

NAME:



Writer's Stylus ›

Portfolio
7

A CLERESTORY LEARNING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM: WRITING

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REVISION SKILLS CHECKLIST: Grade 7

ADVERBS

- Identify every adverb in the draft.
- Question the necessity of each one. Could a stronger verb eliminate the need for an adverb?
- Look for redundancy created by modifiers (e.g., *She smiled happily*.) Eliminate redundancy.

DANGLERS

- Read the draft to identify phrases.
- Examine each phrase. If a phrase lacks connection to another sentence component, revise the sentence to make the connection obvious by adding the connection to the phrase, placing the connection in an position where the relationship is obvious, or by moving the phrase to follow the sentence's main clause.

DEFINITIONS

- Read the draft to identify any terms that may not be familiar to your intended audience.
- Develop definitions for each term.
- Try including the definitions in the manuscript. If they clarify your meaning without distraction, keep them.
- If the definitions cause a distraction, consider revising the draft by using more familiar terms that do not need to be defined for the reader.

ITEMS AND DESCRIPTORS

- Read the draft to identify descriptors or nouns presented in a series.
- Refer to the principles for how many items to include:
 - Use one item or descriptor for emphasis (e.g., *Joe is determined*.)
 - Use two items or descriptors for comparison (e.g., *Joe is smart and determined*.)
 - Use three items or descriptors for completeness (e.g., *Joe is smart, determined, and conscientious*.)
 - Only use four or more descriptors as a list (e.g., *Joe packed several items: his uniform, his radio, his weapon, and his phone*.)
- Revise to match intent and number of items.
- Revise to state items from shortest to longest.

MISPLACED MODIFIERS

- Read the draft to identify modifying phrases.
- Check the location of each modifying phrase and its intended "target."
- If the "target" is missing, rewrite the sentence to include it.
- If the modifying phrase and target are separated by other possible "targets," restructure the sentence to keep modifying phrases and targets together.

OVERUSED PHRASES

- Read the draft to identify common phrases.
- Ask yourself if the common phrase represents overused phrasing. Is it what you expect to hear in the given context? If so, it is likely a cliché. [Susan Bell (2007) offers this guiding question: "Am I writing new words to fit this moment and this story?" (p. 136)]
- Revise the sentence with fresher language.

PARAGRAPH UNIT

- Read the draft one paragraph at a time.
- For each paragraph, ask: "What do I want to say here? What point do I want to make?" (Provost, 1985, p. 44).
- Identify the sentence that states that idea. If no such sentence exists, consider adding one.
- Review every sentence in the paragraph. If any do not develop or support the central idea, consider moving or deleting them.

PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES

- Read the draft to identify prepositional phrases.
- Examine each prepositional phrase, especially those in sentences that contain two or more.
- If possible, revise the sentence to eliminate as many prepositional phrases as possible without changing your intended meaning.

QUOTES & ATTRIBUTIONS

- Read the draft to identify quotes or dialogue.
- If the attribution appears at the beginning or end of the sentence/section, try moving it to the first logical break in the quote.
- Use enough variety in placing attributions that your text reads smoothly.

REDUNDANCY

- Identify every adjective and adverb in the draft, including prepositional phrases acting as adjectives or adverbs.
- Question the necessity of each one. Could a stronger verb eliminate the need for an adverb? Could a stronger noun eliminate the need for an adjective?
- Look for redundancy created by modifiers (e.g., *She smiled happily*, and *The boy was sad and unhappy*.) Eliminate redundancy.

SHOWING NOT TELLING

- Read the draft to identify sentences/paragraphs/sections that explain something.
- Ask yourself if it is possible to show the same ideas through action or dialogue. If so, make the revisions that entrust the reader to reach appropriate conclusions.

TRANSITIONS

- Read the draft sentence by sentence, focusing on the flow (or lack of it) from one to the next. Do the same with paragraphs and sections.
- If transitions are rough, try one of the following:
 1. Repeat a word from a previous sentence in the next sentence to establish a continuity of thought
 2. Use a signal word—e.g., *later*, *meanwhile*, *after*
 3. Rework the sentence/paragraph/section to base the transitions on an obvious “thread,” such as chronology (i.e., an obvious thread frees the writer from being too concerned with transitions)

VERBS TO NOUNS

- Read the draft to identify nouns formed with a suffix.
- Identify the verb from which the noun was formed (e.g., *action* formed from *act*).
- Revise the sentence by using the verb form. If the meaning stays the same, consider keeping the revision.

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Unit
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Unit
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Unit
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REFLECTING

Sunday morning, December 7, 1941, slowly began unremarkably for the sailors and pilots stationed in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The U.S. servicemen were involved in the completion of breakfast about 7:55 a.m. and the establishment of plans for their day. Suddenly, without warning, Japanese planes quickly flew down, bombing the airfields, and the radio message went out: “Air raid, Pearl Harbor—this is no drill.” The world knew then that the introduction of the war in the Pacific had begun.

JOURNALING

PRACTICING

VISIONING

Seven U. S. battleships were securely tied in Battleship Row on the eastern side of Ford Island, forming an easy target for the Japanese bombs. One battleship was in dry dock in the nearby Navy Yard. The implementation of the surprise air attack came in two waves. Within a few minutes Battleship Row received devastating, destructive damage by torpedo planes. As the torpedo planes brought their runs to completion, horizontal bombers dropped armor-piercing, destructive bombs, one of which explosively blew up the *Arizona* in a huge, tremendous explosion. The *Pennsylvania* was another target of destruction in the Navy Yard, and the *Nevada*, making an attempt to escape out to sea, was dive bombed again.

COACHING

REFLECTING

In about two hours, the Japanese raid had left behind 2,403 dead, nearly crippled the United States fleet, and severely damaged or completely destroyed eight battleships and 188 planes. However, all American aircraft carriers were safe at sea, and the attack did not target most of the destroyers, cruisers, and submarines.

JOURNALING

The crucial effect the Japanese failed to predict was the profound impact of their sudden, sneak attack on the minds and hearts of Americans. On December 8, 1941, President Franklin Roosevelt spoke to the American people, “Yesterday, December 7, 1941, is a date that will live in infamy. The United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan.” Because of the “unprovoked and dastardly attack,” he challenged Congress to declare War on the Empire of Japan...

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