**Seven Days to a Good Paper**

**Day #1: Pick a topic.**
- What are you interested in?
- What do you question?
- What do you agree with?
- What do you want to know more about?
- What do you need to, positively or negatively?

**Day #2: Brainstorm**
- Try free-writing. Set a time limit and write whatever comes into your mind. Don't worry about grammar or word choice — just write.
- Try summarizing. Look at your free writing and find connecting ideas and sentences on those ideas.
- Try listing ideas relevant to your topic.

**Day #3: Write a working thesis statement.**
- Find the points that incorporate all of those points into a single idea. This will be your working thesis. Don't worry — you can change it as you begin to write.
- Ask yourself:
  - Is my thesis interesting?
  - Is it specific enough for the essay length?
  - Does it make a provable claim about my topic?

**Day #4: Write a draft.**
- Look at everything you have written. Use your working thesis, your main points, and your brainstorming notes to shape a draft.
- Just get your ideas on paper in the form of paragraphs and sentences.
- Don't worry about perfecting anything now.

**Day #5: Take a break!**

**Day #6: Redraft.**
- Read your draft aloud.
  - Did you say what you wanted to, what you thought you did? Is it clearly stated?
  - Does the reader ever have to make connections between points on her own?
  - Are your complicating sentences easy to follow?
  - Is your organization logical?
  - Does the essay follow your thesis? Does your thesis follow your essay?

**Day #7: Fine tune.**
- Check paragraphing. Are your transitions logical? Does the organization prove your thesis effectively?
- Check sentences for fragments. Try to use varied sentences — in length and structure.
- Check passive voice; only use it when absolutely necessary. The reader wants to know who is doing what, not what is being done.
- Check grammar, word choice, punctuation, and spelling. Don't rely solely on spellcheck — read your paper for errors!
- Use "thesis language" — the same terms you use in the thesis, throughout the paper, especially in topic sentences and conclusions.

**Follow the arrows to a good paper!**