Revision and editing are two very important stages in the writing process. Leaving enough time for both can improve your writing and make it more clear and effective. It’s best to have other people help you with these steps, but you can also do a lot of it on your own. Keep in mind that good revision and editing can take several hours to a few days. This worksheet will guide you through some editing steps that will help you practice making your language correct. Write your response to each of the following in the space below:

**Style – “I just don’t like the way it sounds.””**

1. **Diction:** What are two types of diction? _________________________________
   *Hint: Handbook for Writers p.359*
   List characteristics of each: 1 - _________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   2 - __________________________________________
   _____________________________________________

Which one should you use for your paper? ______________________________

Read through your paper one paragraph at a time and look at the diction; make changes on your draft.

2. What is **tone**?
   *Hint: Handbook p.148*
   What should the tone of your paper be?

   Read through your paper aloud one paragraph at a time and think about the tone; make changes as needed.

3. What is **fair language**?
   Do you have any instances of unfair language in your paper? What are they?

   How can you revise those? Write corrections here or on your draft.

4. **Word choice:**
   What is **denotation**? _____________________________________________

   What is **connotation**? ____________________________________________
   *Hint: Handbook for Writers p.362*
   Read through your paper and look for words that you are unsure of. Do you know the definition of each word? Do you understand the connotations of everything you’ve written? List the words and phrases you find here:
Look up the words above and decide if you need to change them. Write the corrections on your draft.

**General vs. specific words:** Which should you use?  
*Hint: Handbook for Writers p.365*

Read through your paper and look for general words and circle them. Then go back and look at each one; how can you rephrase it to make it more descriptive and specific? Make corrections on your draft.

5. **Redundancy:** Read through your draft aloud and listen for words you use over and over (and, however, then, next, etc.). Highlight those words on your draft and list them below.

Now get out a thesaurus and look up each word. Write the original word and a substitute below. (Example: and: also, in addition, etc.)

Now read through your draft again and put in some of the substitutes.

6. **What is a cliché?**  
*Hint: Handbook p. 370*

Should you use them in your paper? Yes or no? Why or why not?

Read through your paper and look for clichés. Highlight them on your draft and list them below.

Think about what you are trying to say with the cliché and rewrite a replacement phrase below. (Example: That company is straight as an arrow = The company is very ethical and fair.)
7. Sentence length: What is a choppy sentence?

What is a wordy sentence?

Read through your paper out loud and listen for choppy and wordy sentences. Are there any that should be separated with punctuation, or that should be combined? Make these corrections on your draft.

Correct Language – “Is this right?”

1. From the list below, circle the language errors you are concerned about. If you don’t know which ones you have trouble with, read through a few paragraphs with a tutor and then discuss which ones you might want to work on. If you don’t see your item on this list, write it in.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject/verb agree</th>
<th>Word usage</th>
<th>Comma in a series</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verb endings</td>
<td>Prepositions</td>
<td>Comma/intro element</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fragments</td>
<td>Tense shift</td>
<td>Comma/compound sentence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Run-ons</td>
<td>Pronoun shift</td>
<td>Comma/nonrestrictive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possessives</td>
<td>Pronoun reference</td>
<td>Comma/ restrictive element</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s/its</td>
<td></td>
<td>Comma splice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Below, write the items you circled in order of priority. Then locate the chapters or pages in The Handbook for Writers where those items are covered. Read those sections until you understand the rules; feel free to make some notes on a separate sheet. You can also use The Writing Center’s Common Grammar Mistakes to help you.

3. Now read through your paper for one editing item at a time. You should read out loud, and you may want to consider starting at the end of the paper and reading one sentence at a time (backwards). This will allow you to really look at each sentence individually. Make corrections as you read, and be sure to check the handbook when you have questions.