Revising for Global Coherence†
Revising the Draft Argumentative Research Essay

1. **Posing the problem**: (a) Determine whether you have connected your research question to a problem or posed the question as a problem that your target readers care about. (b) Then determine whether you are posing a practical or conceptual problem. Do you want readers to do something or to think something?

2. **Framing the introduction**: Draw a line after your introduction and between each section and subsection. If you cannot quickly locate how you have divided your paper into parts, neither will your readers.

3. **Four-part introduction**: Divide the introduction into its four parts: prelude + shared context + problem + claim. The shared context should include a literature review for research essays. If you cannot quickly make those divisions, neither will your readers, and your introduction may seem unfocused.

4. **Distinguishing the thesis**: Is the first word after the shared context but, however, or some other contrastive term indicating that you will challenge the shared context? If you do not explicitly signal that contrast, readers may miss your thesis, or main claim. When a paper lacks an opposing viewpoint, it may indicate the lack of a thesis or the lack of a significant argument.

5. **Creating significance**: Divide the problem into two parts: condition (problem’s cause) and cost (problem’s consequences).
   a. Is the condition/cause the right kind for the problem? For a practical problem, the condition will be whatever exacts a palpable cost. For a conceptual problem, the condition should be something not known or understood. Do not state the condition as a direct question, but as a statement of what target readers likely do not know.
   b. Does the cost/consequence answer So what? For a practical problem, the answer to So what? must state some palpable cost that causes unhappiness. For a conceptual problem, the answer to So what? should state some significant issue that is not known or understood.

6. **Thesis and themes**: Underline your solution/claim/thesis and circle its most important words. The thesis should be the main point of your argument, and the circled words should signal the key concepts that the rest of your argument will develop as themes.

7. **Advance organizer**: Determine whether you have an advance organizer summarizing the specific reasons that support your thesis. The advance organizer is usually written directly after the thesis/claim, either as a subordinate because-clause or as its own sentence. If you cannot articulate an advance organizer, neither will your readers understand what reasons support your thesis.

8. **Thematic coherence**: In the paper’s body, circle the key themes and other key terms referring to central concepts. If you cannot find where your paper has repeated its connecting ideas, neither will your readers.

9. **Framing the sections**: Draw a line after the introductory segment that frames each section and subsection. If you cannot quickly locate where you set up or frame a section, neither will your readers.

10. **Clarifying the point**: Underline the sentence that states the main point of each section (the point is usually a reason supporting the thesis or main claim), and then box its most important words that you did not circle in step 8. That point is what the rest of the section will support, and the boxed words are the key concepts that the section will develop as its distinct themes.

11. **Creating local coherence**: In the body of each section, put a box around the themes and other words that refer to the same concepts. These concepts should support in some way the point of the section and/or the main claim of the essay. If you cannot find where your section has repeated its connecting concepts, neither will your readers. Also if you cannot see how each section’s point and concepts relate to your thesis, neither will your readers understand how the local argument contributes to the main argument.