



Revising, Editing, and Proofreading Essays

Revision: Revision means “re-visioning” your paper. It is “big picture” work. Step back and ask yourself: does the paper you wrote respond directly to the assignment and its audience, answer the questions that were posed? Is the argument clear? Is it sufficiently complex? Check to see if any of the ideas need to be developed, and if you’ve articulated the relationships among ideas. See if you need to add further evidence or support. Revision can require adding material, taking material away, working with the big strokes of the paper. It might involve changing the order of paragraphs and re-crafting topic sentences/transitions. It may demand re-drafting the introduction and checking the conclusion to see what should be brought up to the front of the paper. All of this is when you “re-vision” your paper.

Editing: People often refer to all stages of revision as “editing,” but editing is what you do after you revise. Editing involves crafting with a fine tool, and it leads to style and coherence. Here is where you consider your paper as a writer/artist. Try reading your paper aloud, slowly, in parts. Is the voice clear and confident? Is there a sense of rhythm and flow in each paragraph, each sentence? Do the sentences connect up with one another like well-constructed joints? Editing is when you correct any awkwardness that may have occurred in the initial drafting or in revision (revision can be very helpful to the big picture but create problems within paragraphs, for example). While editing is also a good time to check the clarity of your title and the accuracy of your reference or works cited page(s). Careful editing is critical to a polished, well written paper.

Proofreading: Proofreading comes last and consists of a final sweep through your paper with an eye for errors. When proofreading you make your final check for errors in sentence structure, grammar, verb tense and punctuation. You also look for mistakes in spelling, use of quotations, citation details, etc. Look not just for the tricky mistakes but also for any typos. It is important to check that your name is on your essay and it is desirable to number your pages or include a word count. This is the final read-through of your paper, your last chance to impress your reader and show your commitment to your work. Reading aloud at this stage or any other stage of the revision process can help you focus more carefully on your work.



Additional Resources:

The SSU Writing Center – Payne 201

What we do:

- We work on a one-to-one basis on any writing project – from brainstorming to revision to final touches. We work on essays, lab reports, resumes, formal letters of all types, master’s theses, work for publication, etc.
- We help anyone on campus – from freshman to graduate students and from staff to faculty to administrators of SSU.
- We identify your strong and not-so-strong writing habits and help you perfect your strengths and improve your potential strengths.
- We focus on Writing Across the Disciplines (Dr. Hale & Mrs. Thomas edited SSU guide) to include math, science, history, etc. This focus reflects the SSU QEP – the “Write” attitude.

To learn more and/or schedule an appointment,

visit: <http://savannahstate.edu/class/rewrite/index.shtml>

Smarthinking – Online Tutoring

- The Smarthinking Writing Center is designed to assist secondary, post-secondary, and graduate students become stronger writers.
- Students receive a detailed, personalized critique of any written assignment, such as an essay, paragraph, report, or creative work.
- When applicable, students can select specialists such as ESL, Technical Writing, or Creative Writing experts.
- Students can submit writing 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

All students of Savannah State already have activated accounts. To log in, your username is your Savannah State email address (johndoe@student.savannahstate.edu); your password is ssu.

If you any assistance logging in, please contact the QEP Liaison, Ms. Duncan, at 915-358-3151.

http://sites.middlebury.edu/peer_writing_tutors/2011/02/14/revision-editing-and-proofreading-what%E2%80%99s-the-difference/