



Editing with Power Tools: Quick Tips to Improve Your Essay Writing

Misconceptions about editing

- It adds more content to your paper
 - Editing should be cutting down your content to make it more concise
- It's done after one try
 - There are different types of editing - copy editing and content editing
 - Start by content editing
- It's only done by people that know grammar
 - Everyone should edit their own work
 - Often times simply reading an essay aloud will reveal mistakes you can correct

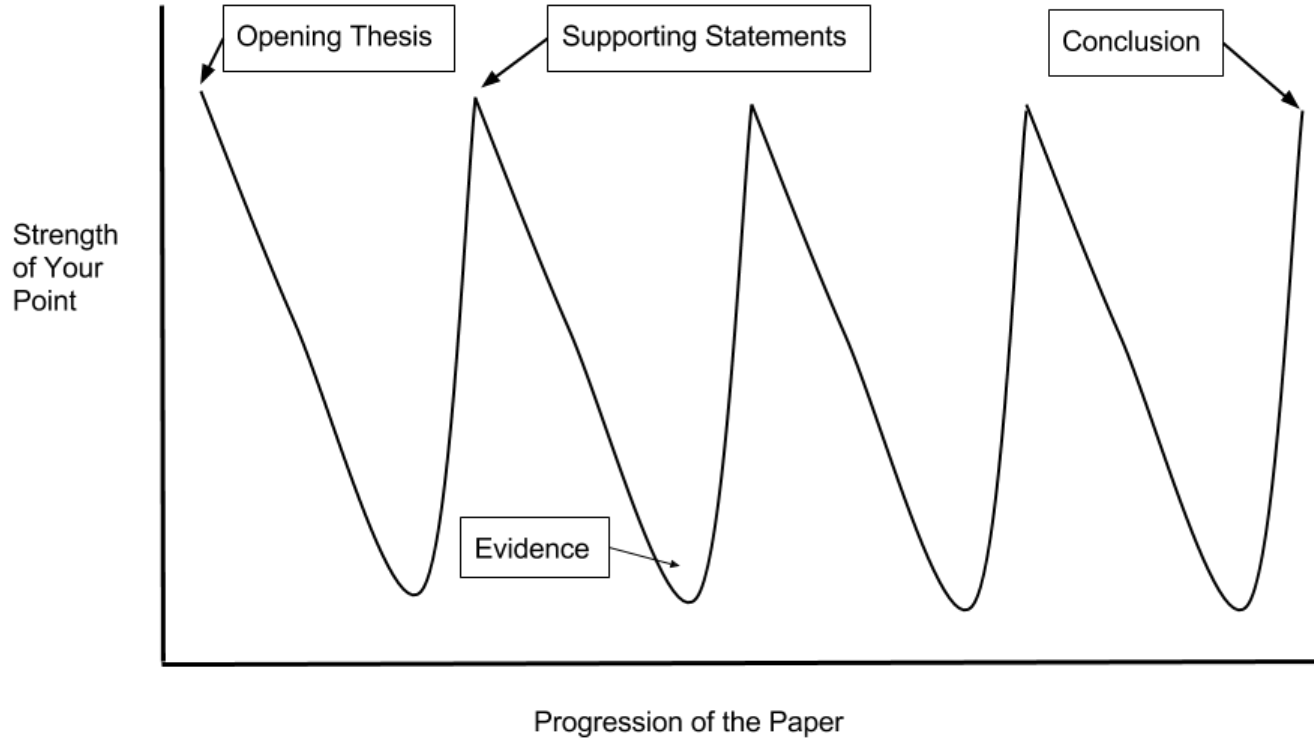
Why is editing important?

- First drafts are crap
- Editing improves your writing, not just now but in the future
 - The more you do it, the better you'll be at it
- It adds value to your paper even if you are cutting content
- The best writers spend time editing their work

Round One: Crane and Wrecking Ball

- First edits are the longest to do
- Edit for content
 - Are you making your point?
 - Does this content help my point or is it distracting?
 - Would this work better somewhere else?
- Don't be surprised if your second draft looks very different from your first
- Your goal is to have a paper that flows and makes sense from start to finish
- You might entirely rewrite your introduction and finish

Strength of Your Point vs Progression of the Paper



Round Two: Fork Lift and Jack Hammer

- Paper should make much more logical sense
- Edit for word choice
 - Do you have unneeded words?
 - “Very”
 - “That”
 - Adverbs
 - Are you using cliches?
 - Don’t let your writing do your thinking for you!
 - Remove outdated and tired platitudes
- Re-consider your audience
 - Does your paper speak to them?
- Your goal is to make your points sharper and more relevant to your readers

Round Three: Power Drill

- Copy edit for punctuation, spelling, and grammatical errors
- Tighten up sections that need it
 - Pay special attention to the introduction and conclusion
 - Are you drawing the reader in immediately?
 - Are you hinting at what's to come without giving anything away?
 - Are you respecting the reader (not spoon-feeding them)?
 - Make sure your transitions are smooth
 - Does the last sentence of a paragraph lead to the first of the next?
 - Does everything relate back to your opening thesis?
- Your goal is to make your paper as sleek and purposeful as it can be. These are your finishing touches, which are often the first thing people notice when they're bad.

Round Four: Inspection

- Even great writers have someone else check their work
- Go to your school's writing center for candid feedback from good students
- Accept criticism
 - Nothing is ever perfect
 - Every critique is a value added to your paper

Now You Are Done

- Celebrate!
- See your friends you've been avoiding
- Go see that movie that's been out for two weeks
- Sleep

Thank You!

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