

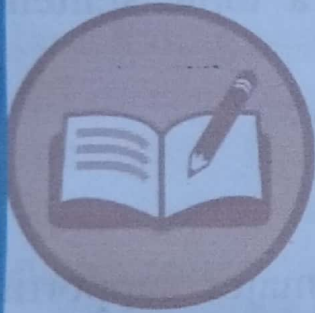
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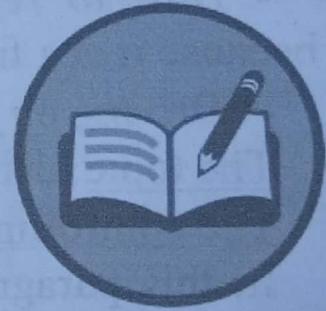
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Essay II

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EssayII 4. 2

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HELLO EVERYONE!

• *What is a topic sentence?*

The topic sentence consists of a topic and a controlling idea.

- *Smoking is harmful for several reasons.*

The topic: smoking

The controlling idea: is harmful for several reasons

The reasons that you will mention in your paragraph are called the supporting sentences.

Look at these sentences:

- *English has been influenced by other languages.*

- *Driving on freeways.* (Not a topic sentence because it is not complete)

The topic sentence should be complete. At least, you should have a subject and a verb.

- *How to register for college classes.* (Not a topic sentence because it is a fragment; it's not complete)

- *Driving on freeways requires skill and alertness.*

The topic: driving on freeways

The controlling idea: skill and alertness

In this paragraph, you write about skill as a major supporting sentence, and another major supporting sentence is about alertness.

You also write other sub-supporting sentences for the skill and other sub-supporting sentences for the alertness. At the end, you write the concluding sentence.

• *What is a concluding sentence?*

It is the same as the topic sentence but in a different way. You can comment or show your opinion in the concluding sentence.

Let us read the following example:

Gold, a precious metal, is prized for two important characteristics. First of all, gold has lustrous beauty that is resistant to corrosion. Therefore it is suitable for jewelry, coins, and ornamental purposes. Another important characteristic of gold is its usefulness to industry

and science. For many years, it has been used in hundreds of industrial applications, such as photography and dentistry. In conclusion, gold is treasured not only for its beauty but also for its utility.

Topic sentence: Gold, a precious metal, is prized for two important characteristics.

Topic: Gold

Controlling idea: two important characteristics

Supporting sentences: (1) First of all, gold has lustrous beauty that is resistant to corrosion.

(2) Another important characteristic of gold is its usefulness to industry and science.

Concluding sentence: In conclusion, gold is treasured not only for its beauty but also for its utility.

In the concluding sentence we paraphrased the topic sentence and kept the same idea. Two characteristics are mentioned in the concluding sentence: beauty and utility.

For each major supporting sentence we have minor supporting sentences. The minor supporting sentence "Therefore it is suitable for jewelry, coins, and ornamental purposes" supports the first major supporting idea which is the beauty of gold.

The second minor supporting sentence "For many years, it has been used in hundreds of industrial applications, such as photography and dentistry" supports the second major supporting idea which is the usefulness of gold.

- *Registering for college classes can be a frustrating experience for new students.*

Topic: registering for college classes

Controlling idea: frustrating experience for new students

Again, I will need to write a major supporting sentence and then minor supporting sentences. Then I write another major supporting sentence and minor supporting sentences. Finally I write the conclusion which is the same as the topic sentence but in a

different way.

• Do we use the topic sentence at the beginning of the paragraph all the time?

Usually, but not always, the topic sentence is the first sentence in the paragraph.

- Moving away from home can be a stressful experience for young people.

Topic: moving away from home

Controlling idea: stressful experience for young people

- A major problem of many students is the high cost of tuition and books.

Topic: a major problem of many students

Controlling idea: the high cost of tuition and books.

The concluding sentence signals the end of the paragraph. It leaves the reader with the most important ideas to remember. It can be done in two ways: by summarizing the main points of a paragraph, or by repeating the topic sentence in different words.

Let us start with page 243:

Revising Drafts

After you write a draft, you need to revise it.

Your first draft probably contains awkward or wordy sentences that reflect your initial attempt to get ideas on paper. After working with your thesis, organization, and paragraphing, you can focus on sentence structures and words choices that will make your writing more vivid and exact, more effective for the reader.

“Wordy sentences” is when you write many words to express a single idea. At first you concentrate on the ideas. The last step is to revise your paragraph in terms of grammar and punctuation. This is what we call *the product*.

You have to follow a process when you write. First we have brainstorming, then writing a first draft, revising the first draft, writing another draft, revising second draft, and finally editing.

The problem with most students is that they start with editing and they forget about the ideas. You need to organize your ideas first.

After focusing on your thesis, organization, and paragraphing, you can focus on sentence structures and word choices (vocabulary). This will make your writing more effective for the reader.

☞ Prefer Active Voice

The first piece of advice is to prefer active voice, not passive voice. We use the passive in research papers when we say for example that an experiment was carried out and the results were so and so.

Generally, avoid passive structures, because they make writing wordy and confusing. Active voice allows you to make vigorous and direct statements.

Vigorous: vivid, clear, full of meaning

Once you recognize a sentence as passive and decide to change it, you can create an active sentence by finding the doer (or inserting one) and turning the sentence around:

Passive	Active
Houses <u>were destroyed</u> by the storm.	The storm destroyed house.
The cake <u>was eaten</u> by me.	I ate the cake.

*

☞ Avoid It ... That Sentences

Some sentences wander aimlessly, taking too long to make a point and thus destroying the flow of ideas. These sentences often contain unnecessary *it ... that* construction:

It .. That	Revised
It is true that the dorms are no longer popular with juniors and seniors.	The dorms are no longer popular with juniors and seniors.

*

Let us see the next piece of advice:

✍ Eliminate Forms of Be and Other Weak Verbs

In first drafts, writers often choose constructions containing weak verbs, especially forms of *be* (am, is, are, was, were, been, being). But in a final draft a succession of be verbs can be vague and monotonous.

You can easily eliminate one use of be that wastes words and delays the action: the *there is* structure.

There Is	Revised
<u>There is</u> one camper who hates milk.	One camper hates milk.
<u>There was</u> a man lurking in the shadows.	A man lurked in the shadows.

*

You can eliminate other *be* verbs by making more specific choices. If you say that "the man was in the gym", your reader knows very little. Did he hang from the ceiling? Slump in a chair? Think of the different impressions you can create with *strolled*, *ambled*, and *limped along* to describe the man walking in the gym. Many writers pick the most obvious choice in the first draft but decide on more specific verbs as they revise.

*

✍ Eliminate Nominalization

To make your sentences more concise, remove nominalizations - nouns created with verbs - because they can lead to wordiness and a plodding tone:

Nominalization	Revised
The two leaders in the two leaders held a <u>discussion</u> concerning several peace alternatives.	The two leaders <u>discussed</u> several peace alternatives.
The director <u>made</u> a <u>recommendation</u> that the student assistant be rehired.	The director <u>recommended</u> that the student assistant be rehired.

*

Other common nominalizations include: *give encouragement*, *make*

a payment, have admiration for, and make a judgment of.

*

☞ Use This with a Noun

You may want to use the word *this* to refer your ideas that you have mentioned in previous sentences or paragraphs. But *this* should not be used by itself; instead, it should always be followed by a noun so that the reference cannot be misunderstood. When *this* is the first word of a sentence, you may be able to incorporate the entire idea of that sentence into the preceding (as in the second example):

Ambiguous <i>This</i>	Revised
That dealership charges high prices for repairs and doesn't stock parts for older cars. <u>This</u> has caused many loyal customers to consider a competitor.	That dealership charges high prices for repairs and doesn't stock parts for older cars. <u>This poor service</u> has caused many loyal customers to consider a competitor.
Chandra refuses to bring her boyfriend over for dinner. <u>This</u> has insulted her family.	<u>Chandra's refusal</u> to bring her boyfriend over for dinner has insulted her family.

*

☞ Eliminate Empty and Wordy Phrases

You can also write more effectively by avoiding long phrases that provide little information. In the list that follows, the single words on the right replaces the wordy expressions on the left:

Wordy Phrases	Revised	Wordy Phrases	Revised
Along the lines of	Like	In the event that	If
At all times	Always	In the field (or area) of	In
At this point in time	Now	In the final analysis	Finally
Because of the fact that	Because	In the neighborhood of	About
By means of	By	On the not too distant future	Soon
Due to the fact that	Because	In this day and age	Today

For the purpose of	For	In today's modern world	Today
For the reason that	Because	On account of the fact that	Because
Have the ability to	Can	Similar in nature to	Like
In a great many instances	Often	Situated in the vicinity of	Near
In order to	To	Until such times as	Until
In spite of the fact that	Although	Was of the opinion that	Believed

For next time, write about an experience that taught you a lesson. Also, choose a problem of your daily life and write how to solve it. You may choose the problem of transportation.

Thank You

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Page:

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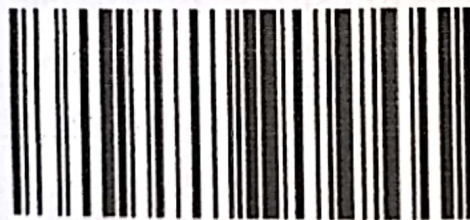
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