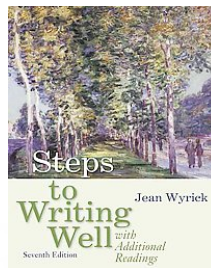


## Revising Your Essay

- You may like to have your textbook readily available.
- Some content will not be from the textbook Steps to Writing Well: With additional Readings, 7<sup>th</sup> Ed.  
By Wyrick

- TAKE NOTES



Hopefully this narrated slideshow will give you a break from reading. If you'd like, you can get out your textbook. Some of the information covered may not be directly from the textbook. You should treat this PowerPoint as if it were an in-class lecture, so I strongly suggest that you take notes.

## Revision is...

Pg. 91

- a Rethinking process.
- a crucial part of the writing process.



“Revision is a *thinking process* that occurs anytime you are working on a writing project. It means you look at your writing with a “fresh eye”—that is, reseeing your writing in ways that will enable you to make more effective choices throughout your essay. Revision often entails rethinking what you have written and asking yourself questions about its effectiveness.

## Revision is NOT...

- autopsy.
- limited to editing grammar or proofreading.



Pg. 92-93



Writing in general is not a neat, linear process. I love to plan and anticipate my next move, but I've learned to accept that when writing, you often jump around from generating new ideas, writing them down, organizing them, revising them, and then returning back to writing. So, the assumption many students have is that when they begin revising, they will begin their FINAL STEP—they may think that they'll conduct an autopsy of sorts. They may think that they'll have to fix their piece just once. This is not true.

Revision also entails revisiting new ideas. Actually, critically reviewing the *content* is the first step in revision, so don't just focus on grammar and mechanical errors.

## Revision is NOT...

- punishment or busywork.



Finally, revision is not a punishment or futile busywork. Rarely, if ever, does anyone—even professional writers—produce the results he or she wants without revising. Personally, when I finished my masters thesis—which is a very large writing project—I revised and revised and revised before turning it into my professor. I thought it was perfect, but later, when I began working on that same piece to submit it for publication in a professional journal, I found myself revising it (on and off) for another 6 months. By the time I was finished, huge changes were made (both content and grammar related). I was shocked at how much revising one writing project could have.

## Tips for revising with a computer

Pg. 96-97

- The “spell-check generation”
- Find common errors



Because this is an online class, I'll assume you have a decent amount of knowledge with computers and their word processors. I love using Microsoft Word. One of the most prized tools the computer offers writers is the *spell-checker*. With spell check, I'll often times misspell a word, and my computer will automatically fix it without warning, and I may not notice it. Many who have grown up with such features on computers are from, what I like to call, “The Spell-Check Generation,” and you may be shocked to realize that I—your very own English teacher—am a member of the spell-check generation. I've been conditioned to rely a bit too much on my spell checker, and in the process have become a not-so-good speller.

But this is no excuse for bad spelling, especially for homophones (you know words that sound the same, but are spelled differently...knew/new, red/read, etc.). So, do not rely on ANY computer program to do your editing and proofreading work for you.



## The Writing Lab

- GCC Writing Center:

<http://www.gccaz.edu/English/writingcenter/>  
*HT 2, Room 107, next to the West Information Desk*

Pg. 97

- Electronic Writing Center

<http://www.gc.maricopa.edu/ewc/>

- If you don't attend Glendale CC, check with your educational institution; surely they have a writing center available to their students.



Today, many schools have professionally staffed writing centers and computer labs open to composition students. At Glendale CC, The Writing Center offers students free 30-minute appointments with a faculty member to discuss their writing.

To make an appointment, you'll need to sign the writing center appointment book at the West Information Desk in HT2. Phone reservations will not be accepted. Walk-in appointments are also accepted if no other student has already signed up for the time.

When you come to your appointment, bring a legible copy of any work you have done. Bring my handout/requirements for the particular assignment.

Finally, GWCC has an amazing Electronic Writing Center, where students who can't make an appointment can submit their essays electronically. A faculty member will spend 30 minutes critiquing it, and then email the advice to them, usually within 48 hours.

## Revision: How-To Steps

- I. **Rethink**- Purpose/Thesis/ Audience Pg. 98
- II. **Rethink**- Body Paragraphs:  
Ideas/Evidence 1<sup>st</sup>
- III. **Rethink**- Organization
- IV. **Rethink**- Style (clarity, sentences,  
point of view, transitions)
- V. **Edit**- Grammar, Punctuation,  
Spelling
- VI. **Proofread**- Revise, revise, revise

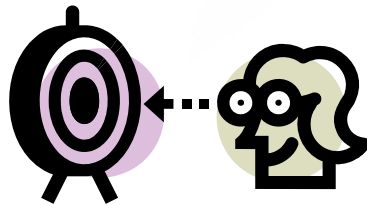


When revising, don't try to look at all of the parts of your paper at the same time. Trying to resee everything at once is not productive and will overwhelm you. There is no "right way" to revise. But, for the rest of this presentation, I will give you a suggested step-by-step process. \*read I-VI\*. Now lets look at these in more detail.

## Purpose & Thesis

- Purpose: Basic
- Thesis: Clear intent

Pg. 99, 19



Look at the directions and guidelines I provided, and ask if you have fulfilled the basic purpose of the assignment. Did you follow the directions carefully? See if you understand purpose of your essay. Are you trying to inform, persuade, or amuse your readers? Does this purpose you selected coincide with the nature of the assignment?

Now read the thesis. Does your essay reflect the clearly understood purpose by offering an appropriately narrowed and focused thesis? What if someone read your body paragraphs? Would they be able to create a correct thesis based on the information you gave? These are very important questions to ask to know if you have truly understood the purpose of the essay.



## Know your Audience

Pg. 99, 19

- Audience: Generally your audience will be students at who attend our college.
- Give particular attention to those students who could disagree with your arguments.



Knowing our audience will help you determine what *voice* you should use to achieve the proper tone in your essay. Have you considered your audience? For this class, your audience will usually be students at GWCC. Factors such as the age, education, and interests of your audience can make a difference in determining which points of your argument to stress or omit, which ideas need additional explanation, and what kind of language to adopt.

Also, give particular attention to those members of the audience who disagrees with your position. You can consider this group of people your “hostile audience”, and if you can convince the, you can convince anyone. So remember to give particular attention to your *hostile audience*.

# Rethinking Body Paragraphs

Pg. --

- A Tell-and-Show Process



Most of us who grew up in the United States remember going to Kindergarten class as a 5 or 6 year old and sharing a “show an tell experience.” I remember bringing a little figurine to class and sharing why it was special to me.

When rethinking our body paragraphs, let’s invert this idea from show and tell to TELL and SHOW.

## Tell = Topic Sentence

Is the topic sentence clearly  
connected to the thesis?

Pg. 99

Thesis: The United States, a bigger and more powerful nation, denies Puerto Rico of its rights and culture; the U.S. should not govern Puerto Rico as its commonwealth, and instead Puerto Ricans should be allowed to govern themselves as an independent nation.

Topic Sentence: One of the many benefits citizens from all democratic countries enjoy is the ability to choose their chief in command, but as a commonwealth under the United States, Puerto Rican citizens cannot vote during the presidential campaign.



The topic sentence of the body paragraph must be clear, and to the point. This is the TELL part. The topic sentence should also be clearly connected to your thesis and each of the major points presented in its body paragraph. In other words, each major topic sentence in your essay should further your readers' understanding, and thus acceptance of your essay's thesis.

To illustrate tell-and-show, I will use a segments from a former student's essay.

First, let's read the sample thesis in pink so that we know what the essay is supposed to be about.

\*Read Thesis\*

Notice that this thesis has the "essay map", discussed on pg 40 of the textbook; it points to the different topics the essay will discuss.

You will see that the topic sentence directly supports a part of the thesis as it discusses the "rights" of Puerto Ricans.

\*Read Topic Sentence\*

## Show: Evidence

- Variety of different pieces of evidence



- Fact vs. Opinion
- Opinions are not evidence
- Strong Evidence
- Must have enough evidence
- Suppress Emotions & Fallacies

Pg. 101-102

Objective: Puerto Ricans are allowed to participate in presidential primaries but not the final event.



Emotional: The clutch the U.S. has over Puerto Rico is sickening; it prevents hard-working Puerto Ricans from participating in their God-given right, to vote in the final presidential elections.



To support your opinions, you must offer evidence of one or more kinds. You have a variety of options to choose from. You might support one idea by using the experiences of others, such as friends and family. Notice that I said experiences, not opinion. A specific experience is a form of evidence; opinion is not evidence.

In another place in the paragraph, you might choose to cite expert information such as statistics, quotes, or authorities in a given field. You can also support ideas by using your own personal experiences. This means that you would use the personal pronoun “I”, but be careful when using these personal pronouns; we’ll discuss this later on. Know that the more convincing the support, the more likely your readers are to accept your opinions as true.

Also, suppress strong emotions, particularly of anger. If you come across to your reader as angry or upset, these emotions can discredit evidence that is otherwise solid.

Let’s read the objective example, in blue: \*Read Example\*

And now the emotional example, in green: \*Read Example\*

Notice how the first sounds somewhat objective and professional. In argument essays, you are naturally going to be pushing one point of view, so you’ll be biased. But the professional tone makes you SEEM unbiased, and it invites readers, who are reluctant to your ideas, into your essay.



## Show: Unpacking

Pg. 58-61

- Why? Why is the evidence valuable?

This is a frustration to many of the younger generation on the island because they are fighting wars and representing the U.S. while still being denied the privilege to choose their commander in chief. The island does have its own elections, where they get to choose who will become governor and who will become various members of the political cabinet, but all of these officials have limited power in deciding the fate of the island.



Possibly the most serious—and most common—weakness of all essays by novice writers is the lack of *effectively unpacking evidence*. The information in each paragraph must adequately explain, exemplify, define, or in some other way support the evidence. Vague generalities or repetitious ideas are not convincing. Be specific and resolute in your unpacking.

A nice way of unpacking is looking at your evidence and asking yourself, why is this evidence important?

Let me ask this question about the sample paragraph: Why is it important that for Puerto Ricans to be allowed to participate in the presidential primaries?

The answer is in the unpacked sentences. \*Read Example\*

## Show: Summarize/Reinforce

- Wrap your main point up.
- Reconnect to Topic Sentence/Thesis

Pg. --

As an independent nation Puerto Ricans would have the right to participate in elections, choosing who their leader would be.



Now that you have introduced the main idea of the paragraph through the topic sentence, and now that you have provided evidence and unpacked that evidence, you're ready to wrap up your main point. The concluding statement of the paragraph should reinforce the topic sentence.

So, in the example we read: \*Read Example\*

# The Complete Paragraph

Topic Sentence is in blue.

**Thesis:** The United States, a bigger and more powerful nation, denies Puerto Rico of its rights and culture; the U.S. should not govern Puerto Rico as its commonwealth, and instead Puerto Ricans should be allowed to govern themselves as an independent nation.

Pg. --

**Body Paragraph:** One of the many benefits citizens from all democratic countries enjoy is the ability to choose their chief in command, but as a commonwealth under the United States, Puerto Rican citizens cannot vote during the presidential campaign. They are allowed to participate in presidential primaries but not the final event. This is a frustration to many of the younger generation on the island because they are fighting wars and representing the U.S. while still being denied the privilege to choose their commander in chief. The island does have its own elections, where they get to choose who will become governor and who will become various members of the political cabinet, but all of these officials have limited power in deciding the fate of the island. As an independent nation Puerto Ricans would have the right to participate in elections, choosing who their leader would be.

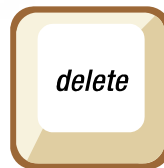


Let's see how the entire paragraph looks put together. First let's reread the thesis.

## If something feels wrong...

Pg. 103

- Decide details
- Delete
- Restructure



If you read the paragraph, and something just feels wrong, there are a few areas you can look at:

Look over the details; and ask if they are all directly connected to the topic sentence. If not, you might want to revise some wording or delete the section all together.

Another reason something could “feel wrong” is because there might be some evidence that needs to be deleted. Writers of all levels struggle deleting sentences that they worked so hard to construct, but remember, the best writers are the ones that know when to keep something good, and when to delete something that may sound good by itself, but hurts the paragraph’s overall purpose.

Finally, there may be times when you don’t need to delete anything at all. Instead, you might want to revise the organization of the paragraph. Copy the paragraph into a new word document, and play with the order of the sentence, and perhaps combine *SOME* (not too many) sentences. You might realize that the revision really clarifies and energizes your writing.





## Sentence Style

- Overly confusing? Tighten.
  - “*Rambling rose*”
  - Keep the point of view consistent (3<sup>rd</sup> person *they* – don’t switch to 1<sup>st</sup> person *we* mid-way)
  - Don’t be afraid to read aloud
- Simplistic? Combine.  
“*Dick and Jane*”

Pg. 104, 134



Perhaps you’ve heard this song, “*Rambling Rose*” sung by Nat King Cole. It’s about a girl who rambles so much that she practically talks her date to death. Well, don’t ramble your instructor to death in your essay! Be aware if your essay or paragraph begins in one subject, but slowly trickles towards another area. Also try to cut what the book calls “empty ‘deadwood’”. Deleting these areas ends up tightening your paragraphs, and having a clear, concise paragraph is great.

Also, don’t change your point of view mid sentence or paragraph. If you begin your essay discussing Puerto Rican citizens as “they”, the don’t switch mid paragraph—or mid sentence—to “we” or “you”.

If you grew up in the US, you might have read those old *Dick and Jane* books. They sound something like: “I see spot. See spot run. Run spot run!” Such writing is alright for beginning readers, but not in academia. Simple sentences with that follow a strict subject-verb format tend to sound choppy. That is why I recommend reading aloud; it’ll allow you to hear the rhythm and flow of your sentences, and if you feel yourself halt or pause, or what the book likes to call a *clunk!* then consider revising that section.



## Consistency: Point of View

Pg. 135

- 1<sup>st</sup> Person "I" - *Narrative Essays*
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Person "you" - *Avoid! Replace "You" with words like "society", "people" or "one".*
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Person "He/She" - *Professional & Formal essays (i.e. argumentative)*

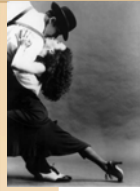


Now let's look at point of view. Point of view refers to 1st, 2nd, and 3rd person.

-1st person can be used 100% of the time when you write a narrative essay. It's appropriate in narrative essays because you're narrating your own personal experiences.

-2nd person refers to the single pronoun you. 2nd person should be avoided in almost all essays. The only time 2nd person is appropriate is when you write a letter.

-Now let's look at 3rd person. 3rd person is the primary type of pronoun you should use in professional and formal essays. When it comes to professional and formal essays, stick to the 3rd person point of view. Now, there is some debate among academic teachers on whether or not students should be allowed to use 1st person in formal essays. Some professors think it's okay for you to use 1st person, while others feel that you should never use 1st person in formal essays. As an English professor, I DO feel that it CAN be appropriate for you to use 1st person in formal essays. But you need to do this very carefully; we'll discuss this in the next slide. Just remember, when in doubt always use 3rd person in formal essays.



## Using 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Person in FORMAL ESSAYS: The Tango of the "I"



• **Love it:** Make good decisions (*i.e. when giving a specific personal example, in anecdote in an intro, personal narrative essay*)

• **Hate it:** Step back, be objective (*i.e. move from specific experience to analysis in 3<sup>rd</sup> person, "I think", "I believe"*)

Example: However, as a person born in Puerto Rico **I have enjoyed** many of the benefits commonwealth citizens enjoy. One of the most important benefits **I'm grateful for** is the right to American citizenship upon birth. If Puerto Rico remains a commonwealth, this is a benefit that future generations will continue to enjoy. But benefits such as these still do not amount to the larger benefit independency would bring, the benefit for **Puerto Ricans to govern themselves.**

Pg. 135



If you've ever seen any ballroom dancing, you might have seen the tango! It's a beautiful, romantic dance where part of the time, the couples dance in passionate embrace, but then mid-way through the dance, the woman is flung away from her partner in what seems to be passionate rejection. I'm sure my description of the Tango is inaccurate, but the image serves as an analogy of the use of the word "I".

It is a myth that the pronoun "I" should **never** be used in an essay; on the contrary, many of our best essays have used first person. However, some of your former teachers may have discouraged the use of 1<sup>st</sup> person for a good reason: Writing in the first person often produces too many empty phrases such as "I think that" and "I believe that." Like in the tango, these are moments where you should fling the "I" away from your essay, in rejection.

Nevertheless, the 1<sup>st</sup> person point of view can be appropriate in essays. In a personal narrative, for example, you can embrace your "I" with more freedom. However, in other essays like argumentative or compare/contrast, you should tango with the "I" it carefully. Look the example in blue.

\*Read Example\*



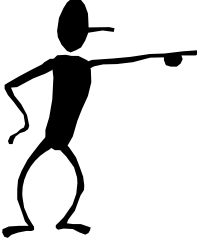
Note how at first, the specific personal example embraces the "I" –but only for a moment. As the personal experience concludes, and the essay moves on, the "I" is flung away and replaced by the 3<sup>rd</sup> person point of view.

2<sup>nd</sup> Person  
"You"

- Letters
- Replacements:
  - People
  - Society
  - Others
  - Many

~~You~~ Citizens should vote.

Pg. --



Do NOT use you in essays. 2<sup>nd</sup> person is generally used when giving directions or asking questions, such as in instructional manuals and letters. Often times, when students force themselves to write drafts omitting the word "you", they get stuck. For these students, I always suggest that they go ahead and use the word "you" in the rough draft. Then, as they revise their essays, they can begin replacing all of their "you-s" with key words like "people", "society", "others" or "many."

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Person "She/He"

- Any pronoun not including yourself.

Pg. --



3<sup>rd</sup> person pronouns, she/he/they/them/those/that/ etc. are always appropriate in essays, and you can feel more comfortable using these. You should feel that you rely most on 3<sup>rd</sup> person pronouns in essays.

# Verb Tense

Pg. 524 -20c

- Be consistent.

1) Big Joe *saw* the police car, so he *turns* into the next alley.

2) Big Joe *saw* the police car, so he *turned* into the next alley.



Just like there is a tendency to shift the point of view mid-way, there is also a tendency to shift verb tense mid-essay or sentence. Let's look at the examples in blue. Which one is correct? The second sentence because they maintain the same past-tense verb.

This may sound easy, like it's no big deal to keep a consistent verb tense, but it is different when you're in the moment of writing. Be careful not to shift verbs.

# Transitions

- Within paragraphs
- Between paragraphs

Pg. 70



Some paragraphs may need internal transitional words to help the reader move smoothly from one thought to the next so that the ideas do not appear disconnected or choppy. Transitions are also necessary between paragraphs for the same reason. Transitional words can introduce examples, compare, contrast, sequence, and signify results.

## Transitions: Giving Examples

- For example
- For instance
- Specifically
- In particular
- Namely
- Another
- Other
- In addition
- To illustrate

Pg. 70



Read slide



## Transitions: Comparison

- Similarly
- Not only...but also
- In comparison

Pg. 70



Read slide

## Transitions: Contrast

- Although
- But
- While
- In contrast
- However
- Though
- On the other hand
- Nevertheless

Pg. 70



Read slide

## Transitions: Sequence

- First...second...third
- Finally
- Moreover
- Also
- In addition
- Next
- Then
- After
- Furthermore
- And
- Previously

Pg. 70



I tend to use these at the beginning of body paragraphs. First-Second-Third may sound trivial, but they are actually a very nice way of organizing the paragraph.

## Transition: Results

- Therefore
- Thus
- Consequently
- As a result

Pg. 70



Read slide

## Key Words

- Repeat key words
- Pronouns substituting key words
- Parallel

Pg. 71-73

The US needs to relinquish  
dominance over it's smaller  
commonwealth ~~nations~~ Puerto Rico.



Sometimes a paragraph might feel wrong, not because the information isn't relevant, but because the information doesn't SOUND relevant. If you find yourself in this situation, you might want to use key words or phrases to connect the evidence back to the topic sentence.

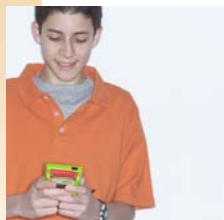
For instance, in our Puerto Rico example, the student could have said:

“The US needs to relinquish dominance over it's smaller commonwealth nations.”

This is somewhat vague and more importantly, it has nothing to do with the topic of the essay—Puerto Rico. By simply replacing the word *nations* with *Puerto Rico*, the statement instantly connects to the main idea of the paragraph:

“The US needs to relinquish dominance over it's smaller commonwealth, Puerto Rico.”

## Writer's Voice vs. Spoken Voice



- “Yo Mrs. Brown!” “Chillax!”

- “Hey! Why don’t you correct my English? Don’t you want me to be good at English?”



When I was teaching high school, I had a student who loved to over-use slang when talking to me. I remember him saying “Yo Miss Brown” and “Chillax!” all the time. He seemed to be daring me to correct him, but I would quietly smile and instead enjoy our conversations. One day, flabbergasted by my uninterest in his verbal grammar, he asked me “Hey, why don’t you ever correct my English? Don’t you want me to be good at English?!” I knew this question would come up sooner or later. I explained to him the difference between the spoken voice and the writing voice.

## Writer's Voice vs. Spoken Voice

- I dare anyone to hold an engaged and natural conversation that adheres to all standard-English grammar rules



The spoken voice cannot follow standard-English grammar 100% of the time. I dare anyone to hold an engaged and natural conversation that adheres to all standard-English grammar rules. Narrating this PowerPoint has been particularly difficult as I have tried to be grammatically correct, so as not to confuse students who I cannot immediately interact with. The spoken voice is also the expression of the self, of a person's identity. I could not ask my high school student to speak like I do, just as he couldn't ask me to speak like him. Finally, spoken voice is informal by nature because it is expressive and full of non-verbal communication.

## Writer's Voice vs. Spoken Voice

- Spoken Voice: Less formal/Conversational
- Writer's Voice: Standard/Academic

Pg. --

Academic Writer's voice is standard, allowing people from various different backgrounds to communicate effectively in school settings.



The writer's voice is different. Unlike the spoken voice, it can be controlled by standard English grammar. It is also a standard form of written language that is universal in academic settings. This allows for consistency and clarity throughout age-groups, education-levels, and regional areas. A professor at Glendale CC for example, could read and understand an essay written by a much older student from, let's say, Louisiana.



## Writer's Voice vs. Spoken Voice

- Suppress your spoken voice when writing.
- Look for "SPOKEN VOICE" in my comments on your essays



*"So anyways, it's really important for citizens of the US to vote on election day. Otherwise it's pretty much like wasting the rights we've been given."*

*"It's critically important for citizens of the US to vote on election day. Otherwise, Americans will be wasting the rights that have been given to them."*



When writing, the spoken voice will often creep into your essay. Let's look at the example in pink, note that the underlined sections are pieces of the spoken voice that has crept into the writing.

\*Read Pink\*

Did you see the mis-use of the personal pronoun "we"? Why is it a misuse? Because it was not used to cite a specific personal experience. Notice how the little phrases "so anyways" and "it's pretty much like" are all phrases you can hear someone say, but they're not appropriate in writing.

Now let's read the revised blue writing. \*Read Blue\*

I urge you to suppress your spoken voice. I will use the term "spoken voice" when grading your essay to help you see where you've deviated from the academic writer's voice. It is harder than you might realize to suppress your spoken voice, but with practice, your writer's voice will come to you more naturally, and you will have to police your spoke voice less and less.

# Spelling & Punctuation...

Pg.

...counts.

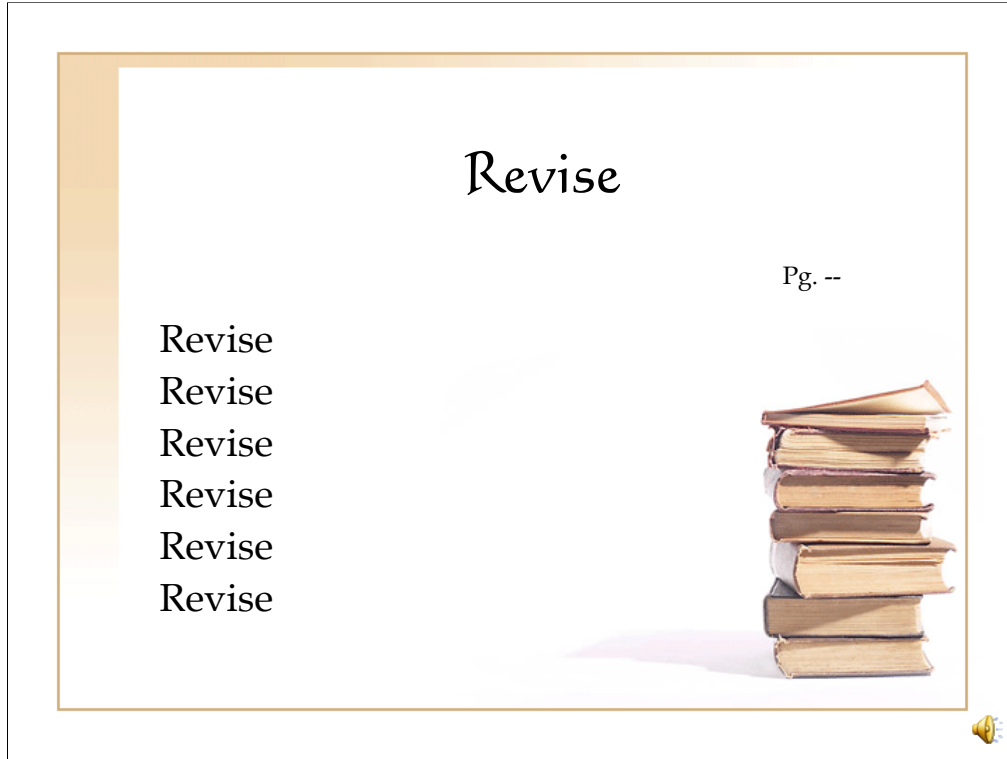
[www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com)

[www.thesaurus.com](http://www.thesaurus.com)

Spell-checker\*



I always seem to get this questions: "Mrs. Brown, does spelling count?" Yes. Grammar and spelling always count.



And to ensure excellent writing, remember to revise more than you may think is necessary! Don't forget that the writing center at your school is available both online and in person! This concludes the PowerPoint slide show "Revising Your Essay".