

## A HEART TRANSPLANT

As an English major in love with the subject, the revision process is the most important skill I will learn as a student. The skills of editing an essay effectively will ease my heartaches through the first four years of my relationship with the subject. Usually, by the time my stylistic writing and imagination take control of my thoughts, my thoughts are lost. Consider the point of the essay to be my heart. Consider the poetic nature of my style to be the sweetness of sugars. Now consider the sum of **HEART+SUGAR+SUGAR+SUGAR<sup>1001</sup>+SUGAR**. Despite the fact that science is not my strong point, it is easy to see that the sum of this equation is one thing—**HEART ATTACK**. The problem is that I write with all my heart. But too much of anything is bad. And too much gloss in an essay leads to one sugar-plated presentation that the audience will choose not to read. Therefore, the main issue I had with my writing was clarity, appropriate language, and wordiness. The end effect of an essay full of these issues suggests that I am seemingly unaware of my audience, the desired coherence of an essay, and the expected presentation of a good essay. Nevertheless, the distinction of my authoritative and compelling voice can be respectfully recognized only if I incorporate it in the proper manner. The process of this modification of my style is what I call the Heart Transplant. The following process is a step-by-step view of my revision method to fit this manner. All examples are from Paper 3, Video Analysis of Rascal Flatt's song “Skin.” This essay analyzed the compositional choice of the song's lyrics and video. Mostly, I focused on the effect the group made on the audience. The color codes represent discrepancies of **clarity**, **language**, and **wordiness**, respectively. The revised version is labeled in **pink**.

1. *This particular sentence was crediting the group, providing ethical appeal for my audience by showing the group's charity ties.*

**They are known for endless charitable efforts, which include their being spokespersons for the Hendersonville Jason Foundation, their working as celebrity ambassadors for the American Red Cross, and their on-going work with the Monroe Carell Children's Hospital.**

The term “endless” is a hyperbole in this sentence and it makes me sound as if I'm praising the band. I do not need to praise the band; my readers know they are important because I am writing about them—period. Also, the term is more potent than the object of the preposition “for.” That is a problem because I want the audience to know that the band does charitable deeds, not that they have a never ending amount of deeds. A sufficient change is to replace the term “endless” with “many.”

The other issue in this sentence is the clarity in the parallel structure. The attempted parallelism is ineffective

because the items in the series are not in parallel grammatical form. Instead of each phrase being a gerund or noun phrase, they vary. Thus, a sufficient change is to make each series begin with a gerund.

**They are known for many charitable efforts, which include being spokespersons for the Hendersonville Jason Foundation, working as celebrity ambassadors for the American Red Cross, and working with the Monroe Carell Children's Hospital**

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2. *This sentence was analyzing two scenes that the group paralleled throughout the video.*

**As Sara Beth psychologically distances herself with surrounding people, she mentally finds relief in her dreams.**

The first issue of clarity occurs with the inappropriate idiom usage of “with surrounding people.” This is unidiomatic, because to the American ear this phrase means that Sarah Beth distances herself and takes the surrounding people with her. However, that is not my intended meaning. Therefore, I must use the word “from” instead of “with.” This will show that Sarah Beth goes away from her neighbors.

**As Sara Beth psychologically distances herself from surrounding people, she mentally finds relief in her dreams.**

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3. *This example is a sentence describing one of the characters in the video.*

**The boy arrives at her house and to everyone's surprise he has a new hair cut—a bald cut resembling the average cancer patient undergoing chemotherapy.**

The error in this sentence is the illogical comparison between the bald cut and a cancer patient. Comparisons must be made between items that are alike; otherwise my audience will be distracted. In this instance, my audience may be left wondering if the boy had a cancer patient tattooed on his head. In order to be clear I have to compare the boy's bald cut to the bald cut of most cancer patients.

**The boy arrives at her house and to everyone's surprise he has a new hair cut—a bald cut resembling the**

**baldness of an average cancer patient undergoing chemotherapy.**

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4. This example was of a section used to elaborate on the symbolism provided by the inclusion of dancers in the video.

**Additionally, the slow and flowing movements of the dancers represent the placid and free lifestyle Sara Beth dreams of. She dreams of being free from worrying and suffering. She dreams of her hair blowing like the dancers' hair, and a glowing beauty like they have.**

The wordiness occurs in this sentence because I include sentences and phrases that I do not have to include. This interrupts the flow of my essay, which distracts from my essay's coherent form. Instead of the babbling, I can easily insert punctuation to reduce clauses to phrases and to reduce phrases to single words. This will ultimately improve the fluency of my essay.

**Additionally, the slow and flowing movements of the dancers represent the placid and free lifestyle Sara Beth dreams of, free from worry and suffering. She dreams of having the dancers' blowing hair and glowing beauty.**

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As the editor inside me takes over, examples like this become a book full. I read my paper out loud, act as if I'm my audience, act as if I had just read fifteen other papers...I basically do everything possible to make sure my paper is distinct and clear at the same time. I'm sure I'm not the first to admit the process of editing and rearranging is about four times longer than the process of inventing. However, for satisfaction...it's all worth it!