

I
II

Preread: Write for College 038-039
Annotate = C/B, Q, I/E, Comm

III

Revising First-Stage Drafts

As you revise a first-stage draft, concentrate primarily on the main points you want to make. Consider your focus: Are you following the assignment as your instructor has explained it? Have you narrowed your topic so that you can express it briefly in a topic sentence? Have you arranged your examples logically and thoroughly explained them? Does your last sentence link to your topic sentence and make a final point?

The following questions will help you as you begin revising your first draft.

1. Have you discussed several examples (steps, groups, causes or effects, or the like)? To fully develop your paragraph, you will need several points to expand the main idea stated in your topic sentence.
2. How effective is your ~~topic sentence~~? Your topic sentence has two functions: to identify and limit the topic. Let the reader know what your paragraph will explore, sometimes by including a forecasting statement. Also, use specific language wherever possible.

VAGUE TOPIC SENTENCE	Restaurants don't always make a lot of money.
FOCUSED TOPIC SENTENCE	The Olive Garden where I work is losing business for three reasons.

3. Have you arranged your main examples, steps, groups, or causes or effects by space, time, or importance? If you are explaining a process or telling a story, you will order the steps by time; otherwise, arranging by order of importance is usually the best method.

4. Have you written a ~~topic sentence~~ to introduce each main example, step, group, cause or effect, or point of comparison or contrast? While not all paragraphs use subtopic sentences, many do, and they can strengthen your paragraph in several ways. Subtopic statements guide your readers, they guide you, and they create emphasis.

5. Are your main examples well developed? Each major point that you introduce for your readers should be thoroughly detailed and explained. Specific words, sensory details, active verbs, -ing words, dialogue, descriptions of setting and people, and comparisons can all help. Practice the principle of layering examples, becoming increasingly specific.

6. Are your examples relevant (pp. 46-48)? Avoid examples that might be interesting but nevertheless distract from the main point.

7. How well connected are sentences within the paragraph (pp. 53-59)? First drafts usually need more transitions for adding material (*also, in addition*), giving examples (*for instance, for example*), and emphasizing points (*in particular, especially*). For overall coherence, remember to use the other connectors as well: repeat words, synonyms, pronouns, and references to main ideas.

8. How effective is your concluding sentence (pp. 49-53)? Your final sentence should use a connector, refer back to the topic sentence, and expand the main idea of the paragraph. While drafting, if you decided that an idea seemed out of place in the body, the idea might make a good expanded thought in the conclusion.

FOCUSED TOPIC SENTENCE	The Olive Garden where I work is losing business for three reasons.
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FOCUSED CONCLUDING SENTENCE	If the Olive Garden management would eliminate or even reduce these causes, business would quickly increase.
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Visit your college's writing center for assistance in revising your drafts.



For more on subtopic sentences, see pp. 138-139 and the student models in Unit Two.

C/B
Q
I/E
Comm

hs

transitions

Thesis Statement

Topic Sentence(s)
for each section

HINT

For more on layering examples, see Chapters 3 and 7.

HINT

For questions on revising a first-stage draft of a descriptive paragraph, see p. 95. For revising a narrative paragraph, see pp. 124-125. For revising an illustration paragraph, see pp. 154-155.

→ MOST IMPORTANTLY → Does EVERYTHING relate to your THESIS STATEMENT? (I.e. Wiesel's purpose writing Night.) Each section answer "So what?"

III

final now, or you may still need to address major content and organization concerns. If at this point you are comfortable with most of the content of your draft, you can focus on word- and sentence-level revision. The following question will help you find problems in your second-stage drafts for all paragraph assignments in Unit Two.

1. Have you used specific language (pp. 75–76)? Your paragraph will include both general and specific words, but remember that specific words sharpen an image. You could sharpen the focus on “old clothes” by saying “old blue jeans and a baggy KU Jayhawks sweatshirt.”
2. Have you developed sensory details thoroughly? Description and narration thrive on sensory details (sight, sound, touch, smell, taste), but all writing can benefit from them. Revise your sentences using the five senses, without relying too much on sight. Which of the following sentences creates a sharper image?

- A. A dessert eaten by a campfire tastes better than one eaten at home.
- B. The hot, white, melting marshmallows fresh from the fire stick to my fingers and almost burn me as I pop them too quickly into my mouth.

Revise your own sentences to add sensory details wherever they will help.

3. Are you choosing “active” verbs to describe action? Verbs that show action are usually a better choice than more “static” verbs (*be*, *do*, *have*, and *make* are common culprits). Which of the following sentences creates the sharper image?

- A. The children are having a good time bowling.
- B. The small children are jumping, clapping, and screaming as their balls hit the pins.

Revise your own sentences to add active verbs wherever they are needed.

4. Are you using any *-ing* words? (See Chapter 24.) Present participles (verb forms with an *-ing* ending) can also convey action. Which of the following sentences creates the sharper image?

- A. I can hear the trees move.
- B. I can hear the leaves rustling and branches brushing against each other.

Revise your own sentences, adding *-ing* words wherever they are needed.

5. Are the sentences in your paragraph varied in length? (See Chapter 19.) Your writing can be more interesting when you vary the length of your sentences. After polishing word choices, count the words in each sentence. If you find that more than three or four sentences in a row are roughly the same length, either combine two of them or divide a longer one.
6. Are the beginnings of your sentences varied? If even two sentences in a row in your draft begin with the same word, such as *the*, you might need to change an opening or combine sentences to break up the pattern. Also look for too many similar openings, even if the sentences are not together.
7. Have you repeated a word or phrase so often that it becomes noticeable? While some repetition is fine, too much becomes boring. Compare the following sentences. Which sounds repetitive?

- A. I like to spend time at the pond because the pond is a relaxing place. Of all the ponds I have visited in the last 20 years, this pond is the one that will forever live in my memory.
- B. I like to spend time outdoors in relaxing surroundings, and there is one place in particular that I enjoy. Of all the ponds I have visited in the last 20 years, this is the one that will forever live in my memory.

Revise your own sentences to cut or replace words that are repeated too often.

8. Have you included words that serve no purpose? Cluttered writing can bore and confuse, whereas concise writing involves readers and clarifies ideas. Which of the following sentences is concise, and which is cluttered?

- A. The meat hotdogs, long and thin, sizzle with a sizzling sound as they cook, roasting, and drip meaty hotdog juices off the end of the wooden stick.

Avoid stacking modifiers in front of words—for example, “a sleek, shiny, turbocharged, gas-guzzling black Mustang.”

HINT

For more on active verbs, see Chapter 24.

www.hemingwayapp.com
(no spaces, no word)

HINT

For more on unnecessary repetition and unneeded words

KILL ALL ADVERBS

CUT THE FAT