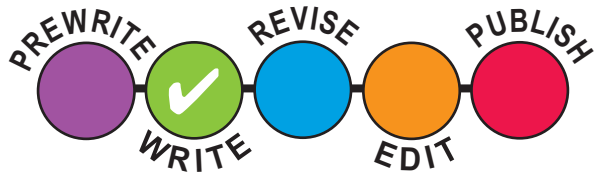




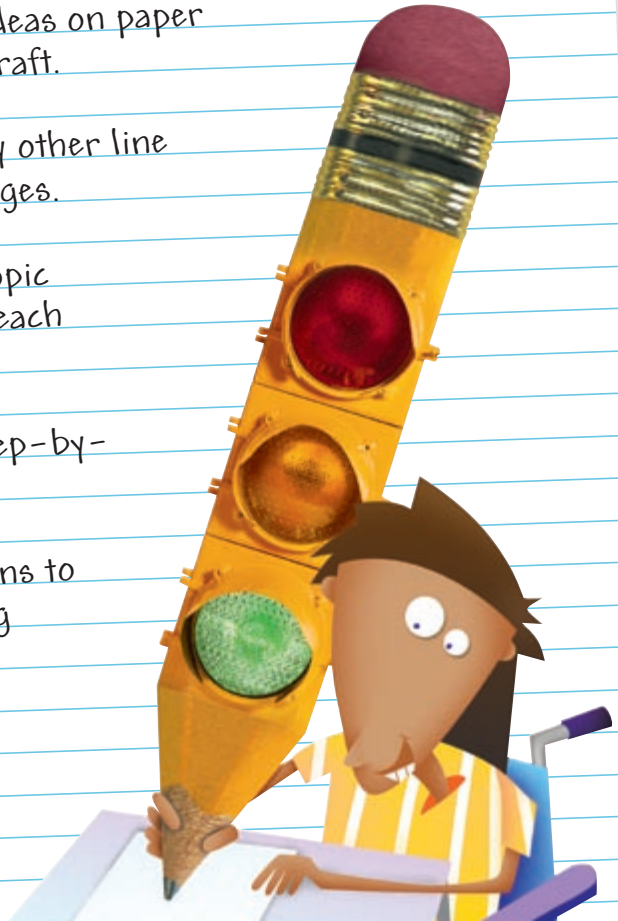
# Writing



Once you've finished your prewriting, it's time to write your first draft. You're ready to write a first draft when you know enough about your topic and have written a clear focus statement.

## Keys to Effective Writing

1. Use your organized list as a planning guide.
2. Get all your ideas on paper in your first draft.
3. Write on every other line for later changes.
4. Use a clear topic sentence for each paragraph.
5. Add clear, step-by-step details.
6. Use transitions to tie everything together.



## Writing Getting the Big Picture

The chart below shows how the parts of a how-to essay fit together. (The examples are from the sample essay on pages 173–176.) You're ready to write your essay once you . . .

- know enough about the steps in the process.
- state your topic in a clear focus statement.
- plan your paragraphs and write your topic sentences.

### Beginning

The **beginning** introduces the topic and tells why the activity is important or interesting. It also gives the focus statement.

#### Focus Statement

A beginning papermaker will find the process easy, enjoyable, and useful if he or she follows these basic steps.

### Middle

The **middle** gives all the how-to information and a step-by-step explanation.

#### Three Topic Sentences

To begin, prepare the paper pulp.  
To continue, work with the pulp.  
To finish, press the paper after it has drained.

### Ending

The **ending** may summarize the process and offer some final thoughts.

#### Closing Sentences

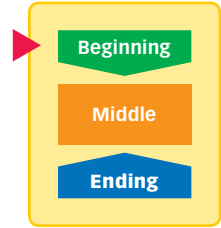
So have some fun, save a tree, and give papermaking a try!

## Starting Your Essay

In the first part of your expository essay, you should introduce the topic, say something interesting or fun about it, and state your focus.

You can also add voice to your essay if you begin with a personal story.

- Share how you became interested in this process.
- Tell how you first learned this process.
- Show why the reader may like the activity.



## Beginning Paragraph

In the paragraph below, Soledad uses a story to capture the reader’s attention. The focus statement gives the main idea of the essay—making paper is fun, easy, and useful.

The writer’s interest is explained.

Materials are listed.

The focus statement is given (underlined).

*On a class trip to the Natural History Museum, I saw paper that had been made by ancient Egyptians. It was beautiful, and I wondered if I could make paper, too. I discovered that if you want to make paper, you need the following items: old newspapers, a piece of wire screen, a bucket or pan, two pieces of felt, a rolling pin, a blender, and some water. After a few tries, I found that making paper is fun, easy, and useful.*

EXPOSITORY

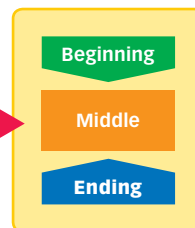


**Write your beginning paragraph.** When you write your beginning paragraph, do the following three things:

- 1 Introduce your topic in an interesting way.
- 2 Include a clear focus statement.
- 3 Lead into your first middle paragraph.

## Writing Developing the Middle Part

In the middle paragraphs of your how-to essay, you must explain the process step-by-step. Each paragraph should cover one main part of the process (1, 2, and 3 in your organized list from page 170). Look at how the steps are handled in the middle paragraphs on these two pages.



### Connecting Your Sentences

The following transitions can be used to connect sentences and to show chronological or time order in a how-to essay.

First	One	First of all	One way	To begin
Second	Then	Next	Another way	To continue
Third	Another	Finally	A third way	To finish

*Remember:* The last sentence of each paragraph should get the reader ready to move on to the next part of the process.

### Middle Paragraphs

In the three middle paragraphs that follow, the underlined transitions help connect the sentences. The transitions move the reader from one step to the next.

Topic  
Sentence 1

Specific steps  
and details  
linked with  
transitions  
(underlined)

*To begin, prepare the paper pulp. You can make pulp from newspapers, brown paper bags, magazine pages, or just about any other kind of paper. First, tear the paper into small strips. Then, pour two cups of water into the blender. Next, sprinkle in a few handfuls of the shredded paper. Finally, cover the blender, press the medium-speed button, and blend for a few seconds. When the mixture in the blender looks like thick potato soup, your paper pulp is ready.*



Topic  
Sentence 2

Transitions  
(underlined)

Topic  
Sentence 3

*To continue, work with the pulp. Pour it into a flat pan with clean water and a piece of wire screen in it. Now is the time to add fun things like grass, flower petals, or glitter. During this step, keep the pulp from settling on the bottom by stirring it gently. After that, move the screen around so that the paper pulp settles onto it. Cover the screen as evenly as possible. Then, slowly lift it out of the water and let the water drain.*

*To finish, press the paper after it has drained. Turn your paper-covered screen over onto one of the pieces of felt. The paper should fall off the screen easily. If it doesn't, just tap the back of the screen. Next, put the other piece of felt on top of the paper. Roll the rolling pin over the top layer of felt to squeeze out all the extra water. Finally, remove the damp paper from between the pieces of felt and hang it in a sunny place. In about three hours, you will have a sheet of paper.*



**Write your middle paragraphs.** Using your organized list from page 170, write your middle paragraphs. Follow the “Drafting Tips” below.

## Drafting Tips

- **If you have trouble getting started**, try writing as if you were talking to a friend about your topic.
- **If you have trouble continuing with your writing**, write for 3- to 5-minute spans with breaks in between. See what happens.

## Writing Ending Your Essay

After you've explained all the steps, you may end your essay by summarizing the process and making some final comments about your topic. Your ending may also encourage the reader to try the activity.

Beginning

Middle

Ending

### Ending Paragraph

End with an invitation to try the activity.

*Papermaking is an easy, inexpensive hobby that is lots of fun. Your friends and family will love to get notes and cards on your homemade paper. You can also feel proud that you are helping to save trees by recycling paper. So have some fun, be creative, and save a tree. Give papermaking a try!*



Read the three sets of final sentences below. Which one of these three endings do you think works the best? Why?

1. So have some fun, be creative, and save a tree. Give papermaking a try!
2. This recycling of paper creates more ideas. Besides that, you'll enjoy wrapping gifts or covering school books with your paper.
3. I, like the ancient Egyptians, can now make beautiful paper.



**Write your ending.** Now write an ending for your essay that includes some final thoughts about the process. Encourage the reader to try it.

**Form a complete first draft.** Write a complete copy of your essay. Write on every other line to make room for your revising changes.



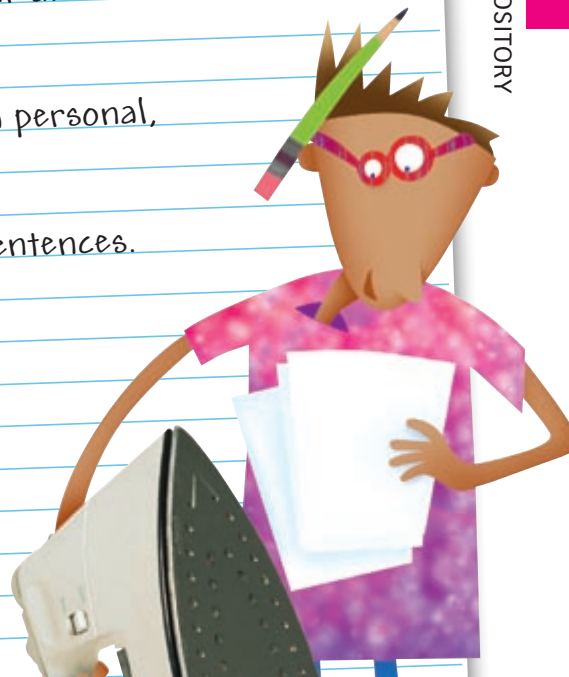
# Revising



A first draft never turns out just right. One part may need more details. Another part may not be clear enough. To fix or improve these parts, you need to revise your first draft.

## Keys to Effective Revising

1. Read through your entire draft to get a feeling of how well your essay works.
2. Make sure your focus statement states your topic clearly.
3. Check your paragraphs to make sure the steps and details are clear and in the right order.
4. Your essay should have a personal, yet confident voice.
5. Check your words and sentences.
6. Use the editing and proofreading marks inside the back cover of this book.



## Revising for Ideas

**6** My topic, focus, and details make my essay truly memorable.



**5** My essay is informative with a clear focus. I use a variety of specific details.



**4** My essay is informative with a clear focus. I need to use a variety of specific details.



When you revise your essay for *ideas*, you check for these things: that your topic is the right size, your focus statement is clear, and your supporting details are specific. The rubric strip above will help guide you.

### How can I add variety to my details?

You can improve your how-to essay by adding personal details. Here are three types of personal details and a chart prepared by the student who wrote the essay about making paper.

- Memory details** include personal memories about what happened as you learned to do or make something. The details might include how you became interested in the topic or the mistakes you made as you first learned the process.
- Reflective details** include personal thoughts about the process and why it is important to you.
- Sensory details** include descriptions of what the activity looks, feels, tastes, smells, or sounds like.

<i>Memory details</i>	<i>Reflective details</i>	<i>Sensory details</i>
<i>I saw Egyptian paper in a museum.</i>	<i>I like recycling.</i>	<i>Pulp looks like potato soup.</i>
<i>Once I added glitter.</i>	<i>People like notes on handmade paper.</i>	<i>It smells like a wet dog.</i>



**Check your details.** Make a chart like the one above for your topic.

- Write the three types of details across the top.
- Then list several specific details under each type.
- Checkmark any details that could make your essay more interesting.



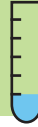
**3** My focus needs to be clearer. I need more specific details.



**2** I need to narrow or expand my topic, and I need many more specific details.



**1** I need to select a new topic and gather a variety of specific details.



## Are my details specific enough?

If your details paint a clear, vivid picture for your reader, they are specific enough. If your details are general and not very interesting, you need to make them more colorful. Using specific details makes the process easier to understand.

### General Detail

Next, add some paper. (*How do you add it? How much? What kind?!*)

### Specific Detail

Next, **sprinkle in a few handfuls of the shredded** paper.



Read the sentences below about making a sandwich. Rewrite the sentences, adding details that will make the process clearer and more complete. (To think of specific details, ask questions such as *what kind? how much? and how?*)

Take some bread. Put peanut butter and jelly on it.



**Review your writing.** Look for places in your essay that need specific details. Have a partner read your essay and point out any parts that are unclear or incomplete. Add specific details wherever they are needed.

### Ideas

Specific details are added.

To begin, prepare the paper pulp. You can make *newspapers, brown paper bags, magazine pages, or pulp from just about any other kind of paper.* First, tear the paper into small strips. Then, pour two cups of water into the blender. Next, **sprinkle in a few. . .**

## Revising for Organization

**6** My organization makes my essay informative and easy to read.



**5** My beginning interests the reader. The middle supports the focus. The ending works well, and I use transitions.



**4** My essay is divided into a beginning, a middle, and an ending. I use some transitions.



When you revise for *organization*, check to see if your thoughts are organized into three main parts: a beginning, a middle, and an ending. Also check your transitions. Use the rubric strip above as a guide.

### How do I check my overall organization?

You can check the overall organization of your how-to essay by making sure the details in each paragraph are in the right place. Use the chart below.

#### Beginning Paragraph

The **focus statement** states your topic. It belongs somewhere in the opening paragraph.

#### Middle Paragraphs

The **first topic sentence** begins the explanation of the process.  
The **second topic sentence** continues the explanation.  
The **third topic sentence** finishes the explanation.

#### Ending Paragraph

The **closing sentences** summarize the process and encourage the reader to try it.



**Check your organization.** Carefully check each part of your essay.

- 1** Underline the focus statement in your essay.
- 2** Place a **1** next to the first topic sentence, a **2** next to the second topic sentence, and a **3** next to the third topic sentence.
- 3** Then place a star (\*) at the beginning of the ending paragraph.
- 4** Compare your essay to the chart above. Fix any out-of-place parts.

**3** My beginning or ending is weak. The middle needs a paragraph for each main point. More transitions are needed.

**2** My beginning, middle, and ending all run together. I need paragraphs and transitions.

**1** I need to learn how to organize my thoughts.

## How can I use transitions?

In a how-to essay, the steps of the process must be clear and in the correct order. That's why transitions such as *first*, *second*, *next*, and *then* are so important. They help lead the reader step-by-step through your explanation.

You can also use prepositional phrases to show connections between the steps. The following prepositions can be used to help organize your essay. (Also see pages **494–495** and **742** for more information about using prepositions.)

### Prepositions

about	before	during	in	through
after	below	for	near	until
along	between	from	off	with

### Prepositional Phrases

Cover the bowl and let the mixture rest for a while. **After two hours**, add two teaspoons of salt and a little oil to the batter. **Along with the salt and oil**, add . . .



**Review for transitions.** Read your paper. Are the steps easy to follow? If not, add transition words and prepositional phrases that will make your directions clearer.

**Organization**  
Two prepositional phrases are added.

*During this step,*  
 ^ *Keep the pulp from settling on the bottom by*  
*After that,*  
 ^ *stirring it gently.*  
 ^ *Move the screen around so that*  
*the paper pulp settles onto it. Cover the screen . . .*

## Revising for Voice

**6** I sound knowledgeable, confident, and enthusiastic.



**5** I sound well-informed and confident. My voice fits my audience well.



**4** I sound well-informed, and my voice fits my audience.



When revising your essay for *voice*, check to see if you sound confident and enthusiastic. The words you use should fit your audience, purpose, and topic. The rubric strip above can guide you.

### Does my voice fit my audience?

Your voice fits your audience when it matches the people—teachers, parents, or friends—you are talking to. In writing, your voice should also change depending on your audience and your topic. To check your voice, answer three questions:

1. Who is my audience?
2. How should I speak to that audience?
3. How should I present my topic to that audience?

Audience	Teacher	Classmates	Friends
Voice	formal, polite	informal, but respectful	very informal



Number your paper from 1 to 3. Write which of the audiences listed above in red would fit the voice in each of the following sentences.


1. Would you hand me that pencil?
2. May I please borrow a pencil?
3. Hey, got a pencil I could use?

#### Voice


A phrase is changed to fit the audience.

... press the medium-speed button and blend for a few seconds. When the mixture in the blender *like thick potato soup* looks ~~really gross~~, your paper pulp is ready.


**3** Sometimes I sound unsure, and my voice needs to fit my audience better.



**2** I sound unsure. My voice needs to fit my audience better.



**1** I need to figure out what voice is.



## Is my voice too informal?

Your voice in an expository essay is probably too informal if it sounds like you're talking to a friend. The two explanations below are similar in many ways, but the two voices are very different. The first is too casual or informal for this topic. The second is just right.

### Voice 1: Too Informal

First, grab a couple of eggs and whack 'em against the side of the bowl. Dump them into the bowl. Next, throw in a little milk, a pinch of salt, and a drop of vanilla for extra oomph. Whip it all up with a fork and pour it into a hot pan. Keep pushing everything around until all the raw stuff is gone. When it looks ready to eat, chow down!

### Voice 2: Just Right

Select two large eggs. Crack them one at a time into a bowl. Add one tablespoon of milk for each egg, a quarter teaspoon of salt, and a drop of vanilla. Next, mix everything together with a fork. Then, empty the bowl into a sizzling, buttered pan. Stir the eggs until they firm up into a hot, golden heap. You're now ready to eat and enjoy.



Compare the two explanations shown above. List four words or phrases that make "Voice 1" too informal for an essay.



**Listen to your voice.** Read your essay and listen to your voice. Is it "too informal" or "just right"?

- 1** Write down three words from your writing that fit your audience.
- 2** Then look for words from your writing that don't fit.
- 3** Replace the words that don't fit with ones that match the voice you want to create in your essay.

## Revising for Word Choice

**6** The words I use make my essay very clear, informative, and fun to read.



**5** Specific nouns and action verbs make my essay clear and informative.



**4** I use some specific nouns and verbs, but I could use more.



When you revise for *word choice*, check your nouns and verbs. Do you use specific nouns? Do you use action verbs? Do your words help the reader understand the steps in the process? The rubric strip above can guide you.

### Do I use specific nouns?

If your nouns name a particular person, place, thing, or idea, they are most likely specific. (See the chart below.) In a how-to essay, specific nouns can make your directions much clearer. For example, the specific word “hammer” gives your reader a clearer picture than the general word “tool.”

Specific nouns make your writing stronger and more interesting. In the chart below, the top row lists *general* nouns. The second row shows *specific* nouns, and the bottom row gives *very specific* nouns. (See pages **170–471**.)

Person	Place	Thing	Idea
worker	building	food	sickness
cook	restaurant	fish	cancer
baker	delicatessen	salmon	leukemia



For each general noun listed below, write a specific noun. Then use that noun in a sentence.

1. cheese

1. *cheese-mozzarella*

*Next, sprinkle the grated mozzarella on the pizza.*

2. dog    3. tree    4. sport    5. fruit    6. feeling



**Check your nouns.** Replace the general nouns with more specific nouns wherever it will help make your writing clearer. (Remember that not all general nouns need to be replaced.)

**3** I use too many general words. I need specific nouns and verbs.



**2** I use general nouns and verbs and leave out words. My essay is hard to understand.



**1** I need help finding the right words.



## Do I use specific action verbs?

If your verbs tell precisely what is happening in a sentence, you are using specific action verbs. Specific verbs describe movement and action and make your explanation stronger. Use a thesaurus to find just the right word.

General Verb	Specific Verbs
put	place, slide, enter, press, draw, set, insert, include, add, pour



Number your paper from 1 to 4. For each of the sentences below, choose a word from the above chart to replace the verb “put.” (Each sentence contains clues for choosing a specific verb.)

1. Slice a potato in half and use a marker to put a design on it.
2. Next, put a knife alongside the outline and cut a shallow line around the design.
3. Then, put the knife in deeper and cut away the potato outside the line.
4. Finally, put your potato stamp on an ink pad and try it out.



**Examine your paper.** Replace general or overused verbs in your essay with specific action verbs.

**Word Choice**  
General and overused verbs are replaced.

Then ~~put~~<sup>pour</sup> two cups of water into the blender. Next, ~~add~~<sup>sprinkle</sup> in a few handfuls of the shredded paper. Finally, cover the blender, press the medium-speed . . .

## Revising for Sentence Fluency

**6** My sentences flow smoothly, and people will enjoy reading them.



**5** My sentences read smoothly. I don't have any fragments or choppy sentences.



**4** Most of my sentences read smoothly, but I need to expand a few choppy ones.



When you revise for *sentence fluency*, begin by reading your sentences out loud. They should read smoothly. If you have used a lot of short sentences or fragments, your sentences will sound choppy and not very interesting. The rubric strip above can guide you.

### How can I fix my choppy sentences?

If too many sentences in your essay are short and choppy, you may want to expand them by adding details. You can do this by answering the 5 W's and H (*who? what? where? when? why? and how?*).

**Sentence:** **Wipe the paintbrush.**

**Where?** Wipe the paintbrush **against the palette.**

**When?** **After dipping the paintbrush into paint,** wipe it against the palette.

**Why?** After dipping the paintbrush into paint, wipe it against the palette to **avoid drips.**

**How?** After dipping the paintbrush into paint, **gently** wipe it against the palette to avoid drips.



Add specific details to the following sentences using some or all of the 5 W's and H.

1. Plant the marigolds.
2. Dribble the ball.
3. Mix the plaster.
4. Cut the paper.



**Expand your sentences.** Use the 5 W's and H to expand some of the short sentences in your essay. Be careful, though, not to overload your sentences with too many words and details. Just pick the best ones.



**3** Some of my sentences are choppy, and I need to fix some fragments.



**2** I need to rewrite many of my sentences so they don't confuse my reader.



**1** I need to rewrite most of my sentences.



## How can I fix fragments?

A fragment is part of a sentence, but it doesn't express a complete thought. It can be fixed by adding a subject or verb or by combining the fragment with a sentence. (See pages **504–505**.)

<b>Fragment</b> After we review the recipe,	<b>Sentence</b> we gather the ingredients.
<b>Sentence</b> Don't place a cake in the oven	<b>Fragment</b> until the oven is hot enough.



Turn the fragment in each set below into a complete sentence by connecting it with the other sentence.

1. Add a handful of baking chips. If you like a sweeter cake.
2. Wear an oven mitt. While taking hot pans out of the oven.
3. When baking aromas fill the room. I feel hungry.



**Check for fragments.** As you read your essay, make sure you used complete sentences. Correct any fragments.

### Sentence Fluency

A fragment is fixed, and a sentence is expanded.

Roll the rolling pin over the top layer of felt, ~~To~~  
squeeze out all the extra water. Finally, remove  
*from between the pieces of felt*  
the damp paper, ~~and~~ hang it in a sunny place.

A piece of paper will be ready in about . . .

## Revising Using a Checklist



**Check your revising.** On a piece of paper, write the numbers 1 to 13. If you can answer “yes” to a question, put a check mark after that number. If not, continue to work with that part of your essay.

### Ideas

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Do I focus on an interesting idea?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Have I divided my idea into interesting topic sentences?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Do I use enough specific details?

### Organization

- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Do I include a beginning, a middle, and an ending?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Have I cut unnecessary details?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Have I reorganized parts that were out of place?

### Voice

- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Do I show interest in—and knowledge of—my topic?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Does my voice fit my audience? My purpose? My topic?

### Word Choice

- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Do I use specific nouns and active verbs?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Do I use colorful adjectives and adverbs?

### Sentence Fluency

- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Have I written clear sentences and avoided fragments?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Have I fixed any choppy sentences?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Do I use a variety of sentence beginnings and lengths?



**Make a clean copy.** When you’ve finished revising your essay, make a clean copy before you begin to edit.