

Revising Your Narrative

Remember	Your goal is to SHOW, not just TELL, the story.
Use	Sensory detail—words and phrases that help readers see, hear, smell, taste, or feel what is happening in the story. Circle examples of sensory details in your first draft. Add or improve the sensory detail.
Circle	The “to be” verbs and replace them with action verbs. Change “are running” to “raced”; change “was thinking” to “pondered.” Take out “is” “am” “are” “was” “were” “be” “being” and “been.”
Check	For sentence variety. Highlight the first word or phrase in each sentence. If they look or sound alike, rewrite them. Try rearranging the sentence structure or make different word choices. Play with the words.
Look	At your paragraphs. Stories need short and long paragraphs. Read the story aloud, Ask yourself if more short paragraphs are needed or if a few very short paragraphs could be combined into a longer piece.
Find	The story transitions that you have used in the first draft. Mark these words. Take time to improve these transitions so that the story flows.
Add	Information or description that will help your readers remember your characters. Bring characters to life by explaining their thoughts and actions.
Help	Your reader picture the setting of the story. Try describing the day, the weather, small animals or objects, buildings, nature, the sky, or some unusual characteristic of the place where your characters live.
Reread	The end. Is it smooth? Will your reader remember the end? How does it connect with the beginning of the story and with the conflict/climax of the story?
Improve	Your story! This often means drafting, revising, editing, and revising several times.

Revise, Edit, and Proofread

Revise	Make changes to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve story• Rethink word choice, characters, descriptions, events, sequencing, sentence structures, etc.
Edit	Find and fix mistakes. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In drafts• In capitalization, usage, punctuation, spelling
Proofread	Find and fix errors. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In final copy• Before sharing and publication• With spacing, indenting, etc.• Made while word processing or writing the final, formal copy

“Remember, it is no sign of weakness or defeat that your manuscript ends up needing major surgery. This is a common occurrence in all writing, and among the best writers.”

--William Shakespeare
The Elements of Style