

# Revising and Proofreading

**Revising** should be done with any written work before submission. There are two main areas to look at when revising: **structure** and **grammar**.

## Structure

Most essays have a three-part structure. The three parts are the introduction, the body, and the conclusion.

### Introduction

The **introduction** is the part of the writing that introduces the essay and its main argument. The introduction should:

- be interesting enough to attract the reader's attention and interest
- tell the reader your main point – your thesis
- tell the reader what to expect (give an idea of the main points that will follow)

When revising an introduction, ask yourself:

- 1. Does the essay fulfill the assignment expectations? Are the questions in the assignment answered?*
- 2. Do I have a clear thesis?*

Things to avoid in the introduction are:

- apologizing for the topic or your opinion in the writing
- writing long personal things that interest you but not the reader
- saying things like, "the purpose of this essay is to..."

### Body

The **body** is the part of the essay that contains the main arguments and information.

**When revising the body of your essay, ask yourself:**

- *Does each paragraph have **one** subject or main idea? (If there is more than one main idea in a paragraph, split the ideas into separate paragraphs.)*
- *Does each paragraph fully support its main idea?*
- *Are the main ideas in each paragraph connected to my thesis?*

- *Have I used transitional words to link ideas together?* (Transitional words can be used to link sentences in the same paragraph together or at the beginning of a paragraph to connect two paragraphs. Some transitional words and phrases are: subsequently, consequently, equally, as a result, in addition)
- *Do I know the exact meaning of synonyms I have found in a thesaurus? Do they make sense in the context in which they are being used?*
- *Is it clear which antecedent a pronoun is referring to?*
- *Do all pronouns agree with their antecedents?*
- *Have I varied the way that quotes are used in the writing?*

<p><b>Some ways to introduce quotes are:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The author argues that “... ”</li> <li>○ According to the author, “... ”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Mr. Smith said, “... ”</li> <li>○ Mr. Smith mentioned, “... ”</li> <li>○ Mr. Smith suggested, “... ”</li> </ul>
---	--

## Conclusion

The **conclusion** is the part of the writing that talks briefly about the whole argument and main points. The conclusion should:

- be forceful
- be interesting enough to stimulate the reader
- make the reader think more about the topic.

**When revising a conclusion, ask yourself:**

1. *Have I summarized my main points?*
2. *Have I restated my thesis in different words?*

In the conclusion, do not introduce new points or ideas.

## Sentence Structure, Grammar & Syntax

**Read each sentence individually.**

*Do your sentences make sense? Do you use a variety of sentence structures?*

*Do your sentences clearly communicate full ideas?*

Grammar and syntax are the details that can improve your writing.

## Here are some rules for correct punctuation and grammar.

### 1. Commas

- Are used after words, phrases or clauses that introduce paragraphs or sentences.
- Are used before and after words or phrases that interrupt sentences.
- Are used to separate items in a list.

### 2. Semi-colons

- Are used to connect two independent clauses (full sentences)

### 3. Colons

- Are used to introduce an idea after the colon: a word, a list of words, or a quotation

### 4. Apostrophes

- Are used to show possession: Dan's bicycle

### 5. Verbs

- A subject and a verb must agree, either singular or plural
- Verb tenses should not change unless there is a good reason for them to

### 6. Articles

- Make sure all singular count nouns use an article (a, an, the) or a determiner (this, that, his, her)
- Make sure that when using "the" the noun that follows is specific and known to your reader

## Here are some tips that will help improve your syntax.

- Use coordinating conjunctions to connect clauses, phrases, or words to other clauses, phrases or words. (and, but, or, for, nor, so, yet)
- Use subordinate conjunctions to connect clauses to phrases and words, phrases to clauses and words, or words to clauses and phrases. (when, where, because, although)
- Use only as many words as are needed and avoid saying the same thing over and over.