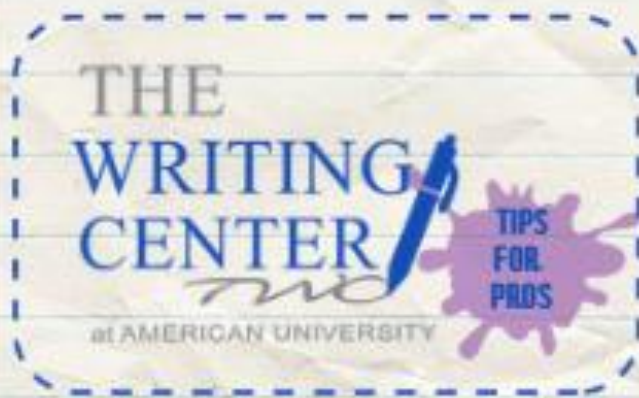




revising: lower-order concerns

style, grammar, sentence structure

If you are confident that you fulfilled the assignment's directions and your paper clearly explains your ideas, you can look at revising for lower-order concerns.

1) Read your paper out loud to yourself (or even better, to someone else).

2) Look for the following common pitfalls of style.

- a. Vocabulary that you're unsure of. If your phrasing doesn't feel comfortable to read out loud, it probably sounds clunky and awkward to the audience as well
- b. Passive voice. Notice where you can change "to be" verbs (like be, been, are, were, is) or "to have" verbs (have, had, having) to more active verbs. Example:
 - i. "The trial of Oscar Wilde had a large effect on Henry James' themes in *Turn of the Screw*." change to "After seeing the trial of Oscar Wilde unfold, Henry James wrote more about crimes of private life".
 - ii. "Women never having access to reproductive healthcare was a problem throughout the 20th century in Bolivia." change to "In Bolivia throughout the 20th century, legal systems prevented women from receiving reproductive healthcare".
- c. Avoid cliches, exaggerations, and everyday speech. Example:
 - i. "The Massachusetts state government has no idea what to do for disaster response now that climate change has increased frequency of weather-related disasters."
 - ii. "History has proven that governments usually end up ceding some power to revolutionaries".
 - iii. "Basically, the marketing of Stanley cups relies on Instagram influencers."
- d. Nominalization. This is the act of making verbs and adjectives into nouns. To find these, go through the clunkiest sentences in your paper and circle the nouns (people, places, things, concepts). If a sentence has more than two or three nouns, you probably need to rewrite some of them.

- i. The discovery of the SS Thistlegorm shipwreck was made in the 1950s by Jacques Cousteau. (This is also an example of passive voice! Nominalization and passive voice almost always occur together.) Change: “Jacques Cousteau discovered the remains of the SS Thistlegorm in the 1950s.”
- ii. “Readers often don’t appreciate the witty eloquence with which Charles Dickens described 19th-century living.” change to “Charles Dickens was a witty and eloquent writer, known for rich descriptions of 19th century life.”

3) Think about language options.

Wordy

Concise

The reason for

For the reason that

Due to the fact that

Owing to the fact that

Considering the fact that

On the grounds that

Because, since, why

Despite the fact that

Regardless of the fact that

Although, even though

In the event that

If it should happen that

Under circumstances in which

If

On the occasion of

In a situation in which

Under circumstances in which

When

As regards

In reference to

With regard to

Concerning the matter of

About

It is crucial that
It is necessary that
There is a need/necessity for
It is important that

Must, should

Is able to
Is in a position to
Has the opportunity to
Has the capacity for
Has the ability to

Can

It is possible that
There is a chance that
It could happen that
The possibility exists for

May, might, can, could

Prior to
In anticipation of
Subsequent to
Following on
At the same time as
Simultaneously with

Before, when, as, after