



2018-19 High School Versus Middle School Revision Guide

Editing Comments

- ✓ **Colloq** is short for **colloquial**, which means informal. You always want to have formal language in your papers, avoiding the phrases of conversation and informal writing. If I wrote the word **ELEVATE** somewhere on your paper, you need to get rid of this informal language.
- ✓ **D** is short for **development**. This note means that you should expand on your argument, typically answering the questions **how** and **why**. It's not enough for a paper to assert claims; you need to prove them with analysis showing how and why those claims are true.
- ✓ **WC** means **word choice**.
- ✓ **P/V** means passive voice. Make the sentence active voice.
- ✓ **T** means **thesis statement** and **TS** means **topic sentence**.

Revising Versus Editing

- ✓ The second draft of your paper should be a **revision**, not just an **edit**. Editing the paper merely means correcting issues of proofing and small mistakes that crept into the rough draft. A revision entails occasionally scrapping or rewriting a whole paragraph, restructuring the piece or sentences, even entertaining the idea that you need to develop a brand new argument. A revised paper will reflect new thought, new consideration, and new structure.
- ✓ My big suggestions for revision are often written in the margins of the paper and describe sentences or paragraphs as a whole. **These are the most important changes to make in your paper.** DO NOT IGNORE!
- ✓ Do not wait until the last minute to read my comments. Clear up any confusion in the days before you sit down to write the next draft.

Essay Myth busting 101

- ✓ Do not assume that you should write like your reader is an idiot. Assume that the reader is an intelligent person who does not need to have basic claims explained to him. For instance, please don't explain to the reader in-depth that high schools have seven periods. Assume that we know that.
- ✓ Essays are not about writing non-controversial ideas that readers already know. You should always be challenging the reader with new information, new ideas, and brand-new ways of seeing the world. For instance, instead of telling the reader that high school and middle school both are focused on preparing students for college, speculate on why that might be true.

Revision Checklist

- ___ **The thesis needs to answer the prompt.**
- ___ **The introduction is STAMPY and contains a **hook, bridge, and thesis**.**
- ___ **Have sub-topics in your paragraphs.** Use the outlining strategy we discussed in class, in which each paragraph has two sub-topics under its main idea. This will avoid repetition and overly short responses.
- ___ **Watch the use of "you."** While you certainly can use the word in a formal essay, you want to limit its use to circumstances when you are directly calling out the reader.
- ___ **Don't make the conclusion a summary of the essay.** A lot of you wrote *really long* conclusions that restated much of what you wrote in the body of the paper. Don't feel the need to re-tell the reader what you've just said. Trust that they will remember it. ☺ A better approach with the conclusion is to bookend your work from the introduction.
- ___ **Your essay must include one naysayer.** A naysayer is when you introduce an opposing view inside the body of a paragraph and then respond to it. For instance, you might say something like this:

While some parents might argue that the classes in high school are just like those in middle school, they overlook the importance of students being able to choose more classes related to their passions and interests.