

# Undergraduate vs. Graduate Writing



# Academic Writing is:

- ◆ Different from the everyday writing that most people do
- ◆ Planned and focused to answer the assigned question and show an understanding of the subject matter
- ◆ Structured such that the material is presented in a logical order, bringing together related points and material, and showcasing the connections between the sources used and points being made
- ◆ Demonstrates knowledge of the subject matter utilizing strong, appropriate sources as evidence to back up any opinions or arguments made
- ◆ Clear, concise, and formal in tone and style with appropriate language and few grammatical errors
- ◆ Written utilizing an appropriate academic-style format (i.e. APA or MLA)
- ◆ Avoids plagiarism by appropriately citing all information that comes from a source, whether it is words or ideas

# Undergraduate Writing vs. Graduate Writing

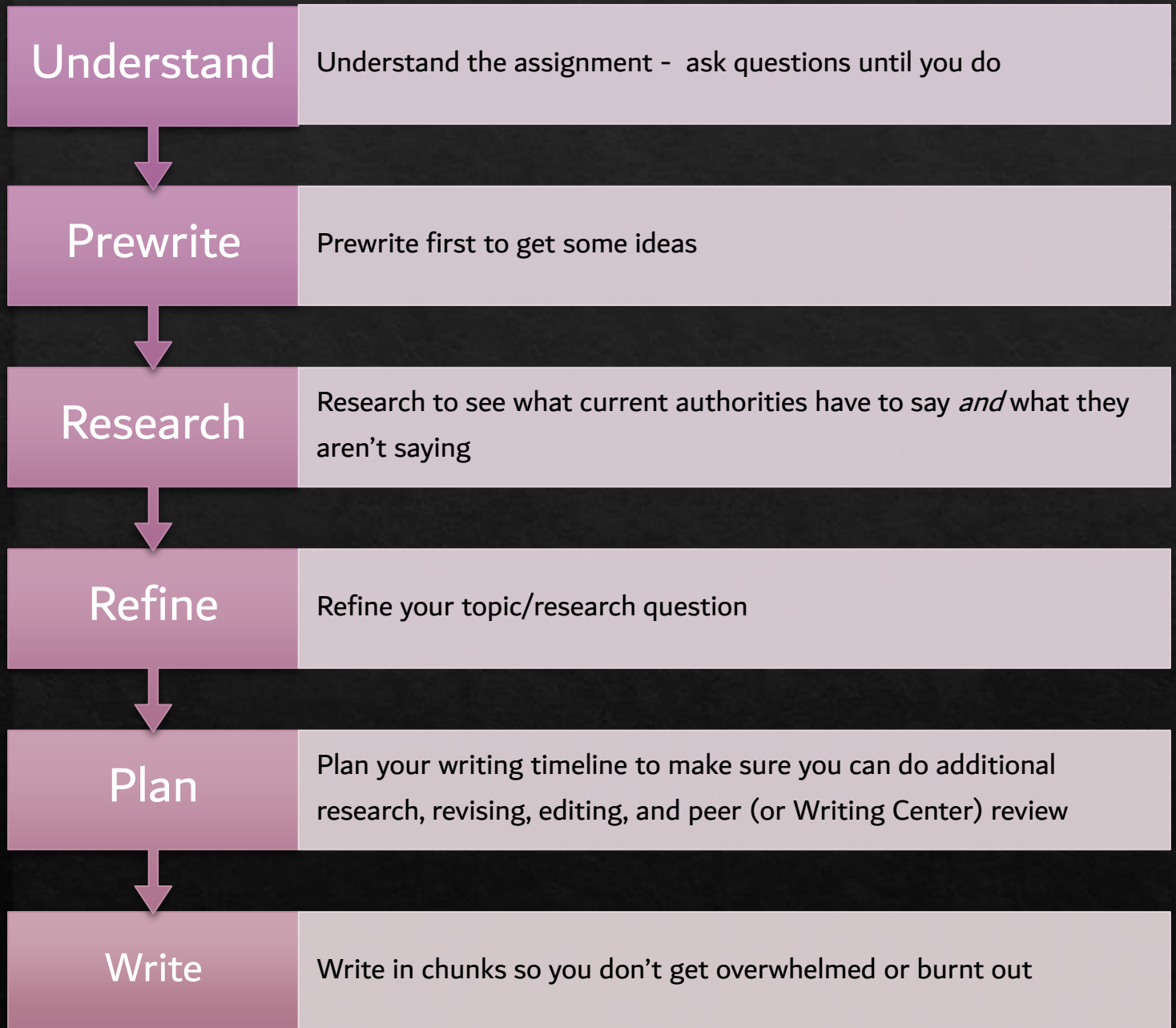
- ◇ There is a difference in the way an undergraduate writer approaches writing and thinks of themselves and their audience as opposed to the graduate writer
- ◇ An undergraduate writer is considered a “student,” but a graduate writer is considered a “scholar”
- ◇ An undergraduate student is answering a question, doing research to find what others have said about the topic, and compiling it all to give to a professor for a grade
- ◇ A graduate student is exploring a topic, doing research to not only find out what others have said about the topic but what HAS NOT been said, and adding to the conversation and research about the topic, not just for a grade and for their professor, but to add to the knowledge of the academic community at large

	UNDERGRADUATE WRITING	GRADUATE WRITING
<b>Topic:</b>	Often addresses a specific writing prompt	Often involves producing and answering a research question
<b>Presenting Information:</b>	Mostly presents what others have said about a topic	Enters the conversation as a scholar with own expertise and insights
<b>Research:</b>	Exploratory research required	Extensive & comprehensive research required
<b>Direct Quotes:</b>	Use of direct quotes is accepted	Less reliance on direct quotes, favoring summarizing & paraphrasing

	UNDERGRADUATE WRITING	GRADUATE WRITING
<b>Synthesis:</b>	Synthesis of research is not typically reached, and the full scholarly conversation is not presented	Studies & expert opinions are synthesized to show similarities, differences, etc. of the full scholarly conversation
<b>Audience:</b>	Written for a general academic audience	Written for other scholars and professionals in the field of study
<b>Vocabulary:</b>	Uses general vocabulary, with defined terms whenever discipline-specific language is used	Uses technical vocabulary specific to the field, with no need to define these terms
<b>Formatting:</b>	Basic academic essay structure with introduction, body of ~3-10 paragraphs, and conclusion	Formatting specific to the field, with use of sections such as literature review, methods, results, etc.
<b>Purpose:</b>	Writing is done to show that understanding/learning has taken place—as assessment	Writing is done to further knowledge in the field—to contribute to the field of study



# Tips For How To Get Started



# APA Format

- ◇ While APA (American Psychological Association) Format isn't the ONLY academic format used in graduate writing, it is the most used format
- ◇ APA has a significant advantage over MLA for graduate papers – it includes the year in the in-text citation which is important in validating the source to be used in the paper
- ◇ 7<sup>th</sup> Edition came out in October 2019 with some significant changes from 6<sup>th</sup> Edition
- ◇ The [Madonna University OWL](#) has great resources for help with APA format

# Synthesize Information (Literature Review)

- ◇ A Literature Review is a summary and a critical analysis of professional literature (books, journal articles, etc.). It focuses on a specific topic of interest and shows the relationship between other material and a writer's own work. A literature review may be a stand-alone paper, or it may provide a framework for a longer, original essay
- ◇ The [Madonna Library](#) has wonderful resources to help finding sources to use in a Lit Review and in graduate papers
- ◇ The [Madonna University OWL](#) has great resources for help with writing a Literature Review



# Madonna University Writing Center

- ◆ Students work WITH tutors and writing specialists in live one-on-one half-hour sessions aimed at improving the writing skills of students
- ◆ It is NOT an editing service for your papers
- ◆ Students can get help at any point in the writing process
- ◆ The Writing Center offers face-to-face tutoring
- ◆ The Writing Center offers online tutoring through Blackboard Collaborate video calls

