

# The Writing Process

Pre-Writing & Drafting

# Now what?

- So... you've picked a topic. Now what?
- This is where many students get stuck. How do you convert your thoughts to a well-organized essay?
- The answer: Pre-Writing

# Pre-Writing: Brainstorming

- You need to know where you are going in your paper, and how to get there.
- Collect your thoughts and ideas, then organize them.
- There are several ways to brainstorm. The most effective way varies by person.

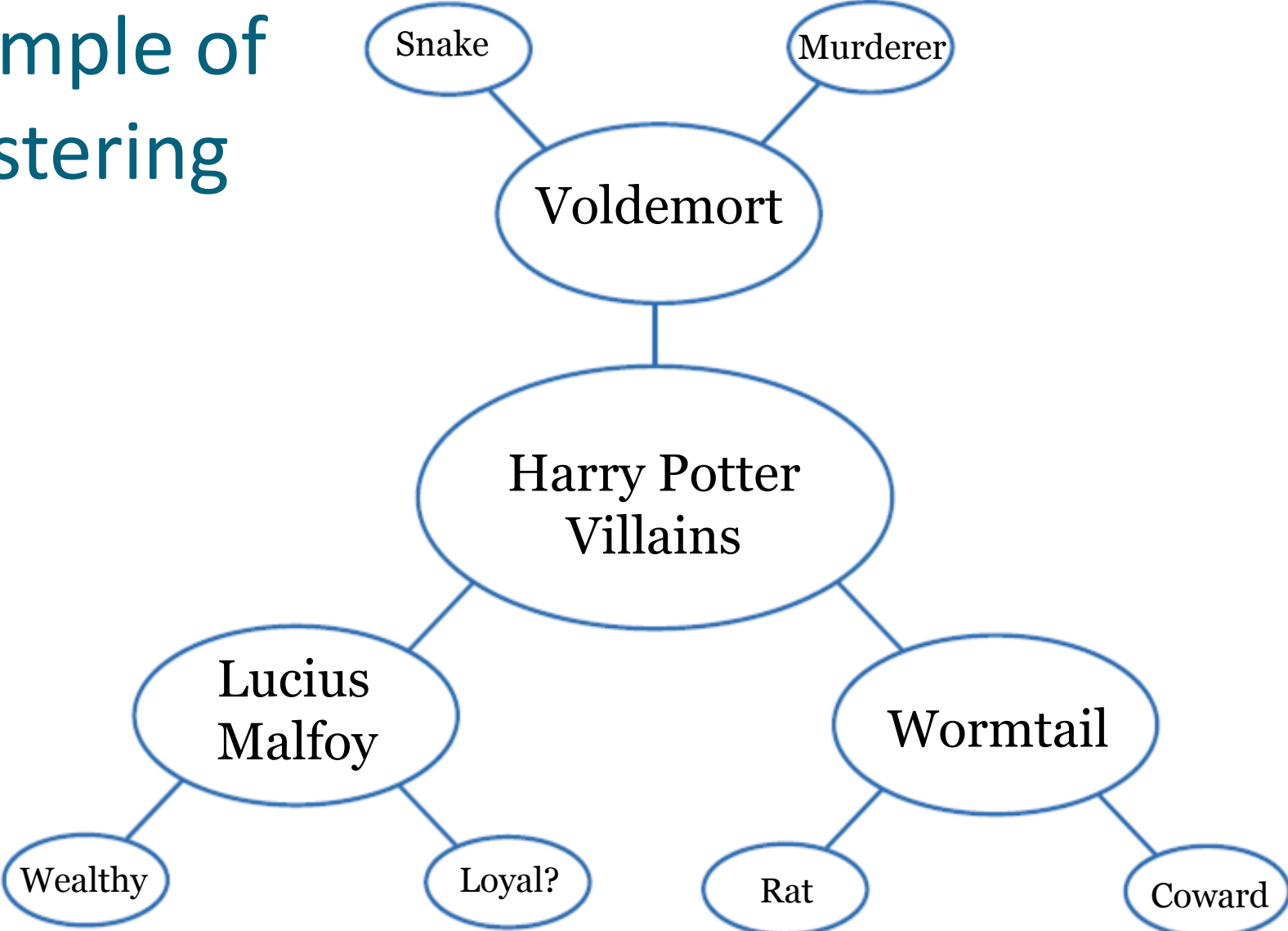
# Brainstorming Strategy #1: Listing

1. Set a timer for 5 minutes.
  2. Write down every idea you have.
  3. List until timer goes off.
- Look for patterns of thoughts.
  - Cross out useless or irrelevant material.
  - Next step: Group the remaining items into categories.

# Brainstorming Strategy #2: Clustering

1. Set a timer for 5 minutes.
  2. Start with the middle circle and write your topic.
  3. Branch out to other related ideas.
- This strategy works well with visual learners.

# Example of Clustering



# Brainstorming Strategy #3: Baby Outline

1. Set a timer for 5 minutes.
2. Convert your cluster to an outline.

- I. Introduction
- II. Background information about the series
- III. Voldemort
  - A. Snake
  - B. Murderer
  - C. Harry's parents
- IV. Lucius Malfoy
  - A. Wealthy
  - B. Loyalty
  - C. Parent
- V. Wormtail
  - A. Rat
  - B. Coward
  - C. Traitor
- VI. Conclusion

## Example of Baby Outline



# Pre-Writing: Outline

- After brainstorming, gather your notes and begin writing an outline.
- Outlining is the key to a good paper.
- The outline is the skeleton of your paper and provides the organization.
- The outline ensures that your paper actually gets where you want to go.
- **START WHEREVER YOU WANT TO  
(but don't stray far from the thesis)**