

**WRIT 117**  
**Fall 2011**  
**Essay Revision**  
**Guide**  
© IQW

first →

**Schedule revision in calendar**  
\_ Set your own **deadlines** for revision  
\_ Schedule time for **outside help** (instructor conferences, Writing Center, peers, friends...)

and →

**Formulate revision plan**  
\_ Follow **flow chart** from beginning to end for thorough revision process  
**OR**  
\_ Revise specific aspects of the essay by following any "EXAMINE..." box.

Let's start

Examine the **structure** of the essay to determine if you need to **rearrange ¶ order, remove ¶s, or add new ¶s**. To do so, do the following:

- \_ Write a **topic** sentence for each ¶
- \_ Decide what **examples** go in each ¶
- \_ Determine how each ¶ helps **develop** the **thesis**
- \_ Show how each ¶ **speaks back** to the **thesis**
  - => determine if you **need** all the ¶s, which ones need to be discarded, what ¶s might need to be added
  - => **Develop** the ¶s
  - => **Rewrite** your working thesis statement

Once the overall structure of the essay is set, move on to the thesis statement

**EXAMINE THE OVERALL ESSAY STRUCTURE**



**EXAMINE THESIS STATEMENT**



\* Look at your **thesis statement** to make sure it is focused and anticipates the structure of the essay.  
To do so, **write** two additional **versions** of the thesis statement and choose the one (out of the three) you like the best.  
\_ Ask the following questions of your thesis: can this thesis be **justified** in a **800 word** essay? Does it speak specifically to the point I am trying to make in the essay?  
  
\* **If the thesis is not focused/ does not anticipate** essay structure, then  
  
\_ **Focus** thesis  
  **Narrow** thesis to speak to the essay specifically  
  **Broaden** thesis to speak to the essay specifically  
  => **Rewrite** thesis so it is focused  
  
\_ **Include** essay **structure** in focused thesis  
  Look at the different parts of the essay and figure out how they are parts of a whole  
  => **Rewrite thesis** to include the parts that create the whole  
  
When your thesis is specific and strong, move on to the introduction

to introduction



to introduction



**EXAMINE INTRODUCTION**

What **strategy** do you use for the intro?  
How does it help present your topic/argument?  
Does it engage the reader?  
**=> If introduction is strong, move on to individual ¶s**

If all ¶s seem strong and functional, move on to conclusion

**EXAMINE INDIVIDUAL PARAGRAPHS**

1  
Look at the **topic sentence** of the ¶: does it capture the main idea you present in the ¶?

2  
Focus on being **concrete** and **specific**: What **examples** do you use to make the idea in the ¶ concrete and specific?

3  
Look at the **analysis** you present in the ¶: how does it help you **advance the point** of your essay? Do you articulate that in the ¶?

5  
Examine the **transitions between** ¶s:  
\_ Do you establish a **link** at the end of the ¶ that **leads** into the next ¶?  
**OR**  
\_ Do you establish a **link** at the beginning of the ¶ that shows its **connection** to the previous ¶?

4  
Examine the **transitions inside the** ¶: do you use transition words to **link** one sentence with the other?  
**=> If not, use the transition handout** to write some transitions in



to conclusion



**EXAMINE THE CONCLUSION**

\_ What **strategy** do you use in the conclusion?  
\_ Do you **recap** the essay in the conclusion? If so, why do you do so?  
\_ Do you do **more** than recap the essay in the conclusion? If so, what is it?  
\_ Do you leave the reader with something to **think** about?  
\_ How can you make your conclusion **stronger**?  
*=> If conclusion is solid, move on to sentence level structure issues*

\_ Does your **title** speak to the **argument** you present in the essay?  
\_ Can you think of a **better/** more catchy/ more accurate title?  
*=> If title seems solid, move on to format*

**EXAMINE TITLE**

**EXAMINE FORMAT**

**EXAMINE SENTENCE LEVEL STRUCTURE**

Look for and correct the following issues:  
\_ **Run on** sentences  
\_ Sentence **fragments**  
\_ **Comma splices**  
\_ **Verb tense** consistency  
\_ **Subject-verb agreement**  
\_ **Pronouns** without close antecedents  
\_ **Spelling**  
~~= Get~~  
\_ **Passive voice**  
*If sentence structure issues seem to fare well, move on to the title*

\_ Do you have your **information** on the top left corner? = **name, course, assignment, and Fall 2010** in the first page of the essay.  
\_ Are your **pages numbered** (top right corner, different first page)?  
\_ Is your document **double-spaced**?  
\_ Do you use **Times New Roman pt12**?

\_ Is your essay around **800 words**?  
\_ Have you included a **Work(s) Cited** list with a bibliographical reference at the end of your essay **if** you are making **reference** to a reading from the Mercury Reader or other sources?  
*\_ TA DA!!*

**TURN IN YOUR ESSAY!**

Examine your **sentences**: if they are **choppy**, work on avoiding choppiness by blending sentences together and streamlining them

If the **sentences** are too **wordy**, work on reducing the number of words by simplifying sentence structure and streamlining them

3

1

2

3

1

2