

REVISING AND EDITING

The most important steps in writing your paper

WHAT IS REVISING AND EDITING?

- **Revising** is rethinking, reorganizing, and rewriting your draft to add and subtract information and improve clarity and organization.
- **Editing** is correcting grammar and punctuation mistakes and improving word choices.

PREPARE TO REVISE AND EDIT:

After you finish your draft:

- **Put it aside for one day.** This will give you fresh eyes.
- **Reread your instructions** to make sure you addressed the essay question(s).
- **Read your essay beginning to end** (in your mind or out loud) so that you hear each sentence and listen for errors.

REVISION CHECKLIST:

Introduction:

- has an interesting and engaging hook
- gives sufficient background information
- introduces any author(s) and text(s) under discussion
- has an arguable, specific thesis statement that responds to the essay question

Body:

- each paragraph has a topic sentence that indicates its main point and supports the thesis
- each paragraph has enough evidence and discussion to support its topic sentence
- body paragraphs are arranged in an effective order
- all topic sentences work together like a summary of your essay

Conclusion:

- first sentence recalls the thesis but without repeating it word-for-word
- the main points of your essay are summarized, leaving the reader feeling that the essay is complete
- you may state further implications and insights, or raise questions related to your topic

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Continued

EDITING CHECKLIST:

References:

- titles of articles, short stories, poems, essays, webpages, and online videos are in quotation marks
- titles of books, plays, films, newspapers, and magazines are in italics or underlined
- citations are written consistently in an acceptable citation style (such as MLA or APA)

Formatting:

- all proper nouns, headings, and the title of your paper are capitalized
- pages are double spaced in a standard font with page numbers, if needed
- title page, essay, and bibliography are formatted according to MLA or APA

Language:

- the style of language is formal and academic: no casual language, slang, or contractions
- vague, simple, and exaggerated words have been replaced with clearer, more specific word choices
- any unnecessary or repetitive words have been cut
- commonly confused words ('than' for 'then') have been checked

Sentences and Punctuation:

- all sentences are complete, containing a subject and a verb and expressing a complete idea
- run-on sentences (two or more sentences written as one) have been corrected
- long, unclear sentences have been divided into simpler sentences or rewritten
- punctuation has been checked: every sentence ends in a period and commas are all in place
- transitional words are used to connect ideas and help sentences flow

Grammar:

- pronouns refer back to specific nouns and match them in number, person, and gender
- subjects match verbs in number and person
- present tense is used to discuss author's ideas, current events, and fictional stories
- past tense is used to describe historical events
- prepositions (to, with, in, etc.) match the verb or phrase with which they are used

For more information, contact the Academic Skills Centre.