



PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY

# **The Writing Center Presents:**

## **Editing**

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# Editing

Once you have revised a draft for content and organization, it's time to look closely at your sentences and words.

Turning a “blah” sentence into a memorable one or finding exactly the right word to express a thought can result in writing that is really worth reading.

# Cohesion

- Check the connections between sentences
  - If you need to signal the relationship from one sentence to the next, use a transitional word or phrase.

# Check Your Sentences



- If you noticed that a sentence was hard to understand or didn't sound right when you read your paper aloud, think about how you might rephrase it.
- Often you can pick up problems with verbs, pronouns, and modifiers by reading aloud.

# Vary Sentence Length



- If a sentence is too long, break it into two or more sentences.
- If you notice a string of short sentences that sound choppy, combine them.

# Varying Sentence Openings



- Vary sentence openings by beginning with
  - a dependent clause,
  - a phrase, and adverb,
  - a conjunctive adverb, or
  - a coordinating conjunction.



# Examine Language

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Examine tone for slang, jargon, emotional language, and your level of formality.

# Eliminate Wordiness

- Look for long expressions that can easily be shortened
  - (“at this point in time” –“now”)
- Remove unnecessary repetition
- Remove unnecessary qualifiers
  - (rather, very, somewhat, little)



# Use Action Verbs

- Any time you can use a verb besides a form of be (is, are, was, were) or a verb ending in -ing, take advantage of the opportunity to make your style more lively.
- Sentences that begin with “There is (are)” and “It is” often have better alternatives.

# Use Specific and Inclusive Language

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- As you read, stay alert for any vague words or phrases.
- Check to make sure you have used inclusive language throughout.

# Study Word Choice

- Are the nouns primarily abstract and general or concrete and specific? Too many abstract and general nouns can result in boring prose.
- How many verbs are forms of be- be, am, is are, was, were, being, been? If be verbs account for more than a third of your total verbs, you are probably overusing them.

# All Information Obtained From

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Lunsford, Andrea A. The Everyday Writer.  
Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2004.

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# The Writing Center Contact Info

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