

6 Word Memoir

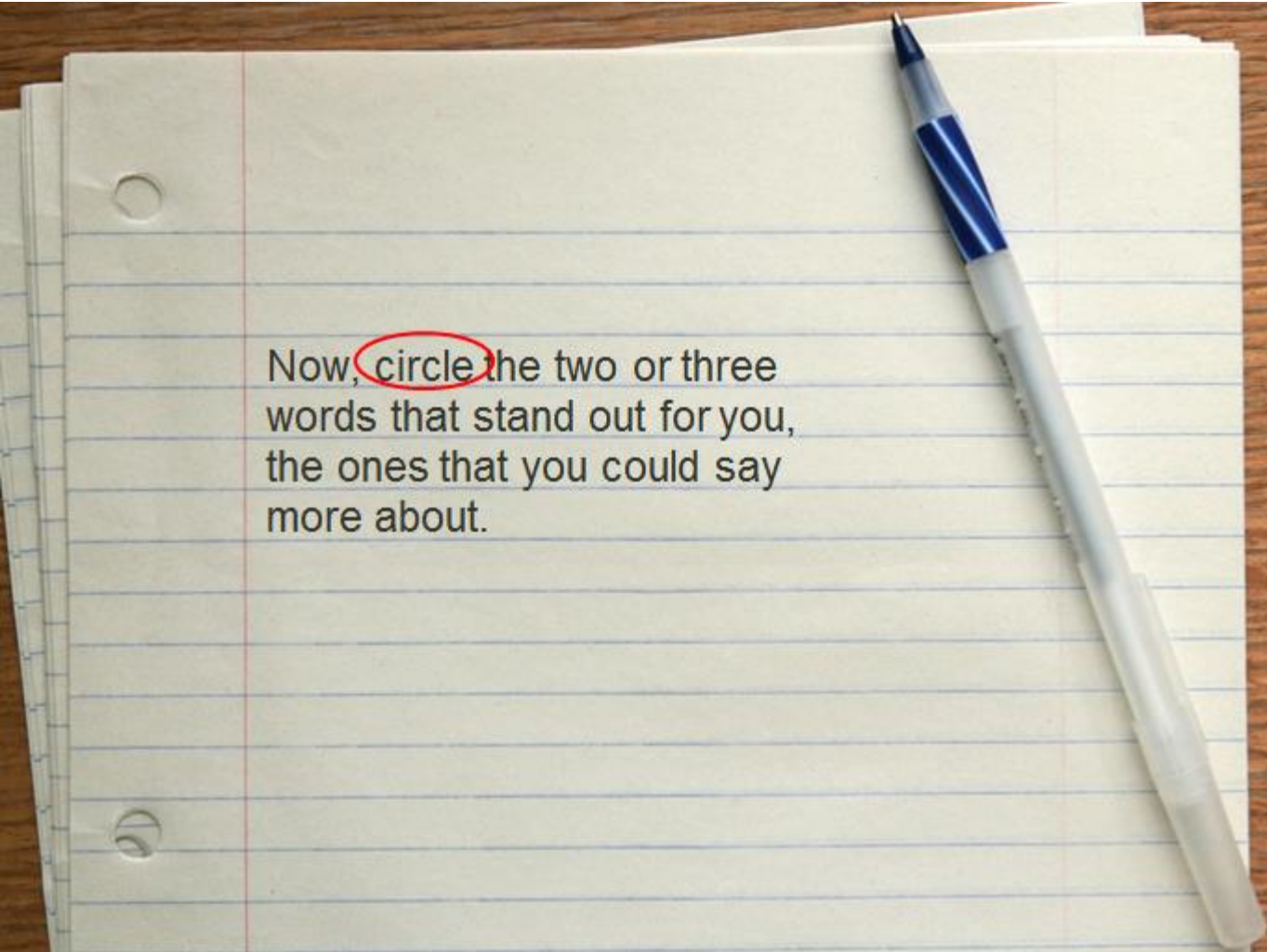
Creative Writing

Start with a list

List as many words, topics, memories, or personality traits as you can about yourself – activities you do, items, belongings, places you like, and feelings you have. Don't edit, cross out, change, or rewrite words. Don't worry about spelling – **just write**. You are going for quantity, so write as much as you can in about three minutes. You should fill at least one full page.

Step 1: Example List:

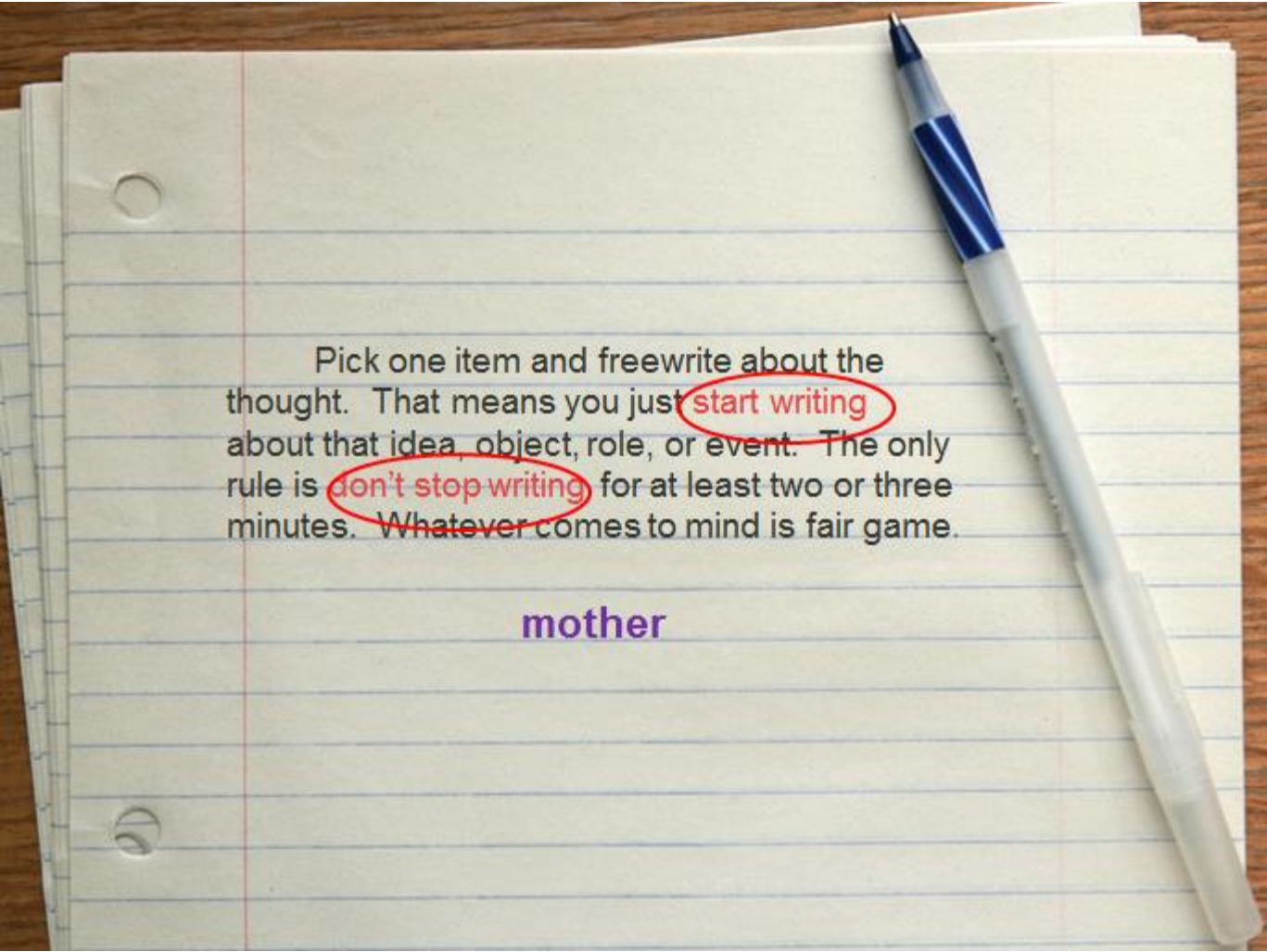
- Laughing, runner, cake with icing, one of 13 siblings, Philadelphia, married, Frank and Scout, happy, caring, blue, red, pizza, cleaning, thin, teacher, coach, cats, good friend, stick shift, Florida, reading, Pulitzer Prize winning novels, empathy, fall, hiking, yardwork, gardening, crazy family, no cooking, organized, middle age, fun, laid back



Now, circle the two or three
words that stand out for you,
the ones that you could say
more about.

Step 2: Example

- Laughing, runner, cake with icing, one of 13 siblings, Philadelphia, married, Frank and Scout, happy, caring, blue, red, pizza, cleaning, thin, writer, teacher, coach, cats, good friend, stick shift, Florida, reading, Pulitzer Prize winning novels, empathy, fall, hiking, yardwork, gardening, crazy family, no cooking, organized, middle age, fun, laid back



Pick one item and freewrite about the thought. That means you just **start writing** about that idea, object, role, or event. The only rule is **don't stop writing** for at least two or three minutes. ~~Whatever~~ comes to mind is fair game.

mother

Step 3: Free write

- I played my first sport when I was in the 7th grade. I joined the track team. I was pretty good at it, and was named captain that year. After that, I joined the field hockey team, basketball team and in high school, joined the swim team. I also was a diver and played one year of girls lacrosse. I liked being active because it gave me something to do. Since our family didn't have much money, it gave me a place to prove that I was more than an income.

Step 3: Cont.

- I played field hockey in college, but didn't become an avid runner until 10 years ago. I got an ipod shuffle and decided that I wanted to start running long distance races. Since then, I have run over 70 races. Some I did very well in, some were pure torture. Most people think running is easy, you just run. However, it takes more mental strength than anything I have ever done. To convince myself to keep going, don't give up, no breaks and do this for over 2 hours, can be the biggest challenge. When I run, even if I am slow, I realize that I am stronger than I give myself credit for.

Synthesize

- As a result of your free write, you have a sense of your topic. Synthesize, combine the individual elements into an understandable whole, into a phrase of what your topic means to you.

Synthesize step 3

- The topic of running started out as an activity, that ultimately became a continuous challenge.

Step 4: 6 Word Memoir

- Now, using your topic, create a 6 word memoir!
- Example:
- Running makes me strong and confident.

Step 5: Memoir paragraph

- Using your 6 word memoir, create a paragraph that discusses the topic in detail.

Step 5 Example

- Being a runner has pushed me to limits I would not have thought I could do. Running races in the pouring rain, only to finish and not have any dry clothes to change into. Running in the snow, while flakes land and freeze on my eyelashes. Running when it is so hot that my clothes need to be wrung out and the salt is dripping off of me. Running has made me tougher not because I developed strong muscles and ran faster. But, because I faced all of those elements while many gave up before leaving the couch.