

A 20-Question Revision Checklist

Purpose

1. Where in the piece do I make my purpose clear?
2. In a few words, what is my purpose in this piece?
3. Would my purpose be clear from one reading, or would it require more readings? Is this a problem for my intended readers?

Quality of Writing

4. Where do I stumble when I read it aloud? How can I make those passages flow?
5. Does the subject unfold clearly, as signaled by transitions and connective words?
6. Are there any repeated words or phrases that run through the piece, tying it together? Should there be?
7. Which passages seem especially well written and why?
8. Which passages seem weak, and how can I improve them?
9. Are there places where I could show instead of tell my points, using details, anecdotes, or examples? If so, should I change them?

Effect on the Reader

10. What questions does this writing answer for readers?
11. Where in the piece is my attitude toward the subject not as clear as it could be for my intended readers?
12. Would readers find my attitude appropriate?
13. Will the writing make readers think more seriously about the subject? See it more clearly? Want to know more? Want to take action?
14. Will any of the passages confuse the readers? If so, how can I clarify those passages?
15. What advice might readers want to give me upon reading this piece?
16. Are there any aspects of this piece that are needlessly offensive?

Credibility

17. Are my facts accurate?
18. Did I use and cite sources appropriately?
19. Does the format fit the needs of my audience and purpose?
20. Have I fixed the mechanical errors?