1.4: Editing and Revising

Revising, editing, and proofreading are the most important steps in college writing, but they are steps many beginning college writers are tempted to skip. Don’t be one of those! Students who don’t revise, edit, or proofread often turn in great ideas, but in a form that is hard to understand or that just isn’t up to the standard of formal academic work. These steps don’t have to be hard, but they can make a huge difference in what your work says about you and how you are perceived. They can also make a huge difference in your grades!

Revising

Revising is the “big picture” work. Look at what you’ve written to see if it all makes sense. Check your logic; have you explained everything clearly and shown how it all ties together? Do you have enough details or examples to illustrate what you’re trying to say and to make the essay interesting? Does each body paragraph really belong in this essay? Is there another paragraph that you really should write and include? Be sure to do these “big picture” checks before you get into the details of editing and proofreading since any big changes will mean you just have to edit and proofread again.

Editing

Editing is a stage between revising and looking for typos. At this stage, check to be sure all your sentences are clear. Also, check the beginning of each paragraph and anywhere else that you introduce a new idea and make sure that passage flows smoothly from the passage that came before. If not, add a transitional word, phrase, or even sentence to help bridge the gap.
More on Editing and Revising

1. Editing and Revising: One and the Same?
2. Sentence Structure
3. Editing Tips
4. Perspectives on Style
   1. Richard Lanham on Prose Styles
5. External Links

References

- Jenny Crisp
- From Rhetoric and Composition/Editing