System

Definition

1. A system is a bunch of parts that work together and that do more together then then can on their own.
    - Systems thinking is looking at things as parts working together, seeing the whole and the parts (seeing processes, holistic function, connections, ,etc.).
    - A system is made up of these elements:
        a. Components (parts, can be subsystems)
        b. Boundary (of the system, you define this anywhere you want)
        c. Inputs
        d. Outputs
        e. Function (what the system does)

Why It Matters

1. Thesis and theory are closely connected ideas. A good thesis will reflect rigorous and systematic thinking, it will be theoretical.
    a. To do "systematic thinking" you need to know what a system is.
    b. Systems thinking provides a model. We will explore what a model is more later.
2. Your papers must explain something. Your papers must focus on one (and only one) thesis.
    a. One way to explain is with systems thinking.
3. The writing process helps you focus on a thesis and helps you fully develop, or explain, the thesis.
    a. Writing itself is a system.
    b. Writing is also a subsystem of a bigger system.
    c. Applying systems thinking to writing makes you a better writer.
        i. ***"Writing is thinking made visible."*** – Juno Pappas

How to Use It

1. Look at the whole.
2. Break it into parts.
3. Understand how the parts work together.
4. Then explain it. You do this by writing.
5. Systems thinking helps you "chunk" out the analysis and the writing.