

## Proofread + Draft Revisions

### 1. Language

- **Powerful Language**
  - Examples of words to avoid include: “things,” “stuff,” “a lot,” “more”
  - Use powerful language to write like a scholar.
- **Contractions**
  - Take contractions such as “don’t” and “can’t” and make them “do not...” or “cannot” for a stronger and more convincing argument
- **Verb tenses + Passive Language**
  - Do you use passive language and descriptive wording? Fix this! Life happens in active terms – events and processes do not just *happen*. Use subjects and active verbs whenever possible.
    - Ex: “There was a study done in New York...” → “Researchers in New York found that...”
    - Ex: “Books were written to convey...” → “Authors wrote novels to convey...”
  - **Active Subjects**
    - Papers do not make arguments. Authors and researchers make arguments
    - Make sure that when you say something, you have a correct subject.
- **Syntax + Wordsmithing**
  - It is rare that what you write will be gold on its first attempt. EVERY sentence should have a purpose and should convey something to your reader – otherwise, why use it at all?
  - You need to wordsmith
    - Play around with words and re-organize sentences to construct a cohesive and strong argument.

### 2. Punctuation

- **Apostrophe**
  - An apostrophe is used to indicate that something belongs to an individual or a group.
    - Ex: That is Megan’s dress.
    - Ex: Mark’s phone is missing.
    - Ex: The school’s chalkboards.
  - If the subject that “owns” the object is a word ending in an “s” you need to put the apostrophe after the “s”
    - Ex: The Schulers’ house is beautiful.
    - Ex: Whites’ level of educational attainment tends to be higher than that of other racial minorities.
- Place **periods** outside of parentheses (in-text citations).
- If you ask a question and need a citation, where do you put the period? (2017:58). ←here!
  - Otherwise: “punctuation belongs inside the quotation marks,” (2017).

### 3. Narrative Style

- **Argumentative Language**
  - Have I written this paper like an academic analysis and research paper?
  - Academic/Analysis papers use argumentative language
  - This is not a response paper with “I” or “I believe,” “I think,” statements
- **3<sup>rd</sup> Person Formal**
  - Academic research papers do not use “we” or “our” unless you are directly referring to a certain situation that involves **you**.
  - If you belong to the society that you are analyzing/researching, then say so and use your positionality as a source of evidence, but not a narrative style throughout the paper.
- Consistency is key – do not fluctuate between informal first person “we,” “I,” “our” and 3<sup>rd</sup> person – it is distracting and awkward.

#### 4. References

- **American Sociological Association Format**
  - Are my references in ASA format? Have I checked them thoroughly?
- Do my in-text citations match my reference list?
  - In-text, do my citations have the correct authors and years?
  - Have I listed all the authors of that citation?
- Do I need a citation here?
  - Do I have an entire paragraph with evidence but without a citation? Then YES
  - Have I taken something from a source word-for-word?
    - Then it should be a quotation.
  - Have I paraphrased something?
    - Then it should have the year AND a page number to avoid plagiarism
- Use et al. only if you have 3 or more authors. The period goes after “al.”
- Do not include an entire article or journal title in your writing. It takes up unnecessary space
- **Reference List Titles + Formatting**
  - Journal titles and book titles are italicized
  - Article titles are written in quotation marks

#### 5. Evidence

- Do you have enough **evidence and proof** to back up your claims?
- Are you making assumptions without indicating from where those claims originate?
- If you have used a quotation, have you introduced it and put analysis afterwards?
  - Do not let a quotation just float – they do not speak for themselves
  - Could you say this just as well or better? Then don't use the quotation.

#### 6. Miscellaneous:

- **Title**
  - Do I have a title? Does it fit my paper? Is it the best title I can think of?
- **Page Numbers**
  - It doesn't matter if they are in the top or bottom corners, but they need to be there.
- **Paragraph Length**
  - No paragraph should exceed  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a page
  - Break them down!