

# Revising

When you finish writing your essay, you should revise it. After you revise it, you may need to return to either of the previous stages (prewriting or writing) to make improvements to your writing. For example, you may need to do more brainstorming if you don't have enough ideas to write about. You also may need to do additional drafting if you decide to delete one of your body paragraphs.

Many people divide the revising stage into revising and editing. **Revising** focuses on making changes to improve the clarity of your ideas and organization. **Editing** focuses on making changes to improve the clarity of your grammar. Revising should be completed before editing so that you do not spend time fixing the grammar in sentences you may delete when you begin revising.

## Self-check

You should always read through your essay to identify mistakes you have made. As you revise your own work, you may need to add, delete, or move text. Write down or mark anything about your essay that you want to ask a friend/tutor to help you with.

### Here is a general list of questions you can use to check your essays:

1. Does the introduction provide the general information a reader needs in order to understand the topic?
2. Does the introduction end with an effective thesis? Does it match the style of the essay?
3. Do each of the body paragraphs begin with an effective topic sentence?
4. Are the body paragraphs sequenced in a logical order?
5. Look at each body paragraph. Do the supporting sentences support the topic sentence?
6. Look at each body paragraph. Are the supporting sentences sequenced in a logical order?
7. Look at each body paragraph. Is there enough development? Are there more details or examples that would help the reader?
8. Look at each body paragraph. Does the concluding sentence close the paragraph logically?
9. Does the conclusion paragraph start by restating the thesis?
10. Does the conclusion paragraph have a suggestion, prediction, or opinion at the end?

When you look for errors, you may be surprised how many errors you are able to identify on your own. Here are some strategies specific to proofreading your essay for errors in grammar and mechanics.

## Apply Strategies

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Start by simply reading through your essay for typos. Then look through your essay for basic grammar that you know well. For example, you can check to make sure every sentence has a subject and a verb (and that they agree).

Read your essay out loud. You may notice mistakes that you didn't see before.

Try to finish your drafting and revising with enough time to give yourself some distance from what you wrote. After you finish writing, do something active that doesn't involve writing and then come back to your essay and read through it again.

## Get feedback and make changes

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If you are not writing for a test, have a friend or a tutor review your writing. Then use the feedback you get to make changes.

## Understand coding symbols

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Many teachers use coding symbols like the following to mark specific types of errors. If your teacher uses codes, make sure you clearly understand what the codes mean and how to fix the error.

Symbol	Code
TRS	Transitions
WF	Word form
WC	Word choice
SV	Subject-Verb agreement
VT	Verb tense
TS	Topic sentence
TH	Thesis statement
CS	Concluding sentence
CL	Clarity
FR	Fragment
UN	Unity

<b>IR</b>	Irrelevant
<b>SS</b>	Supporting sentences
<b>RR</b>	Repetitive

## Exercises

### Exercise 1: Check your essay

*Remember to complete a self-check questions below for your essay before you ask someone for feedback. Good luck with your revisions!*

1. Does the introduction provide the general information a reader needs in order to understand the topic?
2. Does the introduction end with an effective thesis? Does it match the style of the essay?
3. Do each of the body paragraphs begin with an effective topic sentence?
4. Are the body paragraphs sequenced in a logical order?
5. Look at each body paragraph. Do the supporting sentences support the topic sentence?
6. Look at each body paragraph. Are the supporting sentences sequenced in a logical order?
7. Look at each body paragraph. Is there enough development? Are there more details or examples that would help the reader?
8. Look at each body paragraph. Does the concluding sentence close the paragraph logically?
9. Does the conclusion paragraph start by restating the thesis?
10. Does the conclusion paragraph have a suggestion, prediction, or opinion at the end?

### Exercise 2: Analyze and revise a body paragraph

*Read the student paragraph and answer the questions below to guide you in revising it. Write your revised paragraph on a piece of paper.*

The first thing that you should do to find a good book is to ask someone for a recommendation. They can help you if you do not know which book would be interesting to you. You can ask a sibling, your parents, your best friends, or your teachers. Friends or family with whom you have things in common can often recommend an excellent book. Also, small, local bookstores often have amazing recommendations. There are many people in the world who love reading. You should ask for recommendations to help you choose a good book.

1. Do the supporting sentences support the topic sentence?
2. Are the supporting sentences sequenced in a logical order?
3. Is there enough development? Are there more details/examples that would help the reader?
4. Does the concluding sentence close the paragraph logically?
5. Revise the body paragraph.



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