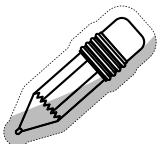# SELF-REVISING/EDITING CHECKLIST
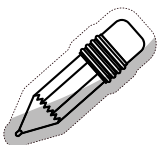## WRITING

RAW TIPS

STEP 1: PREPARE

- Find a quiet space.
- Print your paper instead of revising on-screen.
- Let the essay rest between rough draft and revision.
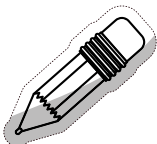
STEP 2: REVISE FIRST

- Check the essay prompt.
- Revise for content and organization first. Look for a strong thesis, supportive topic sentences, well-integrated quotations, and a good flow from intro to conclusion.
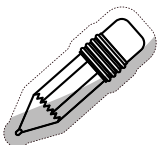
STEP 3: EDIT NEXT

- Edit for sentence structure and word choice.
- Edit for grammar, usage, and style.

STEP 4: STAY ALERT

- Read out loud.
- Ask a friend (or Google) to read your paper to you.
- Craft a reverse outline.
- Start in the middle or at the end.
- Use the search function to find "weasel" words or repetition.
- Highlight or cut your paper into strips to organize.
- Notice patterns and pay attention to details.

CHECKLIST
CONTENT/ORGANIZATION

- [ ] *Hook*: Does it grab the reader's attention, and is it specific?
- [ ] *Thesis*: Is it clear? Does it offer both a topic that relates to the prompt *and* something to prove or argue?
- [ ] *Topic Sentences*: Do they all support the thesis?
- [ ] *Body Paragraphs*: Is there a good balance between evidence/details and explanation/analysis? Do you make strong arguments?
- [ ] *Documentation*: Are quotations and paraphrases cited properly and integrated with signal phrases? Can you paraphrase long quotations?
- [ ] *Concluding Sentences*: Do you finish off each body paragraph with a final thought?
- [ ] *Conclusion*: Does your conclusion leave the reader with a finished feeling? Does it contain no new evidence?
- [ ] *Essay Structure*: Have you paid attention to how each paragraph flows to the next--both in terms of ideas and transitions?

LAS POSITAS
COLLEGE

SENTENCE STRUCTURE AND WORD CHOICE

☐ *Fragments*: Check your paper for fragments. Consult the Fragments handout for help.

☐ *Run-ons*: Check your paper for comma splices and fused sentences. Consult the Run-ons handout for help.

☐ *Sentence Variety*: Use coordination and subordination to vary your sentence structure. Consult the Coordination and Subordination handouts for help.

☐ *Active vs. Passive Voice*: Improve your writing by changing sentences from passive to active voice.

☐ *Generic Words vs. Specific Words*: Use words that paint a picture in the reader's mind instead of general, bland words.

☐ *Strong Verbs*: Instead of weak verbs, such as "to be thinking," use strong verbs. "I think" is better than "I like to be thinking."

☐ *Wordiness*: Don't use ten words when you can use five, and find concrete words to say what you mean. Don't create wordiness problems simply to inflate word count.

GRAMMAR, USAGE, AND STYLE

☐ *Verb Tense*: Maintain verb tense consistency. If you're unsure, stick with the "literary present" tense.

☐ *Subject-Verb Agreement*: Your subjects and verbs should coordinate. Check your nouns to see whether they are plural or singular.

☐ *Articles*: Use "a," "an," and "the" in front of nouns that require them. Check the Articles handout for help.

☐ *Pronouns*: Use the correct pronouns to replace nouns.

☐ *Punctuation Usage*: Look up rules on using commas, quotation marks, apostrophes, semi-colons, colons, and more. Don't be afraid to use more "sophisticated" punctuation once you get a grip on commas.

☐ *Citation Formatting*: Make sure you know whether you're using MLA, APA, or another citation style; punctuate citations properly.

☐ *Jargon and Cliches*: Know whether your assignment allows for a more casual style or if you're required to write with an academic voice.

☐ *Works Cited/Bibliography*: Double space, use hanging indents, and alphabetize your Works Cited. Check online style guides like OWL Purdue for more information.

☐ *Heading and Page Numbers*: Use a properly formatted heading in the upper left corner; in the header add page numbers and your last name.

☐ *Titles*: Come up with a creative but informational title that piques the reader's interest but doesn't repeat the assignment name.