Freewriting[1]

1. Chose a starting point: It can be a specific term, a topic, or the beginning of a sentence that helps you structure your thoughts.
2. The next step is to set a timer to 10, 15 or 20 minutes.
3. Take a few moments and think about the chosen term or topic. Now you can start writing and let your thoughts meander. Anything goes!
4. Do not stop writing! It is important to keep your hand moving until the time is up.
5. Do not pay attention to grammar, spelling, punctuation or style.
6. Do not delete or cross out anything!
7. If you run out of ideas, just write "I don't know what to write about" or "blah, blah, blah, ...", until you have a new idea.
8. If the time is up, finish the sentence you just started and stop writing.

Freewriting is a great method to
- warm up
- come up with new ideas
- activate your "writing brain"
- produce a lot of text in a short period of time
- cure writer's block
- switch between languages

Modifications
- Freewriting guided by questions: Ask yourself a question, choose it as your starting point. Then start writing and answer the question in your freewriting.
- Use freewriting as a method to reactivate your knowledge about certain topics (e.g. before writing an exam)
- Timed Writing: Set your alarm to 20-25 minutes (you can also start with a shorter period of time for the beginning) and try to time your writing sessions, thereby structuring your writing process.
- Rapid Writing: Set your timer to 10-15 minutes and try to write as much as possible in this time.

For 'Non-Natives'
- Always start writing in the target language.
- If you cannot think of the word in the target language, just write it down in the language that first comes to mind and underline it. You can look it up in a dictionary later!
- Use your freewriting to switch from one language to another!

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[1] Natalie Goldberg, Writing down the Bones (Shambala Publications, 1987) and Peter Elbow, Writing with Power (Oxford (Oxford University Press 1998).