BECOMING A STRONG SELF-EDITOR

Becoming a good self-editor is all about evaluating your text objectively. This handout discusses some general areas to focus on as well as tips for taking your paper from a rough draft to a polished work. The more you learn about your strengths and weaknesses as a writer, the easier it will become to prioritize areas to revise/edit.

Try not to revise and edit everything at once! Read through your paper several times with a different focus for each reading. For example, you might look at citations the first time through and sentence fragments the next time.

REVISING VS. EDITING

1. **REVISING happens when you are perfecting your content.**
   - <u>Check your</u>:
     - ✓ Organization
     - ✓ Thesis Statement
     - ✓ Scholarly Sources
     - ✓ Potential Plagiarism
   - TIPS:
     - o Revise your content *before* looking for small errors like grammar/awkward wording, etc.
     - o Compare the paper to your prompt to make sure you fulfill the requirements.
     - o Skim your paper asking yourself the following:
       - ▪ What is each paragraph/section about?
       - ▪ What is its function within my text?
     - o Check that scholarly sources provide evidence for each major point you make.
     - o Seek out feedback on your text from another person, your professor, or the writing lab.

2. **EDITING occurs when you adjust the finer points of your text.**
   - <u>Check your</u>:
     - ✓ Formatting (MLA, APA, or Turabian)
     - ✓ Spelling
     - ✓ Grammar & Punctuation
     - ✓ Active Voice
     - ✓ Clarity/Flow
   - TIPS:
     - o Only edit *after* you have finished revising your content.
     - o Set your text aside before you start editing (anywhere from an hour to a day).
     - o Read out loud or with someone.
     - o Read the text backwards to catch grammar or spelling mistakes.

PRACTICE NOW

Writing Lab | writing@regent.edu | 757.352.4925