

The background features a light gray gradient with numerous thin, vertical, teal-colored lines of varying lengths and positions, creating a textured, rain-like effect. A solid teal horizontal bar spans the width of the image, positioned in the lower half. The text "How to revise..." is centered within this bar.

How to revise...

Don't put a  
band aid on a  
bullet hole.



Adapted from: "Revising Drafts," UNC Writing Center handout, available at <http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/revision.html>, accessed March 2, 2011.

# What does it mean to revise?

- Revision = “to see again”
- It is an ongoing process of rethinking the paper:
  - reconsidering your arguments
  - reviewing your evidence
  - refining your purpose
  - reorganizing your presentation
  - reviving stale prose.

Adapted from: “Revising Drafts,” UNC Writing Center handout, available at <http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/revision.html>, accessed March 2, 2011.

# In other words...

- What am I trying to say?
- What words will express it?
- Could I put it more shortly?
- Have I said anything that is avoidably ugly?

# Why is revision important?

- Writing is a process of discovery.
- Revision is a chance to look critically at what you've written to see:
  - If it's worth saying,
  - If it says what you wanted to say, and
  - If a reader will understand what you're saying.

# So, what should I do?

- Early stages:
  - Let it rest
  - Think BIG
  - Check the focus, do you stay on track for the whole paper?
  - Think honestly about your thesis.
  - Is your purpose clearly stated in the introduction?
- Later stages:
  - Examine the balance
  - Did you keep your promises?
  - Check the organization: Is it logical? Would it work better in a different order? Do transitions ease the reader along? Do topic sentences introduce the paragraph?
  - Check the conclusion

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# So, what should I do?

- Sentence level:
  - Use forceful verbs
  - Use fewer words
  - Look for repetition of words or phrases
  - Cut as many prepositional phrases as you can without losing your meaning:
    - There are several examples of the issue of integrity in Huck Finn.
    - Huck Finn repeatedly addresses the issue of integrity.
  - Check your sentence variety.
  - Aim for precision in word choice.
  - Look for and eliminate “It is...” “There are...” and all passive formations

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# In other words...

- Never use a long word where a short one will do.
- If it is possible to cut a word out, always cut it out.
- Never use the passive where you can use the active.
- Never use a metaphor, simile, or other figure of speech which you are used to seeing in print.
- Never use a foreign phrase, a scientific word, or a jargon word if you can think of an everyday English equivalent.
- Break any of these rules sooner than say anything outright barbarous.

Adapted from: Orwell, "Politics and the English Language," available at <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/orwell46.htm>, accessed March 2, 2011.