



# Introduction to Graduate School Writing

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“I can’t write.”

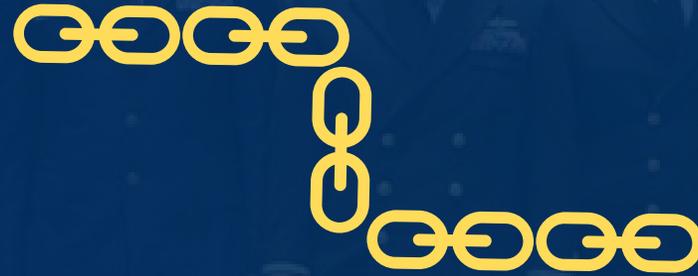
# A writer's job

## Your knowledge

Military / government expertise

Reading, classwork

Research, experimentation



## Your stakeholders

Servicemembers / coworkers

Policymakers

Academics, future researchers





“I can’t write.”

REBUILDING THE NARRATIVE

# You **can** write

AT THE GRADUATE LEVEL

1. Have something to say.
2. Know how to say it.



## 1. Have something to say



FIND A PROBLEM OR A GAP



READ & EVALUATE



DEVELOP & TEST AN IDEA

## 2. Know how to say it



LEARN THE LINGO



JOIN THE CONVERSATION



ORGANIZE & CLARIFY EVIDENCE



# You can write

AT THE GRADUATE LEVEL

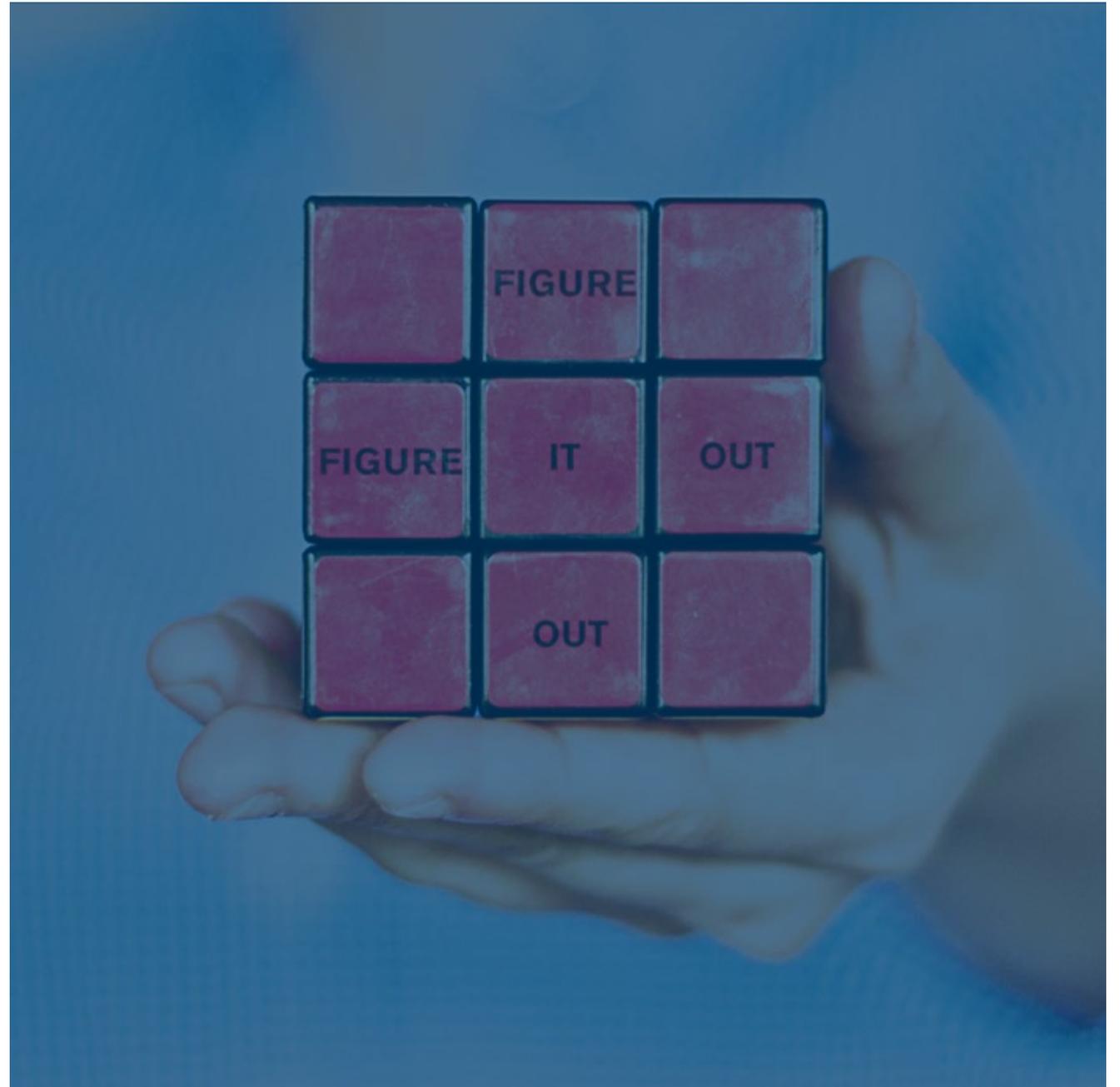
1. Have something to say.

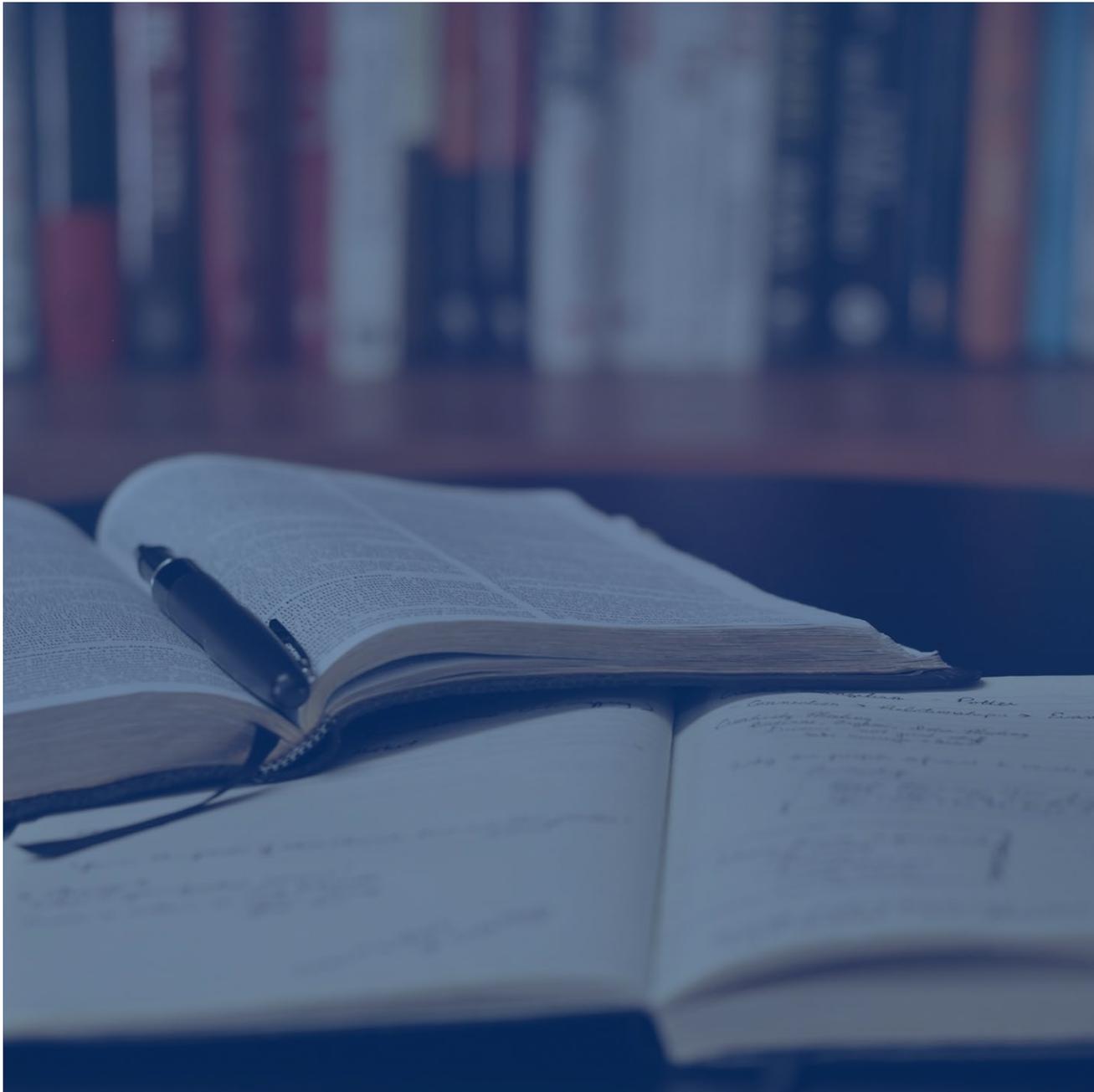




## Find a problem / gap

- What is a problem you and others in your field face?
- How can you add to, improve upon, or delve deeper?
- Be specific / narrow.





## Read & evaluate

- Read what others have written/are writing.
- Understand it.
- Talk about it.
- Evaluate it.
- Question it.
- *Write about it.*





# Develop & test an idea

- Read some more.  
Write some more.
- Talk to colleagues about their experiences and needs.
- Think about how you can help.
- Make a plan. Does it hold up to research and experimentation?
- Develop recommendations.  
Suggest follow-on research.



# You can write

AT THE GRADUATE LEVEL

2. Know how to say it.

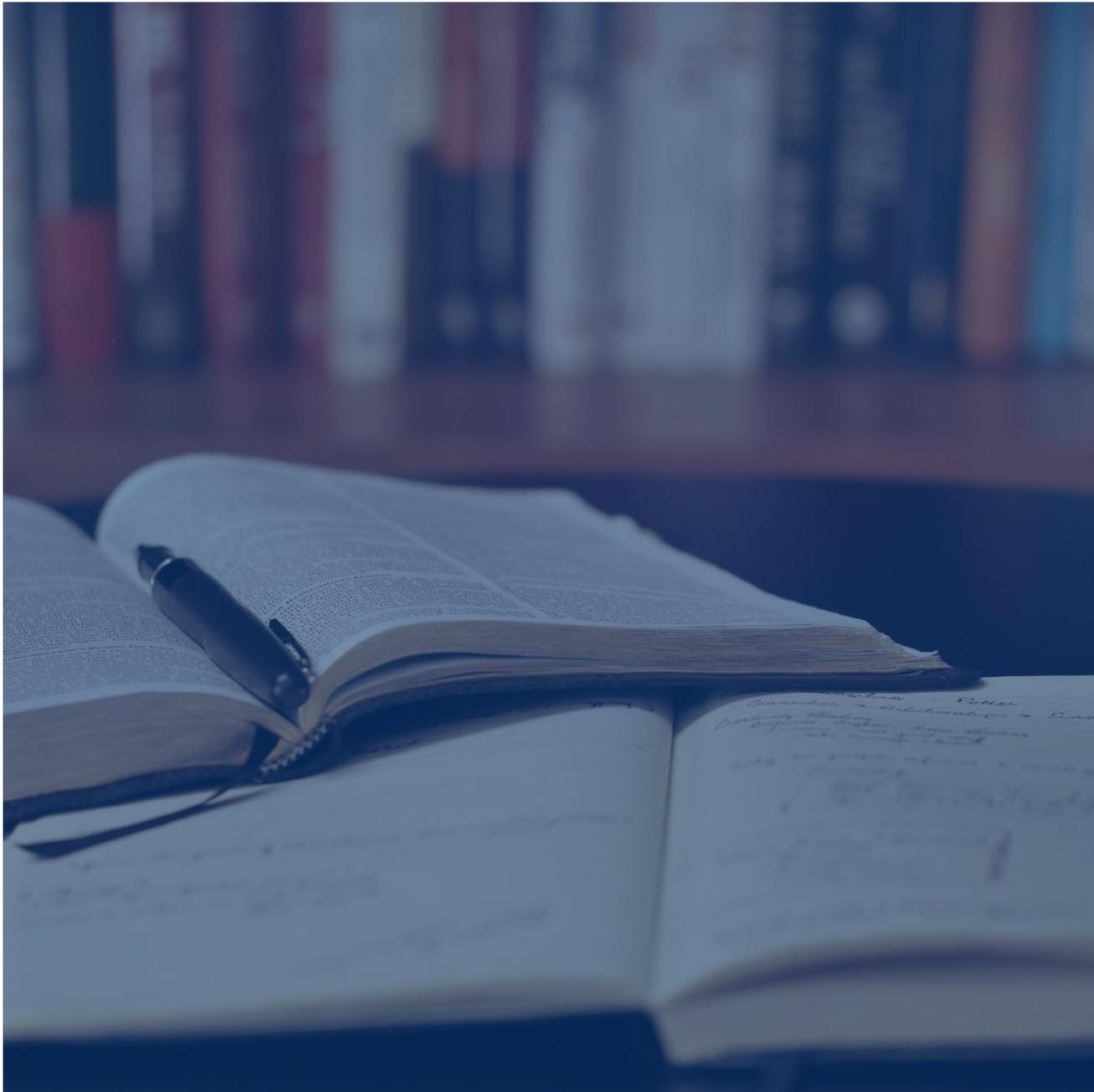


# Inventing the University

“[Students] have to invent the university by assembling and mimicking its language, finding some compromise between idiosyncrasy, a personal history, and the requirements of the convention, the history of a discipline.”

—David Bartholomae





## Learn the lingo

- You are becoming a subject matter expert and academic.
- Code switch: translate your expertise into the language of the academy.
- When reading, pay attention to conventions (e.g., citation style).
- But clarity and your audience come first.





# Join the conversation

- Cite others.
- Agree and disagree.
- Show how what you have to say fits in.





## Organize & clarify evidence

- Outline: put your main points into a logical order for your audience.
- Use academic paper format (headings, roadmaps, topic sentences).
- Be upfront.



# You **can** write

AT THE GRADUATE LEVEL

Be clear.

Be concise.

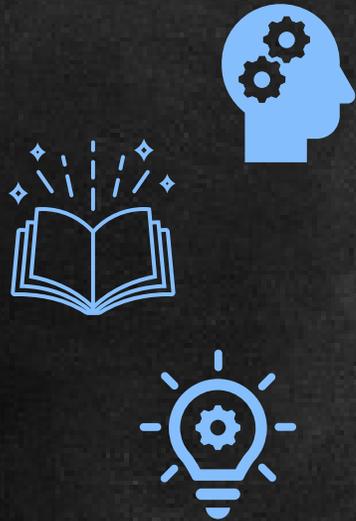
Follow this formula:





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# Graduate Writing



## Content

- Your expertise
- Your experience
- Your context
- Your reading
- Your evidence
- Your educated opinion

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## Form

- Title, headings
- Your field's conventions
- Organized evidence
- Clear language
- Concise language
- Citations



