



Revision Strategies

Why is revision important?

Revision is the most critical step in the writing process. Unlike proofreading, revision is not simply checking grammar and punctuation, but rather re-seeing your paper and making any necessary changes to best connect with your audience. During the revision stage, writers should focus on global concerns like development, organization, connection, and flow.

Using a Revision Checklist

One idea for revising your paper may be to create a revision checklist. Refer back to the assignment sheet or rubric your instructor provided to identify key elements for the checklist. Some elements may include a clear thesis, relevant topic sentences, and/or appropriate examples and support.

Sample Checklist

- Does the introduction give background information so that the reader understands the topic?
- Is there a clear thesis statement at the end of the introduction?
- Does each body paragraph have a clear topic sentence that introduces the paragraph's idea?
- Is there a transition between each paragraph?
- Does the conclusion restate the main idea and summarize the key points?
- Does the paper use a professional, scholarly voice throughout?
- Are all sources are cited in the appropriate style both in the body of the paper and on the works cited or reference page?

What if I need help with **editing**, too?





Reading Out loud

Reading your paper out loud to yourself is a simple and easy revision technique. **Reading out loud allows you to hear how your paper flows** from sentence to sentence and paragraph to paragraph. It also makes it easier to hear when ideas or sentences become confusing to the reader.

Making a Reverse Outline

Creating a reverse outline helps you to identify the main ideas of your writing and see if they are organized in a way that makes sense. To make a reverse outline, start by writing your thesis at the top of your paper or on a separate sheet. Then, read through your paper paragraph by paragraph. As you go along, jot down the main idea of each section of your paper. After you have completed this process for each part of your paper, take a moment to analyze the structure of your outline. Do all of your ideas make sense together? Do they flow logically? Does each of these ideas connect back to the main idea or thesis? Are there any gaps in your paper or points you need to fill in?

Reorganizing Your Writing

Start by deleting all of the transitions in your paper. Then print your draft and cut out each paragraph. Mix the paragraphs up, then try to reorder them in as many ways as possible. Tip: if you're having trouble, ask friend to try and re-order the paragraphs. Why did your friend choose the order they did? How might you change the order of your own writing to reflect your reader's expectations? Recreate your draft based on the new organization of your draft, and of course, don't forget to add new transitions.

Developing Your Draft

Try expanding your draft by taking into account additional viewpoints or counterpoints. Decide on two viewpoints that differ from your own, then draft at least a page on each, using research if necessary. Once you finish writing, look over the drafts to see what material you could use in your original paper. Is there another view point or idea you want to discuss or at least acknowledge?

Alternatively, you can also develop your draft by exploring any areas or topics in your writing which you believe need further support. As you work to revise your draft, consider what information your audience needs to know as well as what concepts they might not know. Once you have identified a topic you wish to develop, write that topic on the top of a sheet of paper and freewrite to generate further ideas. What new ideas emerged as you were freewriting? How could you incorporate these ideas into your paper to develop a stronger draft?

Further Assistance: For more detailed help or if you have questions, visit the Writing Center located in the Lewis University Library, or call 815-836-5427

Consulted: *Acts of Revision* by Wendy Bishop, Walden University, KU Writing Center, Trinity DC