

Essay Ratiocination A revising and editing strategy . . .

Check MLA Format.

- **Font**
Times New Roman, 12 pt., double spaced
Do not put extra space between heading or paragraphs
- **Heading (double spaced; top left corner)**
Your Name
Esparza
AP Language and Composition, 5th Period
Date (European Style – 12 January 2018)
- **CREATIVE Title (suggests the content of essay)**
centered; capitalized correctly; not underlined; no italics; no “ “
please be sure your title is interesting and creative!
- **Page Numbering**
Last name & page top right all pages (example: Jones 2)

Book Titles should always be *Italicized* when typed

- Make sure you are not overusing the book title
- Also, you should not write “The book, *In Cold Blood*,...” or the like – we know it’s a book ☺
- FYI – This is the first non-fiction novel! (NOT the first non-fiction book or non-fiction narrative!)

Add a Work Cited page

Work Cited

Capote, Truman. *In Cold Blood*. New York: Random House, 2012. Print.

Use the version of the book that you read so that the page numbers in parenthetical citations match up.
If you used an e-book, check OWL Purdue for proper way to cite it.

Highlight in BLUE all the “to be” verbs in your essay.

Is, Am, Are, Was, Were, Be, Being, Been

(And all contractions using “to be” verbs, such as “isn’t” and “aren’t” – unless in dialogue -- but you shouldn’t use contractions in this essay) Ignore “to be” verbs that appear in quotes.

For final essay, rewrite to remove half

Bracket every sentence beginning. (2-3 words)

If you consistently begin sentences in similar way, change it up!

Highlight in PINK this at the beginning of any sentences.

“This” at the beginning of a sentence should be followed directly by a NOUN! (“This” what? “This scene...?” “This image...?”

You may know what you are referencing, but your reader may not.

CROSS-OUT all 2nd person pronouns

Get rid of “you” and “your” (unless in dialogue)

You may not use second person in any academic essay.

You will not get an “A” if you use 2nd person in this essay.

Highlight in GREEN every “they,” “them,” or “their” AND the noun that is the antecedent.

Even though some of the following indefinite pronouns may seem to have plural meanings, treat them as singular in formal English: Anybody, anyone, each, either, everybody, everyone, everything, neither, no one, somebody, something—ALL TAKE SINGULAR PRONOUNS (she, he, etc.)

Make a comment on the pronouns that need to be changed.

Example: In this class, everyone performs at her (not their) own ability.

When someone has been drinking, he is more likely to speed.

Neither of my daughters remembered to bring her lunch this morning.

Everyone has her own beliefs.

Highlight in ORANGE all possessives. (Look for words ending in “s”—are they plural or possessive?)

Check for proper apostrophe use.

The girl’s backpack

All the girls’ backpacks

The children’s backpacks

John’s backpack

Chris’s backpack

The killers’ perspectives

The Clutters’ lives

Dewey’s investigation

Check for repeated key words

Repetition can be impactful when purposeful. It loses its impact if overused.

Make sure you are varying word choice when you can.

BUT – Do NOT get thesaurus happy:

As water flows over the rocks, the songs rise in volume and show the magic in the air.

As aquatic liquid courses upon the earth, the aria magnifies in sonority and reveals the enchantment in the zephyr.

Or a favorite example:

When my feline, I waxed lachrymose.

I felt sad when my cat died.

~~CROSS-OUT~~ the words “very” and “really”

It really sounds like you are really trying very hard to really reach your page count very much.

Get rid of them.

Highlight in YELLOW imprecise or vague (“dead”) words.

Find the best word for the job.

Avoid general, vague, overused words such as: great, good, thing, important, nice, bad, sad, etc.

Usage Rule #1 hanged, hung

Hanged is the past-tense and past-participle form of the verb **hang**, meaning “to execute”. For example: *The prisoner was hanged at dawn.*

Hung is the past-tense and past-participle of the verb **hang**, meaning “to fasten or suspend.” For example: *The stockings were hung by the chimney with care.*

Remember: Laundry gets hung, but people get hanged.

Check that you have used **hang** or **hung** correctly.

Usage Rule #2 amount, number

Use **amount** with quantities that **cannot be counted**. For example: *The police found a small amount of blood on the boots.*

Use **number** with quantities that **can be counted**. For example: *A large number of citizens attended the killers’ trial.*

Remember: Don’t use amount to refer to people!

Check that you have used **number** or **amount** correctly.

Usage Rule #3 who, that

Use **who** (not that or which) to refer to **persons**. For example: *Perry was the murderer who (not that or which) actually killed the Clutters.*

Generally, use **that** to refer to **things** or, occasionally, to a **group or class of people**. For example: *The jury that convicted the killers acted swiftly.*

Remember: Use who to refer to people!

Check that you have used **who** or **that** correctly.

Other Usage Reminders:

Check the following:

Used to (not “use to”)

Could **have**/would **have** (not “could of”/”would of”)

Loose is an adjective meaning “not securely fastened.” **Lose** is a verb meaning “to misplace” or “to not win.” For example: Did you lose your only loose pair of work pants?

SUBMISSIONS FOR IN COLD BLOOD ESSAY

This Marked RATIOCINATION COPY due _____ along with Final Copy of Essay.

FINAL ESSAY due same day by beginning of class to turninit.com AND A HARD COPY!

You must incorporate MARJO edits to your essay based on the ratiocination process.

For example, I should be able to see that you have eliminated “to be” verbs, purposefully changed some sentence lengths, re-thought some diction choices, etc.