

Creating an Editing Game Plan



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The University Center for Writing-based Learning

- **We're for everyone!** We work with all writers at all stages of the writing process.
- We offer **four types of appointments** to best fit your writing needs and style of learning.
- Between our two offices, we're open **seven days a week**.
 - SAC 212 (Lincoln Park) and Lewis 1600 (Loop)

WORKSHOP GOALS



By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- Identify different approaches to editing
- Learn what approaches might work best for you
- Craft an editing game plan that you can use for your next writing project

What are your goals?

SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU



- When you have finished a writing project, long or short, do you begin editing with a plan in place?
- What are some of your strategies?
- Also, what sort of things do you write? Tell us about them!

HOW MIGHT WE APPROACH EDITING?



From the [University of Leicester's Writing Resources](#) website:

“It may be tempting to work paragraph by paragraph, trying to perfect each one before attending to the next. This is, however, neither an efficient nor an effective method for editing a large document. Several of the processes, e.g.: maintaining a logical thread throughout; and identifying duplication; require more of an overview to be taken, involving review at a chapter or thesis level, rather than at a sentence or paragraph level.”

HOW MIGHT WE APPROACH EDITING?



What does that quote mean?

- Approach individual elements in the text
- Could be more effective than focusing on one paragraph at a time

Let's talk a bit about how that might appear—and what some of these elements in the text might be.

ARE ALL ELEMENTS OF THE DRAFT EQUAL?



First, let's break this down into two parts: **Global** and **Local**

For example,

- **Global Elements** might be structural or organizational—think of how paragraphs are fitting together
- **Local Elements** are generally sentence-level concerns like grammar and punctuation.

GLOBAL VS. LOCAL: WHICH COMES FIRST?



Every draft is different, what is most important to focus on first will vary.

While there might be sentence-level elements that you'll want to address, taking a look at the big picture is a good way to begin.

That way, we can get a plan in place for other elements as well.

LOOKING AT THE BIG PICTURE



What are **global** elements of a paper?

- What affects the work as a whole?
- What is your work aiming to accomplish?

A few elements to think about:

- Purpose
- Organization
- Structure

PURPOSE



If a text isn't meeting its purpose, then looking at punctuation won't matter. Ask yourself:

- What is the academic purpose of this work?
- How might a reader interpret that purpose?
- Is that purpose consistent throughout?

While it's fine to make small edits along the way, reading a draft through with purpose in mind can save a lot of time in the end.

ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE



Every text is different, but once you've discovered your writing's purpose, it can be useful to evaluate organization and structure.

- How do your paragraphs fit together?
- How do your paragraphs organize your information?
- Why did you choose to organize your ideas this way?

ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE



Organization

- Global element
- The outline of the work as a whole— how did you order your paragraphs?

Structure

- Local element
- The ordering & flow of ideas within each paragraph

STRATEGIES FOR ORGANIZATION & STRUCTURE



Organization

- Try a reverse outline
 - Write an outline of your draft
 - Are your ideas in the right order?
 - Is there a more logical way to arrange this?

Structure

- Read the paper aloud
 - How do the sentences sound?
 - Do the words sound appropriate?
 - Does the order of sentences create a good flow?

PROOFREADING VS. EDITING



Proofreading

- Focuses on the local elements of your work
- Includes correcting spelling, punctuation, grammar, etc.

Editing

- Focuses on the global elements of your work as well
- Often consists of revision

PROOFREADING STRATEGIES



- Focus on one type of error at a time
 - Spelling, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.
- Don't rely on spell check
- Take your time
- Read on the sentence level
- Circle punctuation
- Read from end to beginning
- Develop a strategy

Source: [UNC Writing Center](#)



Editing has multiple elements:

- Content
 - Have you included all the necessary information?
- Overall Structure
 - Does it flow logically?
- Structure within paragraphs
- Clarity
- Style
- Citations

EDITING: CONSISTENCY



Inconsistency is often more noticeable than an error

Checking for consistency:

- Punctuation
- Verb tense
- Capitalization of certain words

EDITING: STRATEGIES FOR CONSISTENCY



Consistency is often a tough thing to strategize for, but here are some we have found to be helpful:

- Highlighting
- Search & Replace
- Keyword List
- Word Usage Checks

EDITING: LENGTH



Length is both a global and local concern

Global

- Length is part of your overall organization
- How long is this paper? How long should you spend on each idea?
- How can you best break up ideas to convey your overall purpose?

Local

- How long should each individual sentence & paragraph be?

EDITING: STRATEGIES FOR LENGTH



When you don't have enough words:

- Look at your paper section by section— have you thoroughly explained everything?
- Where can you add more detail?

When you have too many words:

- Are there any sentences you can condense?
- Have you overused any filler words, like “that” or “very”? Ctrl + F

ADDITIONAL EDITING STRATEGIES



After the first draft is done, put it away for a few days.

- Have other people read your draft and see what jumps out at them.
- Have more than one person read it—what comments were most common?

What feedback should you follow, and what should you ignore?

ACTIVITY



Think about your strengths and weaknesses as a writer. Make a note of these, or just remember them.

Try to identify 3 strengths & 3 weaknesses.

Think about each of your strengths & weaknesses:

- Are they global?
- Are they local?

What strategies that we've discussed today might you use?

FINAL THOUGHTS



Editing can be time-consuming—but it's worth it!

Editing helps you polish your work, and get the best version of your words out into the world.

Editing can give you more agency, confidence, and empowerment as a writer!



Questions?



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