“If a teacher told me to revise, I thought that meant my writing was a broken-down car that needed to go to the repair shop. I felt insulted. I didn't realize the teacher was saying, "Make it shine. It's worth it." Now I see revision as a beautiful word of hope. It's a new vision of something. It means you don't have to be perfect the first time. What a relief!"

--Naomi Shihab Nye
Revision Strategies

Presenter: Michelle Detorie
Student Learning Outcomes

After attending this workshop, students should be able to do the following:

- Identify strategies for revision.
- Match revision strategies to particular stages of the writing process.
- Apply revision strategies to their own writing.
What is revision?

- Revision means, literally, to re-see.
- Revision is a thinking process that happens throughout the writing process.
  - Revision often entails rethinking what you have written.
  - Revision involves discovery as well as change.
Why Revise?

• Revision helps you – the writer – learn more about what you want to say.

• Revision allows you – the writer – to think about how your writing works for a reader.
All experienced writers revise.

Colette wrote everything over and over.

Hemingway rewrote the ending to *Farewell to Arms* 39 thirty-nine times “to get the words right.”
Re-think
Rearrange
Rewrite
“My first draft usually has only a few elements worth keeping. I have to find what those are and build from them and throw out what doesn’t work...”

— Susan Sontag
(Later he goes into catalytic state in coffee pot where proctax thinker drank and poured him up outside where he can see and hear neggers rob white-men looking for prostitutes; then he is rolled by these two—this fellow helps them by cripple, then by child. Around corner.)

I walked back to Harlem at top speed, never slackening my pace until blank face began to dominate the streets. God, what had come over me? What had happened to people, couldn't they see me? Didn't they know that I was nothing like other people? First the eviction and now this, one group as confused as the other! Had I become invisible and then had a terrifying thought: Perhaps I was everything, or nothing, depending upon who was looking at me at the moment! Hadn't I acted the role of priest as quickly as I had played the ———? This was frightening, because I hadn't wanted to do either—or at least I had gone along and who knew? I would do next? Perhaps there was someone who was whispering that I was a bank robber, a Dillinger or Robin Hood—impossible to find myself masked and with gun in demand on the banknote for a teller. And what if someone took the notion that I was a moron? I might find myself arrested for indecent exposure. This would have to stop now, today, I thought as I passed a looking-glass. I knew who I was, perhaps, but not who I was. And what I appeared to be to others was liable to come into serious trouble. No doubt the police were watching for me. This very minute. But I wasn't sure; perhaps by now had come to look like anybody and everyone and not everybody. Could look at a man and determine the quality of his voice. And yet remembered stopping around a car, that had stopped too far into the intersection, that certain type. Negro did one of our alto and contralto singers, had tended to be short dark girls... Any way, they couldn't look at me at tell what I'd say in a speech anymore than the crowd of Lavery's diary and era what he had to say inside. Besides, I wasn't to know what I would say myself. Lord, how simple life had seemed on the campus where everyone had had his name and his role...}

Ralph Ellison: Invisible Man
“The rough draft is a big mess...I just need to get everything down on paper...By the time I write my next draft, I have a clearer idea of where I'm going.”

—Kazuo Ishiguro
Considerations

- Each writer’s writing process is unique; pay attention to what works for you.
- Seek feedback from readers (tutors, instructors, friends)
Considerations: Strategies to use on your own

- Play roles of both writer and reader
One way to think about it:

When you write, the text reminds you of pictures that you already have in your head—and it is almost impossible to forget those pictures when you’re reading your own text.

A reader, however, has to draw the picture from scratch.
Considerations: Strategies to use on your own

- Play roles of both writer and reader
- Read actively and make notes on a paper copy of your essay
I often compose on the computer, but I still work longhand as well. I print out a lot—I type my horrible early drafts and print them out and write all over them.

—Andrea Barrett
Active Reading

- Read a print copy of your paper in the same way you would a textbook:
  - Use **highlighters**, **underlines**, **circles**, or other symbols you use
  - Ask yourself questions with your reader in mind (Does the introduction include the central topic of my paper? Is this point fully explained?)
  - Read out loud
Reading Out Loud

Reading aloud is a critical part of my process…it really helps you to hear the work in a different way.

—Jennifer Egan, winner of the 2011 Pulitzer Prize in Fiction
Considerations: Strategies to use on your own

- Play roles of both writer and reader
- Read actively and make notes on a paper copy of your essay
- Follow an “order of concerns”
Order of Concerns

Global: paper meets assignment, thesis, essay structure, introduction, conclusion

Paragraph: topic sentence, supporting evidence, transitions, citations

Sentence: grammar, punctuation, spelling, style
One way to think about it…
Activity: Practicing Strategies

- Read the sample essay
- Practice strategies:
  - Global Level
  - Paragraph level
  - Sentence level
Revision Strategies at the Global level

- Re-read the assignment sheet: does your paper meet the requirements (type of essay, length, format)?
- Underline the thesis: does it answer the assignment and let your reader know the main point of your paper?
- Re-read your conclusion: does it restate the thesis?
Revision Strategies at the Paragraph level

- Underline each topic sentence: does it state the main idea of the paragraph? Does it match the thesis?
- Identify your evidence
- Identify your analysis of the evidence
- Underline transitions: is the reader being lead forward?
Revision Strategies at the Sentence level

- Slowly read aloud: listen for punctuation pauses and careless errors. (Alternatively, have a friend or writing tutor read aloud to you.)

- Read sentences in reverse order, from last to first: check each sentence as a statement unrelated to the content.

- If you find a grammar error you can identify, look for a pattern of these throughout the paper (read paper only looking for that error).
Next Steps: Revision Strategies

- Review the self-editing handout for suggestions.
- Try some of the strategies on your next assignment.
- Use the DLA to identify your current writing concerns when you visit the Writing Center.
- Meet with a tutor and/or your instructor to enhance your writing.

**Remember:**

*Writing Center tutors can help you revise your paper on global, paragraph, and sentence levels.*

*Mon-Thurs 9-7 and Fri 9-3*

*Make an appointment today!*
Additional Resources

For more information about self-editing your paper, explore these additional resources, available in the Writing Center or on our website at: http://sbcc.edu/clrc/writing_center.

- Assignment Analysis
- The Writing Process
- YOUR Writing Process
- Checking the Structure of Your Essay
- Structure of a General Expository Essay
- Independent Grammar Workshop
- Building Complex Sentences
- Correct Comma Use
Upcoming CLRC Workshops Wednesdays & Thursdays, 1 – 2 PM

- Writing Skills Workshops
  - Exploring Fiction – Wednesday, October 22\textsuperscript{nd}
  - Essentials of Research—Wednesday, October 29\textsuperscript{th}
  - Introduction to Citation—Thursday, October 30\textsuperscript{th}
  - MLA Citation—Wednesday, November 12\textsuperscript{th}
  - APA Citation—Thursday, November 13\textsuperscript{th}

- Learning Skills Workshops

http://www.sbcc.edu/clrc/workshops.php
Thank you

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