

# CHAPTER 2



# Communicating Effectively

## Chapter Outline

### LESSON 1

#### The Basic Checklist for Writing

### LESSON 2

#### Writing Effectively

### LESSON 3

#### Speaking Effectively

*A document that looks hard to read is hard to read.*

Diane Brewster-Norman, communications-skills expert

# LESSON 1

## The Basic Checklist for Writing



### Quick Write

Think about an article, short story, or graphic novel that you've really enjoyed reading. What was it that you liked? Write a paragraph or two explaining why you enjoyed it.



### Learn About

- the basic checklist for writing
- analyzing your purpose and audience
- conducting research to support your ideas
- how to support your ideas
- getting organized
- drafting and editing
- fighting for feedback

### The Basic Checklist for Writing

People who write for a living know that good writing is no accident. Journalists, technical writers, screenwriters, poets, advertising copywriters, speechwriters—even people who write textbooks—know that when it comes to good writing, you follow a *process*. Just as a chef follows the steps of a recipe for making a special dish, writers use set ingredients and processes to make their work turn out just right.

There's no secret process to good writing. The professional writers mentioned above probably all use a version of what's known as the basic checklist. **The basic checklist** is a set of guidelines that can help you tackle any writing and speaking project with confidence and competence. If you learn and use the six steps on this basic checklist, you'll almost always succeed in your writing and speaking. That means people will be able to understand your message and what you want them to do.



When it comes to good writing, you must follow a process.

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## Vocabulary

- the basic checklist
- audience
- purpose
- tone
- research
- definition
- example
- testimony
- statistics
- explanation
- argument
- outline
- drafting
- editing
- topic sentence

Imagine that you're ready to start planning to write several articles for the newsletter of an organization at your school. How do you proceed? Here's a version of the basic checklist you might use (Figure 2.1). Notice that all the items in the checklist are actions.

- 1. Analyze your purpose and your audience**—Your purpose is your reason for writing. The **audience** is *the people to whom you are writing*. Who will be the main audiences of your newsletter? What are their interests? Their biases? Their hot buttons? How much do they know about your subject?
- 2. Conduct research to support your ideas**—What types of articles will you need? How will you get material to back them up?
- 3. Support your ideas**—Assemble and arrange your facts to support the logic and/or position.
- 4. Get organized**—Create a story list. Newspaper editors call this the story “budget.” Use the patterns of writing. Figure out how you will structure each article.
- 5. Draft and edit**—Write the articles. Then read them carefully and make any needed changes.
- 6. Fight for feedback**—Show a draft of the article to your classmates, friends, or teachers. Analyze their feedback. Make changes where necessary.

### The Basic Checklist

- \_\_\_ **1. Analyze Purpose and Audience**
- \_\_\_ **2. Conduct Research**
- \_\_\_ **3. Support Your Ideas**
- \_\_\_ **4. Get Organized**
- \_\_\_ **5. Draft and Edit**
- \_\_\_ **6. Fight for Feedback**

**FIGURE 2.1**

The Basic Checklist

Remember that the basic checklist consists of *suggested* steps. Once you get used to using these steps, you'll find that you can adapt them to your own writing style. Sometimes you might use the steps in a different order. For longer assignments, such as a research paper, you might even find yourself moving back and forth between steps. That's OK. It's better to stray from the plan than to have no plan at all. The trick is to focus on writing *as a process, not a product*.

Finally, no matter how you rearrange the steps, don't leave any of them out. Completing each will increase your chances of success.

The only way to become a better writer is to work at it. There are no shortcuts. Your writing skills will become stronger the more you use them. The basic checklist is like a compass. It's a tool designed to help you on your journey to being a better writer.

## Analyzing Your Purpose and Audience

Good writing is a lot like building a house—you need a good blueprint and a solid foundation. Don't launch into projects without a clear understanding of what you are trying to achieve. You're much more likely to hit the target if you know what and whom you're aiming at.

### Know Your Purpose

Your **purpose** is *what you want your audience to think, do, say, or believe after they've read what you've written*.

Here are some questions to help you begin to analyze your purpose.

- What is the overall objective of the newsletter? Are you trying to change your audience's behavior? Are you writing mainly to share information?
- If you had one sentence (or 30 seconds) to explain your objective, what would you write or say?
- Which format will you use to communicate? How much time do you have to prepare?
- Is there anything unusual about the time and place your audience will receive your newsletter? How will it be distributed, for example?

What are some possible purposes of your writing? Here are a few:

- **To inform**—The goal of *informative writing* is to pass information on to the audience. This writing is successful if the audience understands the message in exactly the way you intended.
- **To direct**—You use *directive writing* to pass on information describing actions you want your audience to take. The writing gives clear, concise directions. It helps the audience understand what you expect of them.

- **To persuade**—You use *persuasive writing* when you are trying to “sell” your audience on an idea. Since the purpose is to guide your audience to a specific course of action, you shouldn’t overlook tone and emotional delivery. But don’t depend entirely on emotions. They are just one tool of persuasion. The best persuasive writers also use evidence that they put together in a logical way.
- **To inspire**—The emphasis in *inspirational writing* is dramatic delivery.

Regardless of your purpose, there are some principles that apply to almost all writing. These principles are all part of the basic checklist.

## Purpose Statement

You don’t want to waste your readers’ time. Readers are often impatient. If they can’t understand what you’re saying, they’ll toss your writing aside. You owe it to them to express yourself clearly and to let them know where your story is leading. One way to make sure you’re clear on your objective is to write out a *purpose statement*. A purpose statement is a single sentence that sums up what you’re trying to do—your “bottom line.”

Possible purpose statements for your newsletter include the following:

- To inform students about the details of the organization publishing the newsletter
- To inspire teachers to support the organization
- To persuade local businesses to donate to the organization

You can update your purpose statement after you’ve researched your topic. Even if you revise it later, a written purpose statement will help guide your research and support your drafting efforts.

## Know Your Audience

The better you know your audience, the more comfortable you’ll feel writing for them. If you take the time to understand your audience and think about their backgrounds, interests, and motives, you’ll be better able to write your message in a way that will accomplish your purpose.



**The better you know your audience, the more comfortable you’ll feel writing for them.**

*Rawpixel/Shutterstock*

Here are some questions to help you begin to analyze your audience:

- Who will read this newsletter? Your peers? Teachers? Neighbors?
- What are your readers' education levels, career fields, and areas of expertise?
- Do you need to supply any background information, explain terms, or provide other information? Does your audience have experience with the ideas and concepts you are presenting?
- What does the audience think of you? Do they know and trust you?
- Is your audience motivated to read your communication?
- Are you making promises your organization will have to keep?

### **Audience Analysis: The Human Factor**

How many times have you seen a friend get upset over an e-mail or text message that he or she misunderstood? Why does this happen? Partly it's because when you write, the nonverbal signals that are part of face-to-face communication are absent. You can't see the writer smile or frown. You have only written words to rely on. Because of this, when you are writing, you must think about the tone of your message.

In writing, **tone** is *the way you say something*. You know that people have a tone in their voices. Writers, however, have only words on paper. Pay close attention to how your writing *sounds*. Some words carry negative suggestions (*ignorant, opinionated*) or call up unpleasant thoughts (*goofy, unsuccessful*). They can defeat your purpose. Listen for your tone.

### **Conducting Research to Support Your Ideas**

Regardless of your purpose in writing, you'll need more than words to succeed. You'll need content or substance as well as style. Once you're clear on your purpose and audience, you'll need to research your topic to uncover information that will support your purpose statement.

**Research** is *the process of digging up information that supports your purpose*. Think of it as doing your homework. Research can help you become an expert on your topic.

One good place to begin is a local library. And of course there's the Internet. In many ways, doing good research has never been easier—electronic databases and the Internet give you access to vast amounts of information.

If you know how to use these resources, you're off to a good start. But with so much information, how do you find the data you need to meet your purpose? How do you know you can trust a source? And what if you're dealing with a local problem or a sensitive topic, or feel uneasy with the research process or search tools? In that case, you might want to start by talking to another person—a peer, teacher, parent, or adviser.

By doing some planning, you'll be a more effective researcher. For simple projects, planning means spending a few quiet moments thinking about your purpose. For longer projects, you may want to write out a research shopping list.

## Using the Library

The local library offers a number of terrific resources for your writing:

- Librarians who can help you find information and give basic research advice
- Free access to books and periodicals—many of which aren't available on the Internet
- Interlibrary loans that let you get at nearly any book in print—even at small libraries

The Internet is a convenient source of information, and most libraries today offer Internet access. But the information needed for serious research is not always on the Internet. You must find it in books, periodicals, or magazines. Libraries give you free access to these materials. Another advantage of libraries is that their information, unlike some information on the Internet, has been critically reviewed. It is more trustworthy.

Don't forget about your local college or university library. It usually has more in-depth research sources than your neighborhood public library does. Even if you can't borrow books there, many such libraries allow anyone from the community to visit and read their materials.



**A good place to begin your research is in a local library.**

*bikeriderlondon/Shutterstock*

*Virtual libraries* are another important resource. These are websites that give you access to resources in several libraries. Though you access these sites through an Internet browser, the information in them meets the same standards as the material in the library itself.

## **Using the Internet**

How do you begin your Internet research? Most people use a search engine. Google is one of the best-known search engines; Yahoo!, Bing, and Ask.com are others. If you enter a keyword from your research topic into a search engine, it will supply a list of dozens, or even hundreds, of websites for you to review. To narrow your search, make your keywords as precise as possible.

When you start to review the sites, you want to make sure that the information they contain is as accurate as possible. Ask yourself questions such as the following:

- Who created the website?
- What are the authors' motives? Is the author part of a group whose goal is to influence public opinion or to sell something?
- What qualifies the authors to write about the subject?
- Are there things about the site that make you question its accuracy, objectivity, or currency?

Your adviser, teacher, or librarian can often help you evaluate the accuracy of a website.

## **Other Tips for Evaluating Research Sources**

There are other ways to check the accuracy of your findings. For example, you can use multiple sources. If you can find the same piece of information at two or more sites, the chances of its accuracy are greater than if you find the information in only one place. Watch out, though, for sites that are just quoting each other, or when many sites are quoting the same single source.

When evaluating a source, one factor to consider is the distance between the writer and his or her subject. Since people and their research are often misquoted, it's better to refer to original material than to rely on someone else's interpretation of that material. This is true for research published in books and print journals as well as on Internet sites.

Research can be enjoyable and rewarding, but make sure you review your purpose, scope, and schedule before you begin. Doing so helps you stay focused and keeps you from getting lost in the data.

## How to Support Your Ideas

Once you've researched your topic and collected information, you must figure out how to use what you've found to meet your writing goals. In this process, you'll sort out the information that provides the best support. For informative writing, you provide facts. For a controversial question or problem, you first assemble sound evidence as your foundation. Then you must arrange that evidence in a logical argument that can stand up to other people's questions.

### Using Good Evidence

During this phase of the writing process, you select individual pieces of the evidence you've collected to build your arguments. Here are some common types of evidence you might use to help explain your ideas to your audience.

A **definition** is *the precise meaning or significance of a word or phrase*. In writing an argument, it is often helpful to establish a common definition for important words. Defining things can avoid misunderstandings.

An **example** is *a specific instance chosen to represent a larger fact to clarify an idea or support a claim*. Good examples must be brief and attention getting.

**Testimony** is *the comments of authorities that you use to support a claim*. These comments can be direct quotations or paraphrases, but direct quotations are more convincing. When you're using testimony as evidence, make sure the individuals you quote are believable.

**Statistics** *provide a summary of data in a numerical format that allows your audience to interpret the information*. Statistics can be very persuasive. They provide excellent support for a claim if you handle them well. Keep them simple and easy to read. Round off your numbers whenever possible, and document their exact source. But be aware that leaning too much on statistics is risky. People who put all their trust in numbers can fall prey to people who spout numbers or questionable statistical "proof."



**In the writing process, after researching you sort out the information you've gathered and use the evidence that best supports your ideas.**

*Jacob Lund/Shutterstock*

Definitions, examples, testimony, and statistics provide data that you can use to construct an argument. Another category of writing—explanation—can also be helpful. **Explanation** *makes a point plain or understandable or creates a relationship between cause and effect.* You can use it to clarify your position or provide more evidence to help make your case.

You can use the following techniques as part of an explanation:

- **Analysis**—The separation of a whole into smaller pieces for further study, analysis enables you to clarify a complex issue by examining one point at a time.
- **Comparison and contrast**—Comparisons highlight similarities between objects or situations. Contrasts emphasize differences.
- **Description**—A description provides details—it paints a picture with words. Descriptions are more personal and subjective than definitions are—they are more the writer’s opinion, not necessarily accepted fact.

## Why Are Logical Arguments Important?

When you write, you should use the evidence you gathered during the research process to create a logical argument. When used in this sense, the word **argument** does not mean a disagreement or a fight. It’s just making a case. It’s *a series of statements intended to persuade others.* It’s giving your readers enough information to make decisions on your subject.

Building logical arguments is part of life. You build logical arguments every day—when you talk to your teachers about assignments, to your parents about curfew, or to your friends about making plans. If you build strong arguments, things are more likely to go your way.

Other people present you with their arguments all the time, too. By understanding how arguments work and where they go wrong, you’re less likely to buy into somebody else’s half-baked idea. You should try to recognize mistakes in others’ arguments and avoid them in your own.

Logical arguments are instruments of power. You use them to make things happen.

## Getting Organized

You know your purpose and audience. You’ve done your research and selected the evidence that you want to present. It’s time to deliver your message, right? Not quite. You’ll save time and frustration if you first take time to organize your thoughts and develop an outline of how you are going to present the information.

Successful writers organize their material in an order that leads their audience from one point to the next. Well-organized writing helps the audience understand your point. If you take the time to organize and outline your work before starting to write, you're halfway toward your goal. How you actually draft and edit paragraphs will take you the rest of the way.

### Selecting a Pattern

The next step in writing a great paper, story, or article is to select a pattern that enables you and your readers to move smoothly through your ideas—from the beginning to the end. Six of the most common organizational patterns are listed below. The pattern you choose should depend on your purpose—whether you want to inform or persuade—the needs of your audience, and the nature of your material.

#### Patterns to Inform

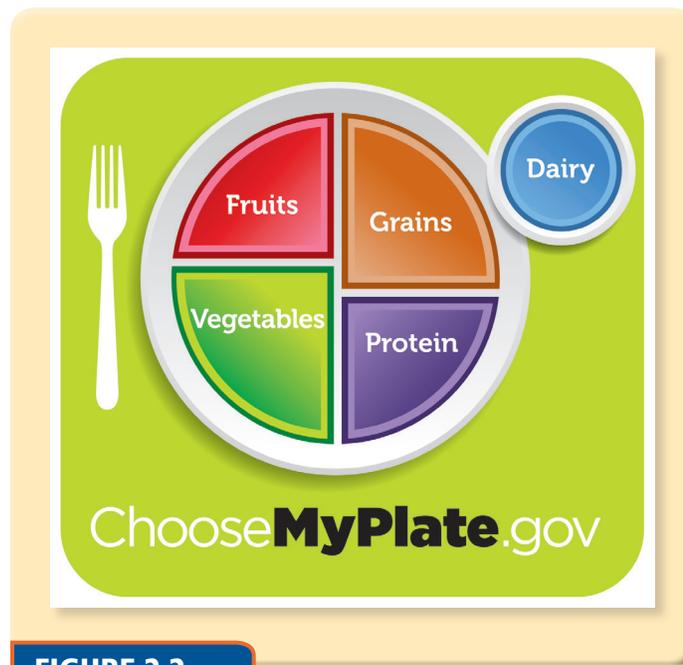
**Topical pattern.** Use this format to present groups of ideas, objects, or events by categories. This is a commonly used pattern to present general statements followed by numbered listings of subtopics to support, explain, or expand the statements.

A topical pattern follows some logical order that reflects the nature of the material and the purpose of the writing. For example, if you were writing about the nutrition of the food served in the school cafeteria, you might categorize the material according to the United States Department of Agriculture's MyPlate icon, which emphasizes the fruit, vegetable, grains, protein foods, and dairy groups (see Figure 2.2).



**If you take time to organize your work before you write, you're halfway toward your goal.**

*Ermolaev Alexander/Shutterstock*



**FIGURE 2.2**

The USDA MyPlate Icon

[www.ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://www.ChooseMyPlate.gov)

**Chronological pattern.** When you use this pattern, you discuss events, problems, or processes in the sequence of time in which they take place or should take place (past to present or present to future). Consider this pattern when writing histories or tracing the evolution of processes or situations. Biographers also use this pattern. For example, in profiling a student in the newsletter, you might tell, in chronological order, how he or she became involved with the issue you're writing about.

**Spatial/geographical pattern.** To use this pattern, start at some point in space and proceed in sequence to other points. The pattern is based on a directional strategy—north to south, clockwise or counterclockwise, bottom to top, right to left, and so on. You might use this pattern if you are writing about a guide to an exhibit, the layout of your school, a museum, or a geographical location.

### Patterns to Persuade

**Problem/solution pattern.** This pattern comes in handy if you need to identify and describe a problem and one or more possible solutions. It's also helpful if you want to describe an issue and possible techniques for resolving it. When describing the proposed solution, include enough support to convince your readers that the solution is practical. A variation of this is Pro/Con. This popular format includes a discussion of the advantages (pros) and disadvantages (cons) of each solution.

**Cause/effect pattern.** Use this pattern to show how one or more ideas, actions, or conditions lead to other ideas, actions, or conditions. Two variations of this pattern are possible. You can begin with the effect, and then identify the causes. Or you can begin with the causes, and then identify the effects. For instance, an article in your newsletter might discuss the relationship between good nutrition and success at school.

**Reasoning/logic pattern.** In this pattern, you state a position and then provide support for it. Use this pattern when your purpose is to present research that will win over your audience to your point of view. For example, if you are trying to persuade teachers to support your solution, look at it through their eyes. Start out with the argument that they are most likely to accept, and then move into other, less popular arguments.

## Organizing and Outlining Your Thoughts

A detailed outline helps you arrange your material logically and see relationships between ideas. It keeps you on target as you write your draft. Think of your outline as the blueprint for your writing.

An **outline** *contains your main points and supporting ideas arranged in a logical order* (see Figure 2.3). Every main point and supporting idea in your outline should relate to that purpose statement. Get rid of irrelevant facts or opinions.

You're more likely to stay on course during the outlining process if you refer to your purpose statement often. If you're writing for a class assignment, ask your teacher for advice before writing your purpose. The teacher may want a thesis statement. A *thesis statement* is a special form of purpose statement used in academic or persuasive writing. The thesis statement captures the author's point of view on a controversial topic, which he or she logically defends throughout the paper. The writer usually finalizes the thesis statement after completing the research. Whether you use a purpose statement or a thesis statement, you must determine your "bottom line"—your main point—and state it early in the message, in most cases.


**talking POINT**

### Classical Outline Format

- I. Section I. ...
  - A. First Subheading to Section I
    - 1. First subheading to I.A
      - a. ...
      - b. ...
    - 2. Second subheading to I.A
      - a. ...
      - b. ...
  - B. Second Subheading to Section I
    - 1. First subheading to I.B
      - a. ...
      - b. ...
    - 2. Second subheading to I.B
      - a. ...
- II. Section II. ...

**History of Aviation—The twentieth century saw incredible development in human flight.**

- I. *Before the Wright brothers*
  - A. *Leonardo da Vinci*
  - B. *hot-air balloons*
  - C. *gliders*
  - D. *failed attempts*
- II. *Heavier-than-air flight before World War II*
  - A. *the Wright brothers*
  - B. *World War I*
  - C. *Airmail and the Ford Tri-motor*
  - D. *Charles Lindbergh*
  - E. *commercial air travel begins*

**FIGURE 2.3**

A Rough Outline

## Benefits of an Outline

To some people, preparing an outline looks like a lot of useless work. Good writers know, however, that though an outline does take some effort, it's a *timesaver*, not a time waster. It allows you to test the flow of your ideas on paper without having to write out complete sentences and paragraphs. If some ideas don't flow naturally, you can easily rearrange them.

A well-planned outline can ease the pain of writing your first draft. The outline will help you remain focused on your purpose statement. It will help ensure your support is organized, relevant, and tailored to your purpose and audience. The outline will also help in the editing process.

Take a break after working on your outline. Then approach your draft with a fresh outlook.

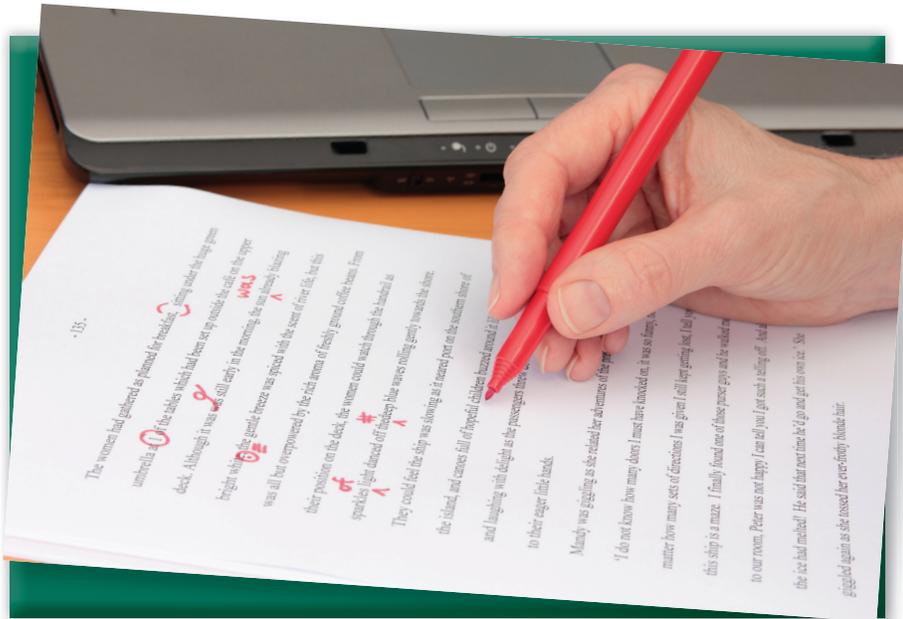
## Drafting and Editing

**Drafting** is a quick first writing of a paper, focused on ideas and not style. A draft is not the finished product, and each sentence does not have to be perfect. Your goal is simply to get your ideas on paper. Don't worry about grammar, punctuation, spelling, and word choice at this point. You can catch these later, during the editing process.

Keep an eye on your outline when drafting your article, especially when you're writing something longer than a page or two. You'll be less likely to lose focus and include unimportant information.

**Editing** is the slow, careful examination of a piece of writing to correct and clarify ideas and to ensure the proper form. When you draft, you are a creator. When you edit, you shift from creator to critic.

Spotting problems in your own writing is not easy. Once your words are on paper, you might resent the suggestion that something could be wrong. That's why you should get into the habit of editing your own writing before asking for feedback. Editing your own work develops your editing skills. You'll be better prepared for those times when you don't have access to a second opinion. When you edit your own work, you also show respect for the people you're seeking feedback from. Why should someone else invest time and effort to improve your writing if you aren't willing to do so yourself? Self-editing also saves face. You'll catch the worst mistakes yourself.



Get into the habit of editing your own writing before asking for feedback.

Pixsooz/Shutterstock

## A Three-Step Approach to Editing

One way to make sure you edit well is to read your document at least three times. In the first pass, look at the big picture. In the second pass, look at paragraph construction. In the third pass, look at the details—sentences, phrases, and words.

### The First Pass: The Big Picture

This is the time to pay attention to the arrangement and flow of ideas. Here are some areas to think about:

#### Check your purpose.

- What is my purpose? Check the wording one more time.
- What is my purpose statement? For short assignments, underline the statement in the draft. For longer assignments, write it down on a separate sheet of paper and refer to it as you edit.
- Does the purpose statement make sense or does it miss the point?

#### Check the introduction.

- Does the introduction contain the purpose statement?
- Is it an appropriate length? (One paragraph is sufficient for most short assignments.)
- Does my introduction give the readers a good idea of what they are about to read? Does it tempt them to keep reading?

### **Compare the introduction and conclusion.**

- Read the introduction and then read the conclusion. Do they sound like they go together without being identical? Does the introduction state the purpose, and does the conclusion show readers that you've achieved it?
- Does the conclusion sum up your main points?

### **Check overall page count and length.**

- What are the audience's expectations regarding length? Are you on target? Will you have to make the draft significantly longer or shorter?
- Check the scope and flow of paragraphs.

### **Check for relevance and completeness.**

- Do the paragraphs clearly relate to the thesis statement?
- Are some paragraphs unnecessary?
- Have you missed any main points in this assignment?
- Are the paragraphs arranged in a consistent order?
- How does the draft compare with the outline?

Some writers can write powerful and clear sentences but have trouble keeping on target. Their main editing challenge isn't grammar—it's the big picture.

If this sounds like you or someone you know, try this simple editing check.

Read the following sections aloud:

- The complete introduction
- The first sentence of each paragraph in the body, in order of appearance
- The complete conclusion

Does it answer the question? Does it stay on message? Does it flow well? If so, you've got the big picture in place.

Now it's time to check your paragraph construction.

### **The Second Pass: Paragraph Structure and Clarity**

After the first pass, you know that your article contains what it needs to do the job. In the second pass, you will check whether the main points and supporting ideas are appropriately organized.

Take a close look at individual paragraphs. For each paragraph, ask the following questions:

**Unity of focus.**

- Is there one, and only one, main point of the paragraph?
- Is all the information in the paragraph related enough to be in the same paragraph?
- Can you identify the central idea of each paragraph?

**Topic sentence.**

- Does the paragraph have a **topic sentence**—*one sentence that captures the central idea of the paragraph*?
- Is the topic sentence the first sentence of the paragraph? (Or, if you're starting with a transitional sentence, the second sentence?)

**Supporting ideas.**

- Do the sentences expand, clarify, illustrate, and explain points that each main idea mentions or suggests? The goal is to lead the reader in a smooth step-by-step process to each main idea.
- Are there enough details in the paragraph to support the central idea?
- Do any sentences seem to be irrelevant to the main point?
- Do all transitional words, phrases, and clauses improve the flow and show proper relationships?
- Do most paragraphs contain three to seven sentences, the best length for a paragraph?

**The Third Pass**

Now you're ready to look at details. Though you've probably corrected some minor errors in the first two passes, it's now time to check the small stuff that can make a big difference. This includes unclear language, wordiness, and errors in grammar and spelling.

Read your article out loud. This will help you catch errors because you slow down and use two senses—seeing and hearing. What one sense misses, the other may pick up.

Listen to the sound of words, phrases, and sentences. The quicker your audience can read and understand what you've written, the better. If you find yourself needing to read a sentence two or three times, chances are your audience will, too. Edit it.

Set aside time for editing— especially for assignments with tight deadlines. With practice, the process will seem second nature.

Editing isn't the final step, however. Someone else needs to look at your work. The final step to good writing is fighting for feedback.

## Fighting for Feedback

After you've finished editing and done what you can to improve your article, it's time to get someone else's opinion. No one can judge his or her own work fairly. Too much ego is involved. You need a fresh pair of eyes.

Feedback is the response of another person to your writing. When you fight for feedback, you seek someone else's views on your writing. You then analyze the feedback and use it to improve your article.

Why is a second pair of eyes necessary? Even the best writers get so close to their projects that they can no longer see them objectively. They may omit vital information or fail to see a weakness in their argument. They may overlook the need for a transition between two points. They are just too close to the material. Pride of authorship can distort their opinion of their own work. If you seek out and listen to feedback, you are much more likely to produce an accurate, understandable article.



**It's a good idea to show your writing to others and get their feedback.**

*Syda Productions/Shutterstock*

Choose your feedback sources carefully. Ideally, they should be people who represent your audience. When you approach your feedback sources, let them know what kind of feedback you're looking for. Encourage them to be honest. Don't say, "I think this article is wonderful. I've worked so hard on it!" Unless you give them clear guidance, reviewers may focus only on details such as spelling, grammar, and margins. While these are important, make it clear that you want feedback on the big picture, too.

To make good use of feedback, you need an open mind. You also need to be able to accept criticism. Don't take comments personally. Accept feedback willingly and use it constructively—it's an important step in the writing process.

 **CHECKPOINTS**

## Lesson 1 Review

Using complete sentences, answer the following questions on a sheet of paper.

1. What are the six steps of the basic checklist?
2. Which of the six steps can you leave out if necessary?
3. What are four possible purposes of your writing?
4. What are some questions you can ask to analyze your audience?
5. What are three resources you can find at your library?
6. List four search engines you can use to find information on the Internet.
7. What are four types of evidence you can use to support your ideas?
8. What are three techniques you can use as part of an explanation?
9. What are the six common organizational patterns for writing?
10. Why is writing an outline a timesaver?
11. Why should you get into the habit of editing your own writing?
12. In which pass do you focus on unclear language, wordiness, and errors in grammar and spelling?
13. Why is a second pair of eyes necessary to improve your writing?
14. Ideally, who should your feedback sources be?

### APPLYING YOUR LEARNING

15. On the next writing assignment you receive for any class, try out the steps in the basic checklist and make them part of your overall writing strategy. Which come easiest to you? Why? Which seem hard? Why?