

AP English- Essay Revisions

Revision Strategies Instruction Sheet

You are going to revise several essays in this class. My hope is that by showing you simple revision strategies you will be able to score well on this assignment, understand the moves that matter for subsequent essays and have the ability to revise your work on your in college. Even if you believe you did well, I still want to see improvements. If you think your first essay was a 9, tell me how you could make it go off the scale into a 10 or 11/used as an exemplar for what to do.

Directions

Step 1 -- Revise your rough draft: Use the revision strategies provided and revise your paper. You should also use *Coelho-Tooley's Pet Peeves* as a checklist to guard against getting an automatic zero. There should be no grammatical errors in your final essay.

Step 2 -- Label Your Revisions: You should **BOLD** all additions and changes in your new draft, placing the particular number of the revision strategy you are using in parentheses after your bolded changes or at the end of the paragraph. **I am looking for more than just simple word changes. I want intense edits that upgrade your writing.**

Step 3 -- Scoring: At the bottom of the revised essay, you must put the score you believe you would have earned for your first attempt at the essay. Explain in one paragraph why this score would fit your essay. Make sure you reference the rubric. You must also give yourself a score for your revised essay, along with an explanation of how your changes would provide you with an elevated score. Use the *Rubric of all Rubrics*. Bold this paragraph.

Step 4 -- Format: I will specify per assignment whether the revision should be turned in online or if you should turn in a hard copy or both. For some revisions you will also be using the table format. This was explained in class.

Revision Strategies

Revision Strategy 1- Clear and Focused Thesis and Intro paragraph: Do not parrot (restate) the prompt in your thesis statement. Your job is to take a position and support your argument. Make sure that you are addressing the heart of the prompt as well as the important components.

Revision Strategy 2- Be Persuasive: Don't confuse summary with evidence/support. Assume your audience has read the text so all you need to do is support your argument with valid, solid analysis. Don't ignore counterarguments. You can add substantial style and analytical points by briefly analyzing why other ideas came in second place. This brief overview can serve as a launching pad for your extended discussion of your first-place theme/idea.

Revision Strategy 3-Quotation Incorporation: Long quotations are for losers. I know this sounds harsh, but more than a healthy handful of words in a quotation make it look like you are padding your essay. If you are going to use a longer quotation, the stakes are enormous: you must make three or four exemplary points in order to justify your use of just 33 words from the soliloquy.

Say you are looking at this passage from *Hamlet*, Act 1.

Seems, madam! nay it is; I know not 'seems.'
'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
Nor customary suits of solemn black,
Nor windy suspiration of forced breath,
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
Nor the dejected 'havior of the visage,
Together with all forms, moods, shapes of grief,
That can denote me truly: these indeed seem,
For they are actions that a man might play:
But I have that within which passeth show;
These but the trappings and the suits of woe

Examples:

3A. Introduction of a quotation using a colon (formal)

Shakespeare begins the speech with a contrast between appearances and reality: "Seems, madam! nay it is; I know not 'seems.'"

3B. Introduction of a quotation using a comma (less formal)

Shakespeare ends the extended metaphor of acting by Hamlet's assertion, "These but the trappings and the suits of woe."

3C. Beginning your sentence with the quotation, ending with your words

"But I have that within which passeth show" asserts Hamlet to his mother, which indicates both deep feeling toward his deceased father and a mild contempt for his newly married mother.

3D. Setting off a longer explanatory quotation (a quotation used as an example) with dashes

Any belief that Hamlet will quickly drop his mourning for his father—"Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother"—is quickly negated by the long list of outward appearances of grief that are rooted in real feeling for his fallen father.

3E. Using a dash to emphasize the importance or power of the source material

Hamlet understands that his mother thinks he is putting on an act—" For they are actions that a man might play."

3F. Quoting different parts of a passage

Suffering is not about "suits of solemn black" or "windy suspiration of forced breath" or even "fruitful river in the eye," for those are tricks that any actor can play to appear to be grieving.

***EXPLAIN THE MEANING & IMPORTANCE OF QUOTED MATERIAL:**

After you have incorporated the quotation into your material, it is your job to squeeze the quotation dry for any analytical juice it may contain.

Hamlet's final couplet, the rhyming pair of "show" and "woe" neatly encapsulates Hamlet's extended metaphor that compares the tricks of an actor and the real grief Hamlet feels at the loss of his father. Certainly this speech indicates Hamlet's interest in peering beneath the surface of things to note the deceit that preys upon the court now that the Claudius has revealed himself to be a bad actor by killing his way to the throne.

Revision Strategy 4-Elaboration and Connection: Begin and end all of your support paragraphs with claims and analysis. Your job is to show the power of the author's language and its relation to the work as a whole. Try using the last two or three sentences of your paragraphs to thoughtfully connect the important parts of the speech to other events in the play to get to larger points about character and theme.

Revision Strategy 5-Active Language: Saturate your prose with active verbs doomed to linger forever in the present tense.

Revision Strategy 6- Sentence Structure: Load up the end of your sentence with the most important information. (See previous.)

Revision Strategy 7- Sentence Variety: Did periods get really expensive, necessitating painfully long sentences? Writing is shaping. How many of your ideas come in shapely packages?

Revision Strategy 8- Punctuation: Can I buy you an apostrophe?

Coelho-Tooley's Pet Peeves:

******Committing these infractions will result in a rejection of your paper and possibly a permanent zero. These issues have been reviewed in class multiple times and the expectation is that you have conquered them by now. ******

- Do not isolate the thesis statement. A thesis statement should be apart of the introductory paragraph.
- Punctuate titles correctly. Novels and Plays = italics or underline; Poetry, Speeches, Essays = parenthesis
- Don't waste time on defining common words and terms, especially if it is in the prompt.
- Proofread and edit your work!!!! There should not be any mistakes in your revised papers, much less in the first sentence or paragraph.

- Plagiarism = 3 or more words in a row of source without citation.
- Leave the reader alone! Use active voice.
- Use academic voice only! Everything should be in third person.
- **Do Not Use Banned Phrases:** is able to, I know this because, this allows the read to, many literary devices, there are several literary devices, this let's the reader know