

Revisión

Advanced Placement Summer Institute

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Revision Guide

Symbol Suggested revision

Style / Stance

<i>ds</i>	Avoid “dead” sentences, those with insufficient reason for being.
<i>echo</i>	Avoid repeating a word or phrase you’ve just used.
<i>gs</i>	Do you want this gender-specific language? It might offend some.
<i>I</i>	Stay in the background; avoid mentioning your paper; imply your outline.
<i>SC</i>	Use sentence-combining techniques to join closely related ideas.
<i>V</i>	Use strong verbs in the active voice.
<i>VV</i>	Work for variety in your diction, especially verbs.
<i>W</i>	Eliminate needless words.
<i>WW</i>	This isn’t the word you want, is it?
<i>[]</i>	Consider dropping this word or phrase.
<i>//</i>	Express parallel ideas in parallel form.
<i>~~~</i>	Reword this unclear, inappropriate, or wordy passage.

Organization

<i>tr</i>	Add a transition to get from one idea or paragraph to the next.
<i>¶</i>	Make the paragraph the unit of composition.

Support

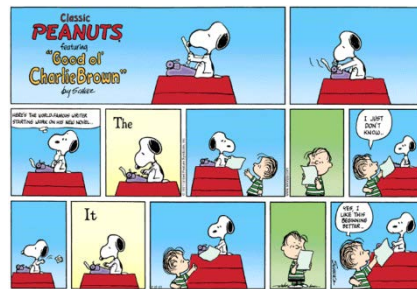
A	Attribute all borrowed words or ideas to their source.
S	Support this idea with specific illustration.

Mechanics

<i>mm</i>	Keep related words together; move a misplaced element.
<i>p</i>	Find and correct the punctuation error.
<i>ref</i>	This pronoun (or adjective or article) has a confusing referent—or none at all.
<i>id</i>	Find and correct the error in idiomatic construction.
<i>SS</i>	Find and correct the error in sentence structure.
<i>SV</i>	Be sure your verbs agree with their subjects.
<i>agr</i>	Be sure your pronouns agree with their antecedents.
<i>X</i>	Is there a word missing here?
<i>!</i>	You’ve violated a rule we’ve worked on in class. Shame.
<i>#</i>	Avoid shifting number, person, or tense.
<i>—</i>	Find and correct the error in spelling or diction.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO STRUNK

1. Form the possessive singular of nouns by adding 's.
2. In a series of three or more terms with a single conjunction, use a comma after each term except the last.
3. Enclose parenthetic expressions between commas.
4. Place a comma before a conjunction introducing an independent clause.
5. Do not join independent clauses by a comma.
6. Do not break sentences in two.
7. Use a colon after an independent clause to introduce a list of particulars, an appositive, an amplification, or an illustrative quotation.
8. Use a dash to set off an abrupt break or interruption and to announce a long appositive or summary.
9. The number of the subject determines the number of the verb.
10. Use the proper case of pronoun.
11. A participial phrase at the beginning of a sentence must refer to the grammatical subject.
12. Choose a suitable design and hold to it.
13. Make the paragraph the unit of composition.
14. Use the active voice.
15. Put statements in positive form.
16. Use definite, specific, concrete language.
17. Omit needless words.
18. Avoid a succession of loose sentences.
19. Express co-ordinate ideas in similar form.
20. Keep related words together.
21. In summaries, keep to one tense.
22. Place the emphatic words of a sentence at the end.



The Rubric of all Rubrics

- 9-8 Superior papers** specific in their references, cogent in their definitions, and free of plot summary that is not relevant to the question. These essays need not be without flaws, but they demonstrate the writer's ability to discuss a literary work with **insight and understanding** and to control a wide range of the elements of **effective composition**. At all times they stay focused on the prompt, providing **specific support**--mostly through direct quotations--and connecting scholarly commentary to the overall meaning.
- 7-6** These papers are less thorough, less perceptive or less specific than 9-8 papers. They are **well-written but with less maturity and control**. While they demonstrate the writer's ability to analyze a literary work, they reveal a more limited understanding and less stylistic maturity than do the papers in the 9-8 range.
- 5** Safe and "plastic," **superficiality** characterizes these essays. Discussion of meaning may be **formulaic**, mechanical, or inadequately related to the chosen details. Typically, these essays reveal simplistic thinking and/or immature writing. They usually demonstrate inconsistent control over the elements of composition and are not as well conceived, organized, or developed as the upper-half papers. However, the writing is sufficient to convey the writer's ideas, stays mostly focused on the prompt, and contains at least some **effort to produce analysis**, direct or indirect.
- 4-3** Discussion is likely to be unpersuasive, perfunctory, **underdeveloped** or **misguided**. The meaning they deduce may be inaccurate or insubstantial and not clearly related to the question. Part of the question may be omitted altogether. The writing may convey the writer's ideas, but it reveals **weak control** over such elements as diction, organization, syntax or grammar. Typically, these essays contain significant **misinterpretations** of the question or the work they discuss; they may also contain little, if any, supporting evidence, and practice **paraphrase and plot summary at the expense of analysis**.
- 2-1** These essays compound the weakness of essays in the 4-3 range and are frequently unacceptably **brief**. They are **poorly written on several counts**, including many **distracting errors in grammar and mechanics**. Although the writer may have made some effort to answer the question, the views presented have little clarity or coherence.
- 0** A response with no more than a reference to the task.
- A blank paper or completely off-topic response.

How to “Rubricize” Anything

Step One:

Develop a description for each of the four levels (based on the district policy):

- 4 Advanced for Grade Level:**
independent learner, demonstrates in-depth understanding of the skill/task, meets or goes beyond the criteria checklist/grade level standards.
- 3 Meets Standards for Grade Level:**
consistent learner, demonstrates competency with skills/task, completes task or demonstrates skill more simplistically than a 4; may have forgotten an essential item.
- 2 Proficient:**
developing learner: competent in basic knowledge, yet may have gaps in demonstrating that knowledge/skill, or task.
- 1 Not yet Proficient:**
struggling learner, requires help to complete task, may make “below grade level” errors, needs reinforcement, * remediation and retest required.

Step Two:

Have these levels ingrained your “head,” then construct rubrics for each assessment. The important point is to share the rubrics with students. Have them assess their “practice” work, using the rubric. Once students understand how I score, even though they feel I am “picky,” they can take charge of their own learning. Paste the rubric to *every* assessment.

Step Three:

Rubrics must grow. What was a 4 at the beginning of the year may be only a 3 at semester time. If expectations for the rubrics don’t grow, then students will not grow. This is the way to document a “year’s growth” for students. Be sure that I tell them that point.

Step Four:

I use *only* 4, 3, 2, 1....no 2.5, 3.5, etc. (Simple assessment lowers my blood pressure.)

Finally....I give my students lots of models. I always have samples of 4’s, 3’s, and 2’s that I have collected. For a new assignment, I usually use a sample from one of our authors. Then students can choose their “levels.”

4’s or “A’s” must always demonstrate a clear level of independence. I rarely give matching vocabulary, for example, because getting 100% correct on that type of test does not, in my mind, constitute a level 4 quality. I always include something more rigorous.

adapted from Joanne Krajeck; Canton South High School;
Canton, Ohio

Grading Guide

4 Advanced for Grade Level:
independent learner, demonstrates in-depth understanding of the skill/task, meets or goes beyond the criteria checklist/grade level standards.

3 Meets Standards for Grade Level:
consistent learner, demonstrates competency with skills/task, completes task or demonstrates skill more simplistically than a 4; may have forgotten an essential item.

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struggling learner, requires help to complete task, may make “below grade level” errors, needs reinforcement; remediation and retest required.

Name

[illegible]

Using Peer Response

one way to do it

Procedure:

- Students bring in two copies of their draft—copies, not their original
- The teacher collects the copies and redistributes them, giving two different drafts to each student.
- The teacher models the writing of questions for a paragraph of an essay draft.
- As homework, students “work through” each of the two essay drafts.

(Alternatively, the students bring in one copy. The teacher redistributes the copies, one to a student. At the next class meeting, the teacher collects the drafts and the peer responses, then redistributes the drafts to a second student reviewer. The second reviewer should not see the review of the first to avoid being “blinded” by it.)

Student reviewers:

1. write their response questions on separate paper and do not mark the original essay.
2. make no suggestions about ‘cosmetic’ changes, such as style, diction, spelling, syntax, or the like. The questions address content only.
3. write questions only, no comments.
4. make no judgments about the essay or any of its parts.
5. write a minimum of fourteen valid and helpful questions for each essay:
 - Student reviewers write the questions paragraph by paragraph.
 - *Valid* here means questions that help a writer think about making changes.
 - *Helpful* here means that the question is intended to help improve the content.
 - There are no “yes/no” questions.
 - Student reviewers may well *not* know the answer to a question they ask.
 - Questions do not state or imply evaluation, as in ‘Why didn’t you...’ or ‘What the heck is this supposed to mean?’

Assessment:

- Students must comment on the whole essay to get credit.
- Students’ own essay grades are lowered one letter for each peer response not completed.
- Students are penalized for making cosmetic suggestions in writing.

Peer Response Sample Student Essay

The following first draft was written by a ninth-grade student on the following assignment on *Romeo and Juliet*. It is typed as written.

ROMEO AND JULIET	"The Valid and the Helpful"
Juliet is only 14, but by meeting Romeo, she virtually becomes an adult. Her attitude changes dramatically as does her outward appearance.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Who are Juliet and Romeo?2. Why and how does she become an adult by meeting Romeo?3. What was her attitude before? after?4. What was her outward appearance before? after?
Through the start of Shakespeare's play "Romeo and Juliet" Juliet is constantly being pressured by others to get married and find the right person for herself. She doesn't know what to do about the unwanted pressure because she hasn't really found the right man and she doesn't want to be forced into anything.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Who is pressuring Juliet to get married?2. Why is she being forced to marry?3. Why is she getting married so young?
When she meets Romeo, her attitude shifts toward him. She can never stop thinking of him. This change brought about happiness, because her search for him had ended, yet it also brought about misfortune, because it was apparent that there would be trouble with them being in different families. Juliet eventually becomes so obsessed with his presence, that she is willing to do anything to stay with him, even kill herself. This was the very sad part of her change. She was unable to control it, and her love for Romeo backfired.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. How does her attitude shift?2. What examples from the story show she can't stop thinking of him?3. What is the change that brought about happiness?4. What misfortune happened?5. Why would there be trouble because they were in different families?6. Did they get married or not?7. What wasn't she able to control?
Juliet's change was an important one. It gave "Romeo and Juliet," happiness, theme, and tragedy.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Why was the change an important one?2. What themes did it give <i>Romeo and Juliet</i>?3. What tragedy took place?4. How did the change give people happiness?

Sample Student Questions for Peer Revision

Reviewer: Jane Quickly • Writer: Harry LeRoy

- ¶1 1. What causes their self-realizations?
 2. What are some of the old costumes they leave?
 3. Why do they feel they have to leave their family? memories? Do they feel trapped?

- ¶2 4. Why was Edna so bored?
 5. What were the trivial tasks that she did everyday?
 6. What would have made Edna feel useful and important? self-worth, dignity?
 7. What was the relationship between Edna and her husband? Was it love or just convenient?
 8. Did the relationship between Ginny and Ty change? Why? When?

- ¶3 9. What was an example when Robert made Edna feel important?
 10. Did Robert really love Edna? Why did he leave her?
 11. Why wasn't Ginny truly in love with Jess? What is an example to support this?

- ¶4 12. In what ways did Reiz support Edna? What did Edna learn from the wise woman?
 13. Do you think suicide was an act of courage, or a sign that she had given up? Why?
 14. Why did Edna want to break the ties with her family?
 15. What were some of the problems unresolved?

- ¶5 16. What lead Edna and Ginny to find themselves trapped in a boring life?
 17. What did Edna and Ginny to do in order to break away?
 18. Was their discoveries a positive or negative influence on their lives? Why?

Reviewer: Jennifer Schaffer • Writer: Harry LeRoy

- ¶1 1. Does either one of the women succeed in this quest?
 2. What is it about Edna's family that binds her? What is it about Ginny's?
 3. What old customers must Edna leave? Which ones must Ginny leave?

- ¶2 4. What type of "respected individual" did Edna strive to become? What type did Ginny strive for?
 5. What sort of things did Edna do to make herself feel important? Were these the same or different from what Ginny did?
 6. What "trivial tasks" did Edna (and Ginny?) resent so much?
 7. Though their husbands were not supportive of their liberation, was society?
 8. Did either woman resent her husband for his attitude and/or lack of support?

- ¶3 9. What did Joe (real name Robert) do to treat Edna as a person?
 10. What did Jess do for Ginny that Ty no longer did? Did he make her feel beautiful or special again?
 11. What made Jess exciting and mysterious?
 12. Does Ginny "love" Jess because he has all that Ty doesn't?

- ¶4 13. What kind of solace are Edna and Ginny truly searching for? Does it have anything to do with men?
 14. What is Kate Chopin saying about trying to live with no support whatever?
 15. Was Edna's liberation worth death?
 16. Why does total emotional freedom not satisfy Ginny?
 17. What causes the "strained & uncomfortable" feeling? Could it be the way Rose & Ginny's relationship ended?
 18. Is making amends necessary for personal resolution?
 19. Was Rose's "support"
 20. Was Ginny's liberation worth it?

- ¶5 21. What was unsatisfying about the women's lives in the beginning? How about in the end?
 22. Were the husbands truly the root of their problems?
 23. Was there any way Edna or Ginny could find someone who truly would respect them as an individual? Or were they stuck with a choice between degrading husbands vs. lonely solitude? Did they think they saw this person in Robert & Jess?

Draft of Student Essay for Peer Revision

Just as Edna in The Awakening, Ginny in Thousand Acres sets out on a quest of self discovery and independence. Though Edna is searching for women's rights and Ginny aspires to become a more assertive and strong individual, both share the common struggle of leaving their family and old customs.

Both women wanted to rid themselves of their passive wife roles and gain the freedom to become a respected individual. Edna was bored of her meaningless life as a wife and mother. She felt her days were filled with trivial tasks and yearned to feel useful and important. Her husband who felt women were created to have babies and serve their husbands and didn't support Edna in her search of self-sufficiency. Ginny's husband Ty was quiet and passive, and like Edna's spouse believed women should keep their opinions to themselves. He was angered by Ginny's new aggressive stand she took against her father and didn't think it was appropriate for her to act in such a way. Also like Edna's husband Ty didn't support Ginny in her quest of self discovery and independence. Though both women longed for the freedom to be an individual, neither received any assistance from their husband.

Edna and Ginny each had an affair with a younger man they felt understood them and helped them where their husbands had failed. Joe (??) was the only one who actually treated Edna as a person rather than a mother or wife. He liked to talk with her and respected her opinion, something no one else had ever done. He made her feel important and that her feelings really mattered, leading her to fall in love with him. Her love for Joe however, was not necessarily with him as a person, but rather the idea that someone saw her as an individual and treated her with respect. Ginny had an affair with Jess Clark, an old childhood playmate who left the farm years before and returned an exciting yet mysterious stranger. Jess was daring. He became a vegetarian and wanted to try new methods of farming. Jess was the antithesis of Ty as he didn't hesitate to speak his opinion or do things his own way. Like

Edna, Ginny wasn't truly in love with Jess, but the excitement and change he brought to the life she was tired and bored of. Both Ginny and Edna have an affair with men who seem to fit the change they are yearning for in their unsatisfying lives.

As each succeeds in breaking away from their original unhappy lifestyle, they discover that although they gained freedom, they failed in their attempts of finding a life that would bring them solace.. Edna was unhappy because Joe left her, for he knew their love was forbidden, and she was left with no one who understood or supported her individual lifestyle. Her husband and society thought she was going insane and believed her dreams and aspirations were inappropriate and weird. She was a woman ahead of her times trapped in a world that supported old-fashioned beliefs. With no strength or support from other Edna saw no other solution to her dilemma than to commit suicide which admitted her defeat in her efforts to find happiness through independence. Ginny lives her dream of being out on her own and raising Rose's daughters, but like Edna she is not content with her new life. Her nieces don't trust her and there's a strained and uncomfortable feeling in their lives. Although she broke all ties with her family like she had originally wanted to, things still felt unfinished and problems unresolved as the entire family either left or died without making amends. Ginny no longer had Rose to talk to or to understand or support her, all she did was work and sleep. Edna and Ginny both wanted freedom unaware that it would also bring lonely solitude.

Edna and Ginny were both trapped in boring unsatisfying lives. They wanted independence from their husbands who they believed were keeping them from escaping from their miserable lives and preventing them from being free. As each broke away and attained control of their own life, they discovered that complete independence from everyone is not what they needed, but someone who understood that they wanted to be respected as an individual.

Revision of Student Essay after Peer Revision

Just as Edna in *The Awakening*, Ginny in *A Thousand Acres* realizes through the influence of her adulterer that life as a housewife doesn't bring satisfaction or contentment. Each yearning for self-identity and respect as an individual, they set out on a quest of self-discovery and *freedom*. Though Edna is searching for women's rights and Ginny aspires to become a more assertive and strong woman, both share the common struggle of **escaping the grasps of a husband unsympathetic to their feelings or needs who binds them to their dismal life**.

Both women wanted to rid themselves of their passive wife roles and gain the freedom to become a woman respected as an individual **instead of identified as their husband's faithful spouse**. Edna was bored of her meaningless life as a wife and mother. She felt her days were filled with trivial tasks **such as preparing meals and caring for children** and yearned to feel useful and important. **Edna's marriage was one of convenience, not love. The two never really spent time together, her husband would go off and do his own thing, knowing that when he returned home, his obedient wife would be waiting. He thought Edna was insane and stubborn when she expressed she was unhappy with her life and wanted some independence.** Her husband thought women were created to have babies and serve their husbands and didn't support Edna in her search of self-sufficiency. Ginny's husband Ty was quiet and passive, and like Edna's *spouse* believed women should keep their opinions to themselves. **Not one to be an assertive attacker himself**, he was angered by Ginny's new aggressive stand she took against her father and didn't *feel* it was appropriate behavior. Ty's **philosophy of life was not to get involved in disputes and let people do their own thing in attempt to keep peace. He believed in following the rules and not breaking tradition which is why he couldn't empathize with Ginny's plight of being dissatisfied with her role as a farmwife. Because of his own beliefs, he didn't understand why Ginny wanted to break away from the typical farmwife stereotype and didn't support her in her quest of self-discovery and independence.** Though both women longed for the freedom to be an individual, neither received any assistance from their husband.

Edna and Ginny each had an affair with a younger man they felt understood them and helped them where their husbands had failed. *Robert* was the only one who actually treated Edna as a person rather than a mother or wife by really listening to her when she talked and respecting her opinion, something no one else had ever done. He made her feel important **by spending all his free time with her, encouraging conversation and true expression of her feelings**. Her love for Robert however, was not necessarily with him as a person, but rather the idea that someone saw her as an individual and treated her with respect. Ginny had an affair with Jess Clark, an old childhood playmate who left the farm years before and returned an exciting yet mysterious stranger. Jess was **educated and well traveled and seemed to spread jovialness and gaiety whenever he was around**. He was the antithesis of Ty as he didn't hesitate to speak his opinion or do things his own way. **The land was Ty's first love and priority, not Ginny. Jess made Ginny feel beautiful and special again by treating her with respect and making her believe that someone loved her above anything else.** Like Edna, Ginny wasn't truly in love with Jess, but the excitement and

change he brought to the life she was tired and bored of and the idea that someone loved her more than the land. Both Ginny and Edna have an affair with men who seem to fit the change they are yearning for in their unsatisfying lives.

As each succeeds in breaking away from their original unhappy lifestyle, they discover that although they gained freedom, they failed in their attempts of finding a life that would bring them solace. Edna was unhappy because Robert left her, **for he knew their love was forbidden**, and she was left with no one who understood or supported her individual lifestyle. Her husband and society thought she was going insane and believed her dreams and aspirations were inappropriate and weird. She was a woman ahead of her times trapped in a world that supported old-fashioned beliefs. **In those times it was uncommon for a woman to want her own identity or break away from her husband's protective care.** With no strength or support from others **except Mme Reiz who taught Edna to follow her dreams no matter what people thought, Edna only succeeded in secluding herself even more, for the wise Mme Reiz was also an outcast of society.** Edna saw no other solution to her dilemma than to commit suicide **which admitted her defeat in her efforts to find happiness through independence.** Ginny lives her dream of being out on her own **and separated from a husband whose passiveness she had outgrown and was tying her down**, but like Edna she is not content. [—] **Betrayed by both Jess and Rose as Jess left Ginny for her sister, Ginny is hurt that her lover no longer loves or is interested in her and Rose who has been her best friend since childhood traded their special love for the affection of a man. Ginny no longer has someone who cares for her or offers emotional support.** Although she broke all ties with her family like she had originally wanted to, things still felt unfinished and problems unresolved as the entire family either left or died without making amends. **Society looked down on Ginny because of the harsh manner in which she treated her father. It was rumored that she and Rose drove Larry insane and she receives only bitter resentment and hostility from the public. Without a friend in the world, all Ginny did was work and sleep. She had nothing to live for or bring joy in her life. Ginny won the battle of escaping her unhappy life as a farmwife but lost the war as she discovers independence also brings discontent.** Edna and Ginny both wanted freedom unaware that it would also bring lonely solitude.

Edna and Ginny were both trapped in boring unsatisfying lives. They wanted independence from their husbands who they believed were the reason they were without their own identity and kept them from escaping from their miserable lives. As each broke away and attained control of their own life, **the one person who they had trusted and depended on for strength and support along the way left them isolated and alone in a world that didn't expect or understand their thirst for freedom.** They discovered that complete independence from everyone is not what they needed, but someone who understood that they wanted to be respected as an individual.

AVOIDING PLOT SUMMARY IN A LITERATURE ESSAY

A frequent criticism you may receive on marked literature essays is that you have done too much “telling of the story”--in other words, rephrasing, paraphrasing or summarizing of the work’s contents. If you have been told, “Don’t tell me what happened; show me why it is important,” you may wonder how to do the latter without having done the former. And if you have been told, “Assume your reader has read the work,” you may wonder how you can possibly discuss a work without referring to specific statements or events within it. The following points should help you to distinguish between unnecessary plot summary and necessary analysis.

1. Distinguish accepted facts about the work from interpretations of it. If all readers would agree about the plot events of a work, you need not remind your reader of those events; you should assume that he or she has read the piece and knows what happens and when. However, if the facts of the work are unclear or not universally accepted (for example, if an event in a novel may be a real occurrence or a dream; or if it is not obvious whether the speaker in a poem is a man or a woman), you may need to describe what you think is going on. This is not plot summary, but is a means of establishing your personal interpretation of something in the work.
2. Descriptions of plot events should be used to support a specific argumentative point. Suppose you were talking to a friend about a recent episode of a favourite TV show, and you said, “That was a great episode: John thought Sue was cheating on him so he tried to make her jealous by pretending to cheat on her, and it backfired.” Your friend might say, “But I saw all that myself; what about it?”--rightly objecting to your simply telling the story with no apparent point. But suppose you were to say, “John’s character is becoming more manipulative; his comment to Sue about his supposed ‘hot date’ with Mary seemed more devious than usual.” In this case, you would be using a particular plot event to support your opinion about the show; in order to convince your friend, you must point to an example with which he or she is familiar.

The same is true for a literature essay: any plot description or summary of contents must support a point--not substitute for one. You should ask yourself the question your marker is sure to ask: “Why is this important?” In other words, what is the significance of this element of the work in relation to the point you wish to make?

The following two paragraphs discuss with equal accuracy and intelligence the same passage from Shakespeare’s *1 Henry IV*. Only one of these, however, would be considered acceptable in a university English essay. The other is merely a well-written plot summary and contributes virtually nothing to our understanding of the significance of the episode.

- A. In the first scene, King Henry compares his own son unfavourably with Northumberland’s warrior son Hotspur. He says that Hotspur is “the theme of honour’s tongue” whereas the wastrel Hal is stained by “riot and dishonour.” The King wistfully wishes that some fairy had exchanged the two in infancy so that he (and the nation) might now have a more suitable prince. Henry then asks his counsellors the meaning of Hotspur’s withholding from the crown a number of Scottish prisoners recently taken in battle. Westmoreland replies that this apparent disloyalty is not the fault of Hotspur but of his malevolent uncle, Worcester, who has induced Hotspur to “prune himself” and “bristle up/The crest of youth against your dignity.”
- B. King Henry’s unfavourable comparison of Hal’s “riot and dishonour” with the heroic virtues of Hotspur (“the theme of honour’s tongue”) effectively introduces and interests us in the two main characters, even though they have not yet appeared on stage. It also establishes from the very outset the conflict between the King and his son and sets up an important structural feature of the play, the juxtaposed careers of Hal and Hotspur. We are, furthermore, alerted at once to the play’s persistent preoccupation with the theme of “honour.” In this passage, then, Shakespeare has two different young men “bristle up/The crest of youth” against the “dignity” of the King and thus sets in motion at one stroke several of the central dramatic elements of this work.

CRISP Method of Style Revision

by Dixie Dellinger, MA

Students work on these steps individually and independently. This is the final edit— <i>before proofreading</i> :	First	CUT WORDS	Cut out every word that can be spared. Remove “due to the fact that” and “in order to” and all other wordy constructions and empty expressions that don’t say anything.
	Next	REDUCE CLAUSES	Almost all clauses can be reduced in some way; to appositives or phrases, etc.
	Then	INTENSIFY VERBS	Circle all verbs and intensify the weak ones. This will take care of excessive use of passive voice.
	After that	SHARPEN DICTION	Find the <i>best</i> words for the audience and the purpose. Diction creates tone.
	Finally	PACK PHRASES	Move them behind the nouns. Instead of “A proposal presented by Derek Bok, the president of Harvard, was defeated,” (12 words) pack it to “Harvard president Derek Bok’s proposal failed.” (6 words)

REVISION STRATEGIES: + X ÷ —

Revision usually works like arithmetic and in this order: Being process, any of these can be — and usually is, with skilled writers — recycled and used again... and again. Students can work on these steps independently or with others.	First	ADD	adding something that is not there: facts, logical argument, details, examples, illustrations, statistics, <i>ad infinitum</i> .
	Next	MULTIPLY	increasing what is already there; twice as many facts, logical arguments, details, examples, illustrations, and so on.
	Then	DIVIDE	“chunking” into paragraphs, moving things around, organizing the parts in a different way, and so on.
	Finally	SUBTRACT	taking out unnecessary words, material, sharpening diction, working on tone and audience consciousness, honing arguments, working on stylistic devices.

INTRODUCTIONS

Try beginning your paper with:

1. A straight-forward, matter-of-fact, statement of a subject. This can be rhetorically effective for critical papers, or as understatement for startling events.
2. An enigmatic opening.
3. A question, possibly rhetorical.
4. An anecdote or a startling fact, like those often used as openers for after dinner speeches or assembly talks.
5. A quotation.
6. The creation of a mood or feeling for a locale, a device common to the short story or novel.
7. A statistic.
8. The withholding of key information until late in the paragraph, hence, evoking suspense in the reader.
9. Effective repetition.
10. A figure of speech.
11. The use of sound (onomatopoeia) to attract the reader's attention.
12. A strong contrast.
13. The reversal of a cliché.
14. A historical comparison.
15. An opinion.
16. An immediate physical description of main character-- holding the name till later.
17. An autobiographical account.

from the editors of *Time Magazine*.

Some sample introductions (not all good, but...)

1. All our important ideas about the rights of individuals in a society grow directly from political writings of the Renaissance.
2. We don't agree on when the Renaissance began, on when it ended, on what brought it about, nor on what snuffed it out. People then didn't even know they were living in it. But it has more impact on our lives to day than any other period of history.
3. How could one person not just succeed but excel in every known area of human activity?
4. Fleas changed the world of the Renaissance more than all the people who lived in it combined.
5. "I know I have the body of a weak and feeble woman," Queen Elizabeth I told a critic, "but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and of a king of England too."
6. The last leaves hung yellow on the small trees, and a late morning breeze that chilled lifted off the Thames. People waited in line at the Globe in small groups, men in wide hats and capes and dull white ice-cream cone collars and smelling powerfully of garlic and ale, the few women whispering in pumpkin-shaped skirts.
7. Between 1348 and 1350, the Black Death wiped out exactly half the population of Europe.
9. Love rang in the songs. Love filled the poetry and painting. Love gave theme and form to drama. Love returned to the churches.
10. Trying to distinguish the nature of the Renaissance is like trying to eat walnuts with your bare hands. You might find the tools to get at the meat, but you come away so scarred that you wonder if the work was worth it.
12. At no time in history had people been more free; at no time had they more resembled prisoners.
13. We look first to books to help us find the words and ideas to serve as a cover for the Renaissance. But you can't judge a cover by its book.
14. In the outburst of literature, music, art, philosophy, exploration, and political thought, the Renaissance and fifth century Athens stand nearly as identical twins..

SENTENCE COMBINING #2

Blocking Characters in *The Importance of Being Earnest*

Combine the following elements into a coherent paragraph that explains the function of *blocking* characters in *The Importance of Being Earnest*.

- 1 The climax of many comedies is the marriage of young lovers.
- 2 A good plot requires this.
- 3 The marriage is delayed.
- 4 This delay or suspense is usually achieved by characters.
- 5 They are called blocking characters.
- 6 They consciously oppose the marriage.
- 7 Their folly somehow stands in the marriage's way.
- 8 Parents are most frequently blocking characters.
- 9 Parents represent practical, puritanical, and antiromantic forces in society.
- 10 The marriage is often blocked.
- 11 It is blocked by some folly or fault.
- 12 The fault or folly is in one or both of the lovers.
- 13 This happens in
- 14 This is the plays' primary plot.
- 15 Jack's plan to marry Gwendolen is initially blocked by the girl's mother.
- 16 The mother is Lady Bracknell.
- 17 Lady Bracknell is concerned with Jack's family background.
- 18 She is more concerned with this than with her daughter's desires.
- 19 Gwendolen herself also threatens to be a block.
- 20 Gwendolen is in love with Jack and willing to marry him.
- 21 She can only love someone named Earnest.
- 22 This is what she says.
- 23 Jack uses the name Earnest when he is with her in London.
- 24 The audience believes this.
- 25 The hero's name is Jack.
- 26 Gwendolen's infatuation with the name of Ernest seems likely to become an obstacle.
- 27 This happens at the end of Act 1.
- 28 The audience is led to expect this.
- 29 Jack will discover a respectable set of parents.
- 30 Jack will get a new name.
- 31 This will satisfy the aristocratic conditions of Lady Bracknell.
- 32 This will satisfy the romantic expectations of Gwendolen.

Sentence Combining

The original line from *The Importance of Being Earnest*:

Lady Bracknell: Untruthful! My nephew Algernon? Impossible! He is an Oxonian.

The sentences to combine:

Lady Bracknell says that Algernon cannot be untruthful.

He is her nephew.

She says it is because he is an Oxonian.

Her statement is nonsense.

Absolute Phrases

a group of words that modifies an independent clause as a whole; it has no finite verb

Her statement nonsensical, Lady Bracknell declares that her nephew Algernon cannot be untruthful because he is an Oxonian.

Adjective Clause

any clause which modifies a noun or pronoun

Lady Bracknell says nonsensically that her nephew Algernon, *who is an Oxonian*, cannot be untruthful.

Adverb Clause

any clause which modifies a verb, an adjective, or an adverb

Lady Bracknell again talks nonsense *when she says that her nephew Algernon cannot be untruthful because he is an Oxonian*.

Appositives

a noun, noun phrase, or series of nouns used to rename or identify another noun, noun phrase, or pronoun

An Oxonian, Algernon is incapable of being untruthful, his aunt Lady Bracknell says nonsensically.

Participial Phrases

one built on a past or present participle; it always modifies the subject of the main clause, whether the writer intends it to or not

Lady Bracknell, *lapsing again into nonsense*, says that her nephew Algernon is incapable of being untruthful because he is an Oxonian.

Prepositional phrases

one beginning with a preposition, ending with the preposition's object, and working as an adjective or as an adverb

Lady Bracknell says, *in another example of nonsense*, that her nephew Algernon cannot be untruthful because he is an Oxonian.

Two Resources

Kilgallon, Don. *Sentence Composing for High School*. Boynton/Cook Heinemann, 1998. Print.

Strong, William. *Sentence Combining: A Composing Book*. McGraw-Hill, 1994. Print.

EIGHT STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING THE PAPER LOAD

from the apenglish electronic discussion group

1. Give students choice in topic (within the parameters of your content) so they are invested and you have a variety of papers to read.
2. Set a page limit and emphasize proving the thesis with apt, clearly written support. Less can be more.
3. Assign two short papers and ask the students to determine (perhaps with the help of other students) which one they want you to respond to. Collect both papers.
4. Give students the opportunity to share their first drafts with others in a structured writing team. The quality of the writing that you receive in the next draft will be higher. You will spend less time correcting misconceptions about the assignment and silly errors.
5. Teach the students oral presentation skills and use this mode for several presentations each marking period. These presentations can show you a great deal about student learning yet can be evaluated "on the spot."
6. Give the students an opportunity to show their understanding of a work of literature and its author's style by imitating it. This type of assignment is both analytical and creative. Students tend to invest and the resulting work is interesting to read. Students can also be asked to perform their pieces in class, which makes it possible for you to become familiar with them before you actually need to read and grade them.
7. Ask students to evaluate their own writing, using your performance standards. This can provide you with insight into the students' processes and make grading easier.
8. Conclude the activities for the last unit of study in the marking period a week prior to the end of the marking period. This will give you time to read and evaluate final projects and share grades with students before you're under pressure to report grades on line.

COMPOSITION

THE FORMAL MEDITATION

READINGS: Meditations by John Donne; "Meditation XVII"

FORM The requirements of the meditation were specified in the sixteenth century by St. Ignatius Loyola. The formal meditation consists of three parts:

1. THE COMPOSITION OF PLACE. A short descriptive essay in which the writer uses memory to reconstruct a specific time from the past, amassing concrete detail using all five senses. The writer must imagine the events of the past as occurring now and must be able to once again see, hear, smell, feel, and taste those events.
 2. THE APPLICATION OF UNDERSTANDING. In this long section of analysis, the writer poses and analyzes questions about the scene described in the Composition of Place. Here the writer applies skills of understanding in the attempt to bring order to the more random sensory description of the first section of the theme, to search for the causes and for the meanings of the events.
 3. THE APPLICATION OF THE WILL. Often taking the form of a colloquy, ("A conversation or dialogue, especially when it is in the nature of a formal discussion or a conference," [Holman, 106]) the final section literally resolves the question as the writer makes a resolution concerning behavior in the future. The resolution must follow with some logic from the application of understanding.
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SOME TOPICS: These are suggestions only. The formal meditation is a highly personal type of writing, and the best papers will be those that come most directly from personal experience.

loneliness	simplicity	pain	cooperation
frustration	indifference	rejection	restraint
faith	curiosity	hope	regret
intelligence	uncertainty	pride	beauty
foresight	ignorance	neglect	courage
health	expectation	incredulity	vanity
discord	fear	error	
excitement	victory	disappointment	
dejection	failure	expedience	

