

CRISP Method of Style Revision

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Students work on these steps individually and independently. This is the final edit— <i>before proofreading</i> :	First	CUT WORDS	Cut out every word that can be spared. Remove “due to the fact that” and “in order to” and all other wordy constructions and empty expressions that don’t say anything.
	Next	REDUCE CLAUSES	Almost all clauses can be reduced in some way; to appositives or phrases, etc.
	Then	INTENSIFY VERBS	Circle all verbs and intensify the weak ones. This will take care of excessive use of passive voice.
	After that	SHARPEN DICTION	Find the <i>best</i> words for the audience and the purpose. Diction creates tone.
	Finally	PACK PHRASES	Move them behind the nouns. Instead of “A proposal presented by Derek Bok, the president of Harvard, was defeated,” (12 words) pack it to “Harvard president Derek Bok’s proposal failed.” (6 words)

REVISION STRATEGIES: + X ÷ —

Revision usually works like arithmetic and in this order: Being process, any of these can be — and usually is, with skilled writers — recycled and used again... and again. Students can work on these steps independently or with others.	First	ADD	adding something that is not there: facts, logical argument, details, examples, illustrations, statistics, <i>ad infinitum</i> .
	Next	MULTIPLY	increasing what is already there; twice as many facts, logical arguments, details, examples, illustrations, and so on.
	Then	DIVIDE	“chunking” into paragraphs, moving things around, organizing the parts in a different way, and so on.
	Finally	SUBTRACT	taking out unnecessary words, material, sharpening diction, working on tone and audience consciousness, honing arguments, working on stylistic devices.