Revising the Draft
(before editing)

Revising for Content

Every sentence needs to say something of value. Usually the first sentence of each paragraph within a first draft is a running jump into the topic; the real information is in the second sentence.

CAUTION:
- Relatively. Ask yourself “Relative to what?” when you see this.
- Saying that something is interesting. Maybe it is to the author, but the reader should make this call, not be told that it is so.
- Be aware of audience; writing for peers not instructor: briefly explain scientific terms within the sentence using the term.

Examples of revising for Content:
- Salinity is a very important factor in marine environments.
- There are many physical and biological factors that affect the growth of insect populations.

Revising for Clarity

Look at relationship of main SUBJECT and VERB. Is the sentence saying what it means?

Examples of revising for Clarity:
- Theses methods have different resorption rates and tail shapes.
- They measured the change in algal mass of each sample with a crab.
- Ferguson (1963) examined autoradiographs of sea star digestive tissue after being fed radioactive clams.
- This determination was based on mannitol’s relative toxicity to sodium chloride.
- The surface area of mammalian small intestines is 3 to 7 times greater than reptiles.

Revising for Completeness

Look for vague numerical adjectives: many, more, some
Look for demonstratives: this, that, it
Look for ect or et cetera and complete thought

Revising for Conciseness

Focus on SUBJECT VERB placement. Find the main subject and pair it with a present verb to give it action. Reconsider all prepositional and adjective phrases for their contribution to the sentence.

1- Eliminate unnecessary prepositions
2- Avoid weak verbs
3- Do not overuse passive voice
4- Make the main subject the agent of the action

Examples of revising for Conciseness:
- The data indicates that...
- It is interesting to note that...
- It has been documented that....
- Analysis of the data indicated that...
- The fact of the matter is that...
- Evidence has shown that...

Eliminate “running jumps” at the beginning of sentences.

Revising for Flow

Reduce friction or turbulence for the reader by linking sentences and paragraphs allowing an effortless, logical transition from one idea to the next.

Use repetition and summary to remind the reader what has come before and help the reader anticipate what is coming next.

Transitional words/phrases: in contrast, however, although, for example, thus, whereas, even so, nevertheless, moreover, despite, in addition to...