

Revision is a big stage. Don't be surprised if you spend more time in this stage than drafting the original essay. **Revision** is about revising your ideas and information, not grammar or spelling yet. If a grammar mistake interferes with clarity and meaning, go ahead and fix it. But first your focus isn't on commas or spelling; it's on clarity and meaning. You'll tackle grammar mechanics last. Be prepared to go through multiple drafts before your essay is final.

Revision & Editing

Step 1A - Read your essay draft aloud to yourself

- You can go somewhere private to do this.
- As you read it, mark any parts that sound off to you. This could be words missing mid-sentence or unclear sentences. If you have to reread a sentence for it to make sense, you need to mark it for revision.
- Can someone follow your point or train of thought?
- Are your supporting sentences relevant to the body paragraph topic?
- Are your sentences in a logical order? Body paragraphs in emphatic order?
- Revised the marked areas.
- Once you've marked and corrected everything that sounds off to you, print the revised draft for your parent.

OR

Step 1B - Snip and Pin Instead

If you approached your first rough draft more as a freewrite with evidence, it may help to start with Snip & Pin editing first. See *The Writer's Jungle* pg 86 for details.

- Do the snip and pin for each of your body paragraphs.
- Rearrange your draft to reflect the new sentence order/paragraph structure.
- Now do Step 1A.

Note: Snip & Pin editing can be a good way to revise your essay even if you didn't approach the first draft as a freewrite. Feel free to try it.

Step 2 - Your parent steps in as editor

- Your parent reads aloud your draft EXACTLY how it's written. Sometimes when we read our own draft, we automatically insert a word we meant but accidentally left out. Because we know our own thoughts! We know what we mean, so we read it that way. This happens to every writer, even professionals. Someone else reading it aloud helps catch additional missing words or unclear ideas you missed on your own.
- Ask your parent to stop reading when you hear a part that needs revision. Mark it and have them keep reading to the end.
- Now revise any areas you found while they read it aloud. If it helps, explain your thoughts on the marked revisions to your parent, having them jot down your words exactly as you say and use those notes to revise the draft *in your words*.
- Print a new draft. Give it to your parent.
- Let your parent check for any sentences or points that may not yet be clear in your new draft. (Parent should read their teacher notes at this point.) Revise those areas. Print another draft.

Step 3 - Closely Analyze Your Body Paragraphs

1. Grab three highlighters, each a different color.
2. Use one color to highlight your topic sentence - the main point of the paragraph.
3. Use a second color to highlight your evidence - the paraphrased/summarized information, quotes, statistics. Any evidence that should be cited, highlight it in the second color.
4. Use a third color to highlight your own commentary, analysis or explanation of the evidence. These would be *your* thoughts and responses, not what you pulled in from research.

5. How does the paragraph look?

- Do the highlighted colors demonstrate a good balance of information in the paragraph: a clear topic, evidence, and your own commentary?
- Is there sufficient evidence but no commentary/explanation?
- Enough commentary but not enough cited evidence?
- Is a topic sentence missing?
- That's all okay! This is when you fix it.

If a paragraph lacked enough evidence, you may need to quickly do additional research to fill out that paragraph. Do that now before moving on with the rest of revision.

If it lacked enough of your commentary and/or analysis, these resources will help:

- Pull out your original freewrite from before researching. It may have sentences you can use as commentary.
- Expand the paragraph by including examples or explanations in your own words.
- Pull out your [Analyzing Quotes and Facts booklet](#) and follow the steps for clarifying and explaining your cited evidence.
 - The “**more ways to clarify/ explain**” pages in the booklet are helpful for expanding and adding your own insights/interpretation/application of the research you cited.
 - The Analysis Practice: Direct Quotes graphic organizer that comes with your Analyzing Quotes & Facts booklet may help too.
- They Say/I Say book, pages 43-51. Pay particular attention to pages 45-49. The sentence templates can be a jumping off point for your own analysis.
- They Say/I Say book, pages 53-65. These pages cover more sophisticated commentaries, such as disagreeing with the evidence, agreeing but with a difference, agreeing and disagreeing simultaneously, and being undecided. If you're ready for that level, go for it.

Add any new research and/or commentary needed. Print the revised draft.

Step 4 - Final Revisions

Now that your sentences flow well and you're happy with the overall essay structure, make sure you...

- **Add transition words/sentences as needed.**
 - In your paragraphs, where do you need to better connect your ideas?
 - H4HS pages 139-142 discuss transitions. Page 141 has specific suggestions for transition phrases.
 - The [MENSA transition words print out](#) is a thorough list.
- **Vary the way your sentences open.**
- **Check word choice**
 - See the PEN pages from The Writer's Jungle, pages 137-140
 - Swap out weak verbs for stronger ones. Here is [a website with helpful examples](#), especially how to avoid 'to be' verbs. Download a pdf version through the site.
 - Watch for sentences that begin with "There are/is," "There was/were," or "It is/was." See if you can strike them out of the sentence.
- **Check for plagiarism**
 - Make sure all paraphrased/summarized evidence is cited
 - Is it in your voice and your own words?
 - Use an online checker like [Turn It In](#) to be sure.
- **Create a Works Cited page**

EDITING

Now is the time to clean up grammar. Use your favorite grammar guide to help out.

PRINT YOUR FINAL DRAFT!

NOW CELEBRATE!