

$$143 \times 342 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

If someone asked you to solve this problem without using a calculator, how would you begin? Maybe you would start by setting up the problem like this:

$$\begin{array}{r} 143 \\ \times 342 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

Next, you would follow a step-by-step process to answer the problem successfully. In some ways, writing is similar to this math problem. Without a step-by-step process to follow, writing can seem overwhelming at times! While the process of writing isn't as exact as the process of solving a math problem, writing does involve a process that can be learned.

Step One: Understanding the Assignment

Step Two: Considering Purpose and Audience

Step Three: Choosing a Topic and Generating Ideas

Step Four: Narrowing a Topic (if necessary)

Step Five: Writing about the Topic

Step Six: Revising, Editing, and Peer Reviewing

One important thing to remember is that this is a recursive process. In other words, the process does not always occur in a straight line. For example, while you are completing step three, you may realize that you don't have enough information. For that reason, you back up to step two again, and reconsider your topic. It's OK to take steps backward during the writing process; in fact, sometimes it results in some excellent final work!