



REVISING: STEP 3 OF THE WRITING PROCESS

INTRODUCTION: Revision is the third step of the writing process. It is also the most underutilized step. Often times, students think their first draft is their final draft. This is not the case. Published writers often revise their drafts countless times before even sending their work to editors. Students begin to become writers when they realize the value in revising.

During this process, the writer does the following:

- Rewrites the paper (building on what has already been done) in order to make it stronger
- Often discovers large sections of the essay that need to be rewritten, cut, and/or expanded
- **Often discovers what is at the heart of the essay**

During this process, the writer does NOT:

- Merely proofread/edit the paper. Instead, consider this process more of a rewriting and reorganizing of your paper.

Think of revision as remodeling your house. You consider what isn't functional about your house, you come up with a plan to tear down a wall here, add one there. You re-envision your house in terms of flow and organization. This is not a simple step in which you just dust the furniture and sweep the pile of dirt underneath the couch. This is a down-and-dirty, roll up your sleeves, knock down walls, rebuild passageways, then reorganize the clutter kind of deal. In other words, it's important. Think about how well organized and impressive your paper will be when you're done!

To revise the content of your essay, ask yourself the following questions:

- Is my paper unified?
 - a. Do I have a thesis that is clearly stated or implied in the introductory paragraph of my essay?
 - b. Do all my supporting paragraphs truly support and back up my thesis?
- Is my paper supported?
 - a. Are there three separate supporting points for the thesis?
 - b. Do I have specific evidence for each of the three supporting points?
 - c. Is there plenty of specific evidence for each supporting paragraph?
- Is my paper organized?
 - a. Do I have an interesting introduction, a solid conclusion, and an accurate title?
 - b. Do I have a clear method of organizing my paper?
 - c. Do I use transitions and other connecting words?

To make the revision process less daunting:

- Seek feedback from friends, family, coworkers, fellow students, random people on the street (no, not that last one, actually)
- Visit the Writing Lab. COS Lab Specialists are great at helping students **re-envision** their essays!