

Revising and Editing Your Reflection with *A Writer's Reference*

The authors of *A Writer's Reference* note that “[r]evising is rarely a one-step process” (Hacker and Somers 19).

Editing for surface-level correctness is essential, but it is not the only step, and it should not be the first.

Begin instead by re-seeing (or re-visioning) your reflection and considering its focus and organization. Ask these questions:

- Is it a focused reflection rather than an overview of your work in English 111?
- Does it present a clear thesis, one that is not simply a statement of fact about one or more aspects of the course?
- Would it benefit from a different organization? If the strongest piece of textual evidence appears in the first body paragraph, try moving it to the last one.

After you have addressed those questions, examine each paragraph one by one, from first to last.

Introduction

Does the opening paragraph provide a hook for the reader? If not, consider using one of the strategies on page 14.

Does the introduction end with a clear **thesis**? Can the thesis be a point of disagreement among reasonable people? (If the answer to both questions isn't yes, revise accordingly.) For more on writing a thesis, see page 69.

Body Paragraphs

- Does each body paragraph present evidence that supports your thesis? Evidence may take the form of examples from your own writing (quotations or paraphrases), descriptions of your work in the course, or citations from relevant secondary sources.
- Are the paragraphs patterned in suitable ways? In reflective essays, the most common patterns are examples and illustrations, description, process, comparison and contrast, and analogy. For more on paragraph patterns, see 44-49.
- In the body of the reflection, do you integrate at least two relevant secondary sources? For recommended sources (in addition to your own essays written for English 111), see the list of sample sources in the October 11 blog post: <https://janelucas.com/2020/11/11/eng-111-beginning-your-reflection/>.

Conclusion

- Is the conclusion a well-developed paragraph? Does it reiterate the thesis without repeating it verbatim? For more on writing conclusions, see page 18.

After you have revised the paragraphs one by one, review the MLA section of *A Writer's Reference* to ensure your document complies with style guidelines.

MLA Style

The MS Word file that you will submit to Moodle should comply with the format guidelines for MLA (Modern Language Association) manuscripts, including **in-text citations with signal phrases (384)**, and **works cited entries (392-423)**. You can use the MS Word files of my sample essays, posted on my blog and in Moodle, as templates.

Remember that in addition to submitting your revision to Moodle, you will publish it as a post on your WordPress blog. Your blog post will omit the first-page information included in your file submitted to Moodle (your name, my name, course, section, and date). You will include in your blog post an image that documents some part of your writing process away from the screen, such as a photo of your reading notes or a page of your handwritten draft.