Develop a Working Thesis

(SO FAR I've thought about my purpose, audience, and topic....)

Not sure what to say about the topic? START HERE.

Got something to say about the topic? START HERE.

THINK about my personal connection to the topic.

WHAT INTERESTS me about it?

WHAT do I know about my topic?

What do I need to find out?

CAN I write a sentence that DESCRIBES my topic and comments on it?

Maybe I've got a WORKING THESIS!

OKAY! I CAN COMMENT ON MY TOPIC.

If I'm just STATING FACTS, I don't have a thesis yet.

A VAGUE thesis is a boring thesis.

...stay focused....

TEST THE SENTENCE.

Will it GRAB my audience's attention?

An OBVIOUS thesis is a boring thesis, too.

Can I cover this topic in the TIME and SPACE I have, or would I have to write a book?

I'VE MADE A COMMENT ON MY TOPIC!

IT'S INTERESTING, SPECIFIC, AND MANAGEABLE!

I HAVE A WORKING THESIS!

(can and can refine it—or change it—as I go)

Work with Peer Reviewers

START to work with others on a DRAFT.

WHAT SHOULD WE FOCUS ON?
Big picture, development, sentence-level questions?

IT DOESN'T MATTER if this writer has more or less experience than I do—we can still help each other....

REVIEWERS

READ CAREFULLY.

What should I look at FIRST?
(ASK if I'm not sure....)

What's the draft doing?

Do I get the MAIN POINTS?

Is the writer on the RIGHT TRACK?

1. GUIDE MY READERS.

What PROBLEMS do I see in this draft?

TELL readers what I want them to do first.

2. MARK UP THE WRITING.
Compliment what's good.

CRITICIZE constructively.

BE HELPFUL, NOT HARSH!

Should I ASK more questions?

Are my markings CLEAR?

2. ACCEPT HELP.
Remember that all writing can be improved—EVEN MINE!

3. SUGGEST NEXT STEPS.
What changes could make the next draft stronger?

BE SPECIFIC....

Do I UNDERSTAND what my REVIEWERS think?

If the comments don't seem helpful, ask for better ones....

3. CONFIRM SUGGESTIONS.

Have I gotten FEEDBACK on what to do next?

I'M ASKING GOOD QUESTIONS...

I'M HELPING OTHER WRITERS THINK...

I KNOW WHERE THIS WRITING SHOULD GO FROM HERE!