

## **“Is/Does” Revision Exercise**

**Objective:** This activity is designed to help you figure out where in your essay you might want to focus your revisions. To accomplish this objective, you will evaluate your essay, reflect on your findings, and make a plan for future revisions.

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### **Evaluate:**

**STEP ONE:** Take out a whole, clean sheet of paper (scratch paper is fine as long as at least one side is clean) and the essay you want to revise

**STEP TWO:** For the first paragraph answer the following two questions in one to two sentences—no more.

- **QUESTION ONE:** What “is” the paragraph? That is, what is the content of the paragraph and what information does it convey? (Does it provide a close reading of a source, a narrative of a specific event, describe a problem we all have, describe a solution to a problem, nothing, etc.?)
  - Another way to think about this question is: What does the Paragraph say?
- **QUESTION TWO:** What “does” the paragraph do? That is, how does it function in the paper? (Does it provide an introduction or conclusion to the argument; provide evidence to help support a point, reason, or claim; provide transitional material between larger sections of the paper; explain how the Reason supports the Claim; nothing; etc.?)

**STEP THREE:** Repeat for each paragraph in the essay.

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### **Reflect:**

**STEP FOUR:** Pause and answer the following questions.

- What did you notice about your paper as you did this exercise?
- Are any paragraphs too large to be about just one thing? Are any too short?
- Does each paragraph serve a clear purpose?
- Does the order of the paragraphs make sense to you? Would the order of the paragraphs make sense to another person?
- Does any paragraph have unclear content or an unclear purpose?

You have just identified some areas for revision in your own writing and can begin your penance/revision before I or your PRL partner have even looked at the essay.

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### **Plan:**

STEP FIVE: Based on how you answered the above questions, develop a revision plan. Try to pick three concrete revisions you could make to improve your paper.

- What revision do you think would help you resolve an issue you identified?
  - How do you plan to make this revision?
  
- What is another revision that you think would help you resolve an issue you identified?
  - How do you plan to make this revision?
  
- What is another revision that you think would help you resolve an issue you identified?
  - How do you plan to make this revision?