my lips in" in my license photo.
- The chinese guy in the crowded subway car who started at me for 30 seconds and then:

 GUY: "Have you given yourself to Jesus?"

 ME: "Not interested"

 So you haven't given yourself to jesus?

 I'm catholic, you don't have to tell me about Jesus.

 YOU HAVE NOT GIVEN YOURSELF TO JESUS!

 <awkward silence>

 I will pray for you, pray that you will be saved!

 <he then blesses me, touching his thumb to my forehead>

-Guy at the Imcc info session that I sort of know from a friend. We had a very nice conversation.

-Conversation with girl who ran the info session.

-Poet guy "allen" who had the residency last year. We didn't really connect, but I don't think either of us made much of an effort to--too bad.

You know the crazy lady at the end of the bench? She's wearing a Camo Jacket and a Camo skirt. Maybe she's cool/crazy.

DAY 8

- Man I don't want to do this brainstorming
- ▼ I didn't do it yesterday
 - Makes me feel a little guilty perhaps
 - I told myself I'd do it a little every day
 - Now I find it harder to do it because yesterday I let myself down
 - This reminds me of Getting Things Done, by david allen
- I need a topic
- ▼ I was surprised at the positive reaction in class yesterday
 - It was the last class, which makes people giddy
 - I presented second, so people had energy to pay attention
 - ▼ People apparently aren't as adverse to reading as I thought
 - I'm so busy now that when I see some writing on someone's blog, I either skim or skip
 - I guess these hierarchical menus work well for casual reading
 - ▼ ze had some good advice about how it's ok to censor some thoughts, but after I've written them down
 - Hmmm, maybe I'll try to think of something fucked up
- ▼ **DON'T FORGET TO CENSOR THE FOLLOWING**
 - Ok, this is tricky, when I think of really fucked up stuff to write about, I really don't want to write about it. It's probably my superego doing its job
 - ▼ Hmmm...How about


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*****
*****
*****
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 - ***** (That would be weird)
 - ***** (That would be serious)
 - ***** (that would be interesting)
 - ***** (that would be really interesting)
 - ***** (I don't know about that. *****).
 - ***** creative act class
 - *****
 - *****!
 - *****
 - *****
 - *****?
 - *****
 - *****!
 - *****
 - Well that was mildly interesting. It's strange that a record of this exists. Years later I'll be able to look at this and say "hmmm"
- ▼ Something Different: **Possible Vacations**

▼ □ spain

- □ Miguel!
- ▼ □ Barcelona
 - □ art nouveau church
- □ Pedro Almodovar

▼ □ italy

- □ espresso
- □ architecture
- □ churches
- ▼ □ italian
 - □ "upa duppa dup duppa dup da da"

▼ □ Chile

- □ Pategonia
- ▼ □ Tierra del fuego
 - □ me against the elements
 - □ ancient people
 - ▼ □ I could experience some sort of cool vision there
 - □ South american countries seem like cool places for tripping
 - □ I feel like some of the events in the Invisibles that took place in Nepal could have taken place in south america
 - ▼ □ There are all those cool aztech mummies they found sacrificed on mountain tops
 - □ How cool is that!
 - □ Maybe I should so some reading on the mayans and aztecs

▼ □ Pinochet

- □ desaparaciedos (Yikes!)

▼ □ Germany

- ▼ □ Berlin
 - □ lotsa art
- □ Verona lives there
- □ Volkswagen factory is supposed to be cool

▼ □ US

- □ oregon
- ▼ □ Midwest
 - □ Big Sky Country
 - □ Freight cars
- □ Miami Basil

▼ □ UK

- □ London
- □ Ellen lives there!
- □ Lotsa art

- My People (sorta)

DAY 9

Topic

- ▼ I woke up in the wrong part of my sleep cycle
 - I woke up while I was dreaming
 - ▼ First, I dreamt I *****.
 - I was like why am I *****?
 - ▼ Everyone was like ooooh you should *****.
 - And I was like what? I'm not even *****.
 - ▼ Then, I was on a bus with some people from college, *****. We were all going to nantucket.
 - We got to some big apartment building and started checking out the facilities. I remember going for the sunscreen.
 - I was really siked that *****
 - ▼ My attitude after waking up *****
 - I take my dream ***** is reflecting on *****.
 - ▼ being s***** points to *****.
 - ***** troubles me.

I'm going to put on my prose hat again. Making lists is feeling a little shallow this morning. I think writing paragraphs makes me think a little harder. Since it is early in the morning, this would be a good idea—limber up the grey matter. I'll do a few paragraphs, and if I feel I have time I'll give the lists another shot.

Uh-oh, there are some women next to me talking about a guy making laptop music. It's going to be hard not to listen. Oh, now they moved to talking about a hat one of them made--ZZZZZZ. But wait! The hat is cool! And I don't even like hats! I should join them.

I really like this café. When I was working from home I used to come here a lot. Now, not so much. However, this brainstorming project gives me a good excuse to go to cafes. I get to drink coffee and type in a semi-social environment.

I'm not sure I want this document to be super self-referential. I find that things can get boring fast that way. Ok, I'll talk about:

Topic

▼☐ Coffee

▼☐ Is really popular in:

- ☐ America
- ☐ Italy
- ☐ France

▼☐ Is it as popular in

- ☐ Canada?
- ☐ Mexico?
- ☐ Spain?
- ☐ Venezuela?

▼☐ Where do they drink yerba matta?

- ☐ Peru?

▼☐ What if I invented a new caffinated drink?

- ☐ I could call it "Red Bull"

▼☐ A HOT caffinated drink

▼☐ It'd be, uh, It'd have:

- ☐ Chocolate
- ☐ Mint
- ☐ Sugar
- ☐ Tea
- ☐ Ginseng
- ☐ Chai
- ☐ Guarana
- ☐ St. John's Wort
- ☐ Jim Beam
- ☐ Gasoline

▼☐ I'd put it all in a blender, freeze dry the result, and then you could make the drink in an espresso machine

- ☐ Ewww!

▼☐ How would I market it?

▼☐ In South America?

- ☐ Engineered by American Scientists, this drink is all the rage for wealthy businessmen looking to get ahead

▼☐ China

- same as above
- ▼ France
 - The new curiosity from America "Joi de Vivre" Caffeinated drink
- ▼ Spain
 - ▼ Baila por mas tiempo con super bebida Caffeinado
 - --Could also work for South America?
- ▼ Germany
 - Be more efficient with this new American Drink
- ▼ Japan
 - Put cool characters on the packaging and call it '!!!'

Whoa, the woman next to me is a screenwriter! For HBO? And she makes amazing hats!

Obviously, I'm at the wrong table.

Topic

- ▼ Women next to me in cafés
 - older--late 30s
 - Screenwriter
 - talking shop
 - make cool hats
 - go to laptop concerts
 - ▼ If I can be so cool in my late 30s
 - would I think that was cool in my late 30s?
 - I hope so
 - ▼ Yikes, this reminds me of when i had long hair in high school and I was like "I'll have long hair forever.
 - I said the same thing about my baggy pants
 - This is depressing
- ▼ Since it is early, I wonder if writing on paper would be better
 - writing on paper, one doesn't edit
 - ▼ I don't really edit when making these lists though...
 - I really like omni outliner
 - writing on paper, I have to think about the sentence before I commit it to paper
 - typing, It's like verbal diarrhea
- ▼ What am I going to do today
 - go to j&R, look for adapter

- Work on video
- print video
- work on advanced tech project.
- OK lets go!

DAY 10

Topic

- Jim Beam
- ▼ The Doors
 - Love me two times
 - Love me twice today
- The desert
- Indians
- Buffalo
- Plains
- White Buffalo
- White People
- General Custard
- Big Horn
- Crazy Horse
- John Wayne
- Back to the Future III
- "Marty!"
- Hovering skateboards
- Biff
- Incest
- Ancient Egyptian Dynasties
- Hieroglyphics
- Stargate
- James Spader
- Crash
- Crash Test Dummies
- ▼ that "Simply Red Hot Chile Peppers" game
 - Color me bad brains

DAY 11

Topic

- ▼ A writer
 - Is a man
 - Grows up, has hard-drinking father
 - Grows up working class
 - Has interesting, awkward sexual experiences in his teenage years that effect his attitude towards women and provides him with lots of material later on
 - In his 20s he holes himself up in a tiny apartment and writes
 - Writes and writes
 - And works odd jobs
 - Gets some publications in literary magazines
 - slugs it out
 - has ups and downs
 - more publications -- no book deals
 - slugs it out -- has continuous crises of faith in his profession
 - in his early 30's he gets a book deal
 - first two books do ok
 - ▼ 3rd book is big hit
 - excellent critical reviews
 - ▼ 4th book is good too!
 - people start to really pay attention
 - ▼ By the 6th book our writer is a lion
 - he has money
 - recognized instantly at social functions
 - recognized on the street (not uncommon)
 - married to woman half his age
 - Visits other contries
 - ▼ Meets the president
 - becomes friends with the president
 - becomes friends with presidents of other contries
 - other presidents want him to pass messages to current president
 - CIA wants him to spy
 - ▼ our writer starts doing secret spy stuff on his visits
 - photographing documents, for example
 - ▼ His writing starts to suffer
 - the spy stuff is so interesting, it distracts him from his writing
 - since he stuff is political (in a sense) and super secret, he feels he can't write about it. This avoidance is taking a toll on his writing, because he is blocking himself from expressing himself freely
 - because his writing is suffering he becomes cranky

- ▼ He kills a man in prauge
 - Cia disposes of the body
- ▼ He is very shaken by the experience
 - Fights with his wife a lot
 - snaps during a book reading at someone asking hostile questions
 - Has a close call while doing spy things
- ▼ He says fuck it and starts writing freely
 - the writing is really good but totally unlike any other stuff he's written
 - the publisher loves it
 - the CIA finds it very worrlysome
- ▼ Our writer is feeling more liberated
 - ▼ The CIA thinks he is becoming less reliable
 - ▼ the CIA TRY TO KILL HIM
 - but he kills the assasin
 - Now he's on the run from his own government
- ▼ he goes into hiding during the middle of his book tour
 - this is cause for a lot of speculation in the press
- ▼ He joins up with a bunch of radical quebecious sepratists whom he met while doing research for an earlier novel
 - they give him a lot of cool disguises
- ▼ Each day he still finds time to write
 - but now his writing is getting really weird
 - he starts having trouble telling reality from fantasy
- He goes to kill his case-handler at the CIA?

DAY 12

Topic

- I want to write a song about texas
- ▼ Texas
 - Cowboys
 - Boots
 - Horses
 - Steaks
 - the Alamo
 - Contry music
 - ▼ It's kinda like its own country
 - tons of pride
 - I don't think that many people settle outside of texas
 - Bar B Q

- Oil
- Republicans
- Pulled Pork Sandwiches
- Austin
- Hill Country
- Planes
- Ranches
- George bush
- A texas christmas carol
- the people of texas would love it if I wrote a song about how great texas is
- I think they have snow
- Hot in the summer
- lots of mexicans
- tex-mex food
- ▼ evangelists on the radio
 - super crazy, like: "judism and islam are satan's tools!"
- ▼ Song Conceits
 - I miss texas and my texan family; now I work in a cubicle in chicago
 - I've never been to texas, but I have this fantasy that it's were I want to be because I'm stuck in a cubicle in detroit
 - " " stuck in an assembly line in detroit
 - ▼ My Girlfriend left me for someone from texas
 - All about how stupid texas is, yet list the reasons why someone might go for someone with super republican qualities

Now I don't want to write a song about texas.