

Steps for Revision...

- ◆ Get clear about your thesis statement. Make sure you know what you are trying to prove or what claim you are making. Thesis statements may likely answer a how or a why kind question rather than a what or where or who question. A thesis-driven paper (for example: I argue that Italy contributed to the rise of fascism in these specific ways) is different from a report (for example: Italy is a country in Europe with these specific qualities).
- ◆ Once you have a clear thesis, make sure each paragraph supports it – you can check this by reading each paragraph and writing a one-sentence summary off to the side. (This is called a reverse outline.) Work your way through each of your paragraphs this way. Then look at the summarization sentences that you have written and see if they match up with your thesis. If the paragraph doesn't match up, you need to rework (or get rid of) the paragraph.
- ◆ To rework a paragraph so that it stays on task and supports your thesis, follow these steps:
 1. Does each paragraph have one clear main idea? If there is more than one, consider giving it a paragraph of its own (if it is a worthy idea) or consider getting rid of it if it isn't meaty enough to keep or pursue.
 2. Does each paragraph also have an example of some kind (a quote or an ad maybe) that illustrates your point? If not, figure out one. We understand each other's ideas best when we can "see" what they are talking about in an example.
 3. Do you tell the reader why this example works? If not, you will need some analysis that explains how the example illustrates your point, telling the reader about the example isn't enough.
 4. Do you tell the reader how this paragraph's ideas support your main thesis? If not add a sentence or two that links your ideas back to your thesis for your readers.
 5. At the beginning of the next paragraph you should include a sentence that helps the reader understand why you put this particular paragraph at this particular place in the paper. If your paper is about self-propelling sports, what leads you to talk about roller skates then ice skates...why put them in this particular order? You will need to explain this for your reader so he/she can follow your train of thought.
 6. Do all your paragraphs follow these guidelines? If so, you will be in good shape.

Think of it as the **MEAL** plan for paragraphs:

Main Idea – every paragraph should have only one clear main idea. If you bring up more than one main idea, your reader can't really make sense of your argument. The reader will feel confused about what you are trying to say because you are saying several ideas at once.

Example – an example that illustrates your main idea. This could be a quote or a description of an Ad or a practice.

Analysis – this is the part where you tell the reader why the example supports the main idea. What makes the example work well? Why did you choose this particular example? The answer to this question is usually the analysis portion of your thinking.

Link – Tell the reader how this paragraph connects back to your main idea.