



Prompt: Should ranchers in Montana kill the Western Hognose Snake?

**Brainstorm**

**HOW TO TEACH STUDENTS TO BRAINSTORM**

Simple Brainstorm Fill-in 

**Step 1:** I am writing a(n) argumentative text for ranchers in MT  
(type of text) (audience)  
about Western Hognose Snakes  
(topic)

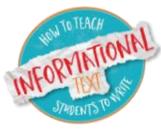
**Step 2:** Here are my top ideas on Western Hognose Snakes :  
(topic)  
- eat mice + toads - play dead; docile  
- non-venomous - rarely bite  
- declining population

**Step 3:** Here are my four best ideas on the Western Hognose snake :  
(topic)  
- declining population - eat mice + toads  
- rarely bite - non-venomous

**Step 4:** Do I have enough information to start writing about the Western Hognose ?  
(topic)  
 Yes  
 No  
If I don't, then I need to go back to Steps 2 and 3 and brainstorm more ideas.

**Step 5:** What is the best order for my ideas from Step 3?  
Idea 1: helpful- eat mice + toads  
Idea 2: non-venomous  
Idea 3: rarely bite  
Idea 4: declining population

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### Thesis Statement

#### Concessions and Reasons

**HOW TO TEACH STUDENTS TO WRITE A THESIS STATEMENT**

Write a Thesis Statement with Concessions and Reasons

Even though <sup>(insert Step 6 response)</sup> many snakes can be dangerous and cause problems for ranchers, <sup>(insert Step 2 response)</sup> Western Hognose snakes should not be killed.

Also, <sup>(insert Step 3 response)</sup> the Western Hognose snake is non-venomous, <sup>(insert Step 4 response)</sup> they rarely bite

and <sup>(insert Step 5 response)</sup> they often are docile rather than aggressive.

### Content Map

#### Simple Content Map

**HOW TO TEACH STUDENTS TO CONTENT MAP**

Simple Content Map Fill-in

My topic is: Don't kill the Western Hognose Snake

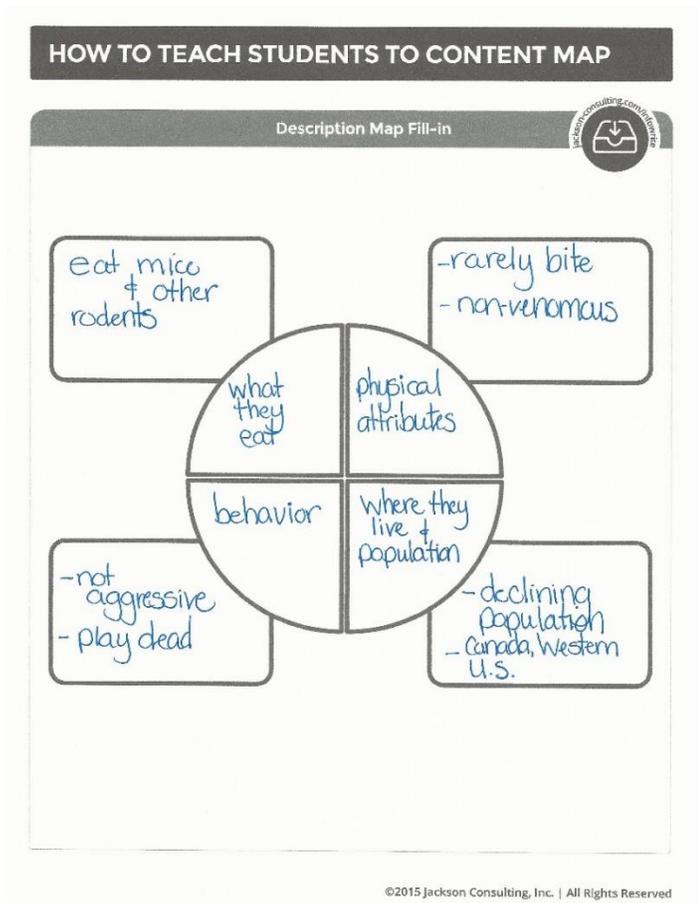
My best ideas in order are:

- Idea #1 Declining population in Montana and other regions
- Idea #2 They eat rodents
- Idea #3 They are not threats to ranchers or livestock
- Idea #4 They avoid ranchers and livestock

<p><b>Idea #1</b></p> <p>Details/Fact 1: <u>rarely found in MT</u></p> <p>Details/Fact 2:</p>	<p><b>Idea #2</b></p> <p>Details/Fact 1: <u>Eat mice + other rodents that are pests to ranchers</u></p> <p>Details/Fact 2:</p>
<p><b>Idea #3</b></p> <p>Details/Fact 1: <u>rarely bite</u></p> <p>Details/Fact 2: <u>are non-venomous</u></p>	<p><b>Idea #4</b></p> <p>Details/Fact 1: <u>they are docile + play dead</u></p> <p>Details/Fact 2: <u>they are non-aggressive</u></p>

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Description Map



**Organize Ideas**

Introduction

- [Attention grabbing opener]
- Do you realize that the Western Hognose Snake is afraid of you and your livestock?
- You should not kill the Western Hognose Snake if you come across one on your ranch!
- Western Hognose snakes are helpful snakes!
- [Thesis]
- Even though many snakes can be dangerous and cause problems for ranchers, Western Hognose snakes should not be killed.

First Characteristic

- [Topic Sentence] In Montana and many other regions the Western Hognose Snake is declining in population.
- They are rarely found in Montana



Second Characteristic

- [Topic Sentence] The Western Hognose snake is a helpful snake to ranchers.
- They eat rodents

Third Characteristic

- [Topic Sentence] Western Hognose snakes are not a threat to ranchers or livestock.
- They rarely bite.
- They are non-venomous if they do bite.
- A person or animal would not get poisoned if this snake bit them.
- They play dead and are docile.
- They are non-aggressive snakes.

Conclusion

Ranchers should not kill the Western Hognose snake if they find one on their ranch and around their livestock.

**Develop a Topic**

**HOW TO TEACH STUDENTS TO DEVELOP A TOPIC**

**Simple Develop a Topic Checklist**

Make a checkmark next to everything you added:

Details       Quotes  
 Definitions       Descriptions  
 Summaries

**Step 1**  
Go back and check to see where you can include more information to improve your writing.

**Step 2**  
Ask yourself: Do I have enough details in my writing?  
 If so, do you need to add more? Or can you move to Step 3? *move on*  
 If not, what is one detail that you could add?

**Step 3**  
Ask yourself: Do I have definitions in my writing?  
 If so, do you need to add more? Or can you move to Step 4? *add more*  
 If not, what is one word that needs defining? *non-venomous, docile*

**Step 4**  
Ask yourself: Do I have a summary in my writing?  
 If so, do you need to add another? Or can you move to Step 5? *move on*  
 If not, what should you summarize?

**Step 5**  
Ask yourself: Do I include quotes in my writing?  
 If so, do you need to add more? Or can you move to Step 6? *move on*  
 If not, what quotes should you include?

**Step 6**  
Ask yourself: Do I include descriptions in my writing?  
 If so, do you need to add more? Or are you done? *done*  
 If not, what points need more description?

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## Completed Essay

Western Hognose snakes are helpful snakes! Even though many snakes can be dangerous and cause problems for ranchers, Western Hognose snakes should not be killed. There are several reasons these snakes should be allowed to reside on your ranch. They are non-venomous, non-aggressive snakes that are docile. Additionally, they are declining in population in Montana.

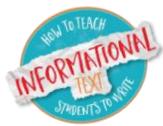
First, the population of the Western Hognose snake is declining. They are rarely found in Montana. One reason may be that they look similar to the Rattlesnake. Mistaken for being a Rattlesnake has caused many undeserving deaths.

Snakes that eat rodents are helpful to ranchers. The Western Hognose eats mice and other rodents. Mice often get into food for livestock and cause other problems for ranchers such as illnesses cause by their droppings.

Beyond being helpful by eating rodents, the Western Hognose snake is docile, or passive, in behavior. It will play dead and is non-aggressive. That means it would rather lay still until the threat is gone instead of turn and bite like Rattlesnakes do. Even if they do bite, which they rarely do, they are non-venomous. Non-venomous means that someone or something that gets bit doesn't die. A person could have an allergic reaction, but that's not very common either.

Ranchers should not kill the Western Hognose snake if they find one on their ranch and around their livestock. As I have said they are non-aggressive, helpful snakes.





### Revise, Edit and Proofread

## HOW TO TEACH STUDENTS TO REVISE, EDIT AND PROOFREAD

### Simple Student Checklist for Revising, Editing and Proofreading



#### Step 1 Revise

**Purpose: To look at and fix up the big picture of my writing**

- I stayed on the topic that matched the writing prompt
- I have an opening statement or sentence that tells what I'm writing about
- I have included important details that tell more about my topic
- I have a concluding statement or sentence

#### Step 2 Edit

**Purpose: To look at and fix up my wording**

- When I read my writing aloud, it doesn't sound choppy
- I used words like "finally," "next" or "then" to give my reader the clue that I was making a new point or closing my essay
- I have used vocabulary words that help explain my topic

#### Step 3 Proofread

**Purpose: To make my writing look professional**

- I have spell-checked
- I have checked my spacing
- I have used my best handwriting or typing
- I have read my piece aloud one last time asking myself, "Does it make sense?"