

Exercise 11. Revising Sentences



Student: _____ Date: _____

Strunk & White (in all editions [1918, 1959 to present] of *The Elements of Style*) advise students to “write with vigor”. For most authors, this phrase means to “revise with vigor” because writers put down thoughts in first forms that are messy, imprecise, and usually reflect the ideas of the author for the author.

Revising with vigor means to use action verbs, to keep words and phrases near the word they modify, to select a simple word instead of the “orotund polysyllables [or] cumbersomely coy phrases”¹, and to keep the reader’s viewpoint in mind.

Below, identify the problem in the sentence, then revise these sentences with the reader’s viewpoint in mind.

1. Problem: Misplaced pronoun. Incomplete information.

Alcohol strengthens your bones, says a new study from Oregon State University. It fights heart disease. A glass a day in midlife is linked to a lower rate of heart disease and cognitive decline in old age. *OSU Today*, Nov. 28, 2012.

Recast:

2. Problem: Muddled, deliberately ambiguous sentence.

Insufficient data are at present available to completely negate the possibility that removal of the above-mentioned substances from the system is not a factor of importance.

Recast:

3. Problem: Verb incorrect for meaning and number (should be singular as written) Subject missing.

Computation of the data have been conducted by means of varied statistical packages.

Recast:

4. Problem: Missing subject. Missing punctuation; misplaced modifiers.

Improved monitoring will be crucial for better understanding acidification trends, its contributing factors and the biological responses of marine organisms. “We lack real time high resolution data because conditions are so variable which is key,” says panel member George Waldbusser, a marine chemist at Oregon State University in Corvallis. Gewin, Virginia. 2012. “US state declares war on acid waters”, *Nature*, Nov. 27, 2012; <http://www.nature.com/news/us-state-declares-war-on-acid-waters-1.11908>; accessed 11/28/1012.

Recast:

5. Problem: Inaccurate terms. Missing subject.

Chart Cartographic Generalization (CCG) has been applied in the whole process of chart complication, and it is the nuclear problem of chart complication.

Recast:

¹ F. Peter Woodford. 1999. *How to Teach Scientific Communication*. Reston, VA: Council of Biology Editors. p. 48.

