

Skill 8 Revision

When you have finished your essay, take a few minutes to read it over. Ask yourself the questions in the following Review Chart.

Review Chart

	TASK
	Did I complete the task?
	Did I write enough words?
	Did I complete the task on time?
	FLOW
	Did I write a strong introduction?
	Did I write a main idea sentence for each paragraph?
	Did I write supporting details in each paragraph?
	VOCABULARY
	Did I use transition words?
	Did I use a variety of vocabulary?
	GRAMMAR
	Did I use parallel structures?
	Did I use a variety of sentence patterns?
	Did I use correct spelling and punctuation?

Let's compare the essay below with the Review Chart.

Question

In your opinion, what are the qualities of a good teacher? Use specific details and examples to support your answer.

Essay

It is not easy to be a good teacher. It takes a special person to do the job well. In my opinion, a good teacher is one who is knowledgeable, creative, and kind.

The most important quality of a good teacher, to my way of thinking, is that she is knowledgeable. In the first place, she has studied her subject in college, so she knows a lot about it. However, it does not stop there. A good teacher keeps up-to-date in her field by continuing to read about it and study it throughout her career. A good teacher makes sure that she knows her subject well, better than people generally do.

A good teacher is certainly creative. She makes appealing lessons that get the students involved and that help them understand the subject. She uses a variety of techniques in her lessons instead of teaching the same way all the time. In addition, she makes learning interesting by taking her students on field trips. In this way, she gives students the opportunity to learn outside of the classroom by visiting places and meeting people. A good teacher is also creative in finding ways to help students who have difficulty understanding the lesson. She can come up with different ways to explain things to them.

Finally, a good teacher is kind. She cares about her students, so she does her best to help them succeed. When students have difficulty understanding something, she does not get upset. Instead, she works patiently to help them do well. Most of all, a good teacher is more than a teacher, she is a friend to her students. She is someone they can trust. Because of this, her students are not afraid to take risks or make mistakes. They are not afraid to learn.

A teacher who is knowledgeable, creative, and kind is well-equipped to help her students succeed in school. I wish we all could have (or be) good teachers.

TASK

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Did I complete the task?

The question asks the writer for an opinion about the qualities of a good teacher. The introduction in the sample essay mentions three qualities of a good teacher: *knowledgeable*, *creative*, *kind*. The question also asks for details and examples. The second, third, and fourth paragraphs each explain one of the qualities mentioned in the introduction using details and examples.

Did I write enough words?

This passage is 322 words, well over the required minimum of 300 words.

Did I complete the task on time?

The task was completed in less than 30 minutes.

FLOW

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Did I write a strong introduction?

The last sentence of the first paragraph, *In my opinion, a good teacher is one who is knowledgeable, creative, and kind*, is the main idea of the essay. It states the writer's opinion, which is explained and supported in the body of the essay.

Did I write a main idea sentence for each paragraph?

The first sentence of each paragraph in the body of the essay (paragraphs 2, 3, and 4) is the main idea sentence.

Did I write supporting details in each paragraph?

Each main idea sentence is followed by details that support it.

VOCABULARY

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Did I use transition words?

This passage uses appropriate transition words, for example:

Paragraph 2: *in the first place*—introduces the first idea

Paragraph 3: *in addition*—adds information
also—adds information

Paragraph 4: *finally*—introduces a final idea
most of all—shows degree

Did I use a variety of vocabulary?

This passage uses a variety of ways to state similar ideas, for example, synonyms *subject* and *field* in paragraph 2, *appealing* and *interesting* in paragraph 3, and *succeed* and *do well* in paragraph 4.

GRAMMAR

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	Did I use parallel structures?
	Did I use a variety of sentence patterns?
	Did I use correct spelling and punctuation?

Did I use parallel structures?

There are no sentences that are awkward because of lack of parallel structure.

Did I use a variety of sentence structures?

This passage uses a variety of sentence structures, for example:

Simple: *A good teacher is certainly creative.*

Complex: *When students have difficulty understanding something, she does not get upset.*

Compound-complex: *She makes appealing lessons that get the students involved and that help them understand the subject.*

Did I use correct spelling and punctuation?

This passage has no spelling or punctuation errors.

Practice

Complete each essay by answering the questions that follow.

Question 1

Which would you prefer: to work at a job that you did not enjoy, but that paid a high salary, or to work at a job that you enjoyed very much, but that paid only a modest salary? Use specific reasons and details to support your opinion.

Essay 1

If you work, you spend a large part of every day at your job. While it is important to earn money, of course, I feel that other things in life are important, too. Spending every day at a job you do not like can have negative effects on many aspects of your life, especially on your family relationships, your emotional well-being, and your physical health.

(1) _____ If you spent all day doing something you did not enjoy, you would not have the energy to be pleasant to your family when you got home in the evening. At best, you would choose to spend your evenings resting quietly alone. At worst, you would be in a bad mood and act grumpy around everyone. Either way, you would not enjoy a pleasant time with your family. Over time, your relationship with your family would deteriorate. No amount of money can make up for this.

Working every day at a job you do not like can have bad consequences for your emotional well-being. (2) _____ You might feel bored, angry, depressed, or all of these things, most of the time. It would be hard to relax and feel good in the evenings or on weekends after spending all day and all week at a job you did not like. Even a high salary would not be enough to make you feel happy.

(3) _____ If you felt unhappy most of the time, you probably would not have the energy to go to the gym, play a sport, or even take a walk. You would not get the physical exercise that you need.

(4) _____, you would probably get sick frequently. Studies have shown a relationship between depression and the immune system. Depressed people get sick more often than people who are not depressed. So, you might earn a high salary, but you might also be too unhealthy to enjoy it.

1. Choose the best topic sentence for this paragraph.
 - (A) Working every day at a job you do not like can have a bad effect on your family life.
 - (B) If you do not enjoy your job, at least you should earn a good salary.
 - (C) The best way to spend your time is doing something that you enjoy and can do well.

2. Choose the missing supporting detail.
 - (A) If you did not enjoy your job, your family life might also become unhappy.
 - (B) If you did not enjoy your job, your boss would notice and you might not get pay raises and promotions.
 - (C) If you did not enjoy your job, you would be in a bad mood most of the time.

3. Choose the best topic sentence for this paragraph.
 - (A) If you do not like your job, you might end up with poor physical health.
 - (B) Working every day at a job you do not like can result in poor physical health.
 - (C) Your health could suffer if you feel unhappy at work.

4. Choose the missing transition word.
 - (A) Nevertheless
 - (B) In addition
 - (C) Next

Question 2

It has recently been announced that a new shopping mall may be built in your neighborhood. Do you support or oppose this plan? Why? Use specific reasons and details to support your answer.

Essay 2

Many people like to have shopping malls nearby. They make shopping convenient and they bring business to an area. I agree that these are good things.

(1) _____

We may not have a large mall in our neighborhood, but we do have some stores. We have several grocery stores, a hardware store, a drugstore, and even a small bookstore. These stores are not big, and they do not offer a huge variety of merchandise. (2) _____, they are enough to provide for our everyday needs. We do not have to leave the neighborhood to buy any basic necessities.

(3) _____. It is a quick trip to get to it by bus or by car. There is a large variety of stores there where you can buy just about anything you can think of. Since we can go to that mall so easily, I do not see any reason to build another one in our neighborhood.

Finally, but perhaps most important of all, I do not think there would be enough business here to make a mall worthwhile. My neighborhood is not crowded and the population is small. It is also not in a very convenient location. (4) _____. If a mall were built here, I think the store owners would find that they could not do enough business in this part of town.

A shopping mall would not bring any real benefits to my neighborhood and would probably not be successful here. These are the reasons why I am opposed to the plan.

1. Choose the best thesis statement.
 - (A) However, I rarely go to shopping malls because all the malls in my city are located on the other side of town and I do not have any way to get to them.
 - (B) On the other hand, shopping malls can bring many problems to an area, so both the advantages and disadvantages have to be considered.
 - (C) Nevertheless, I am opposed to a shopping mall in my neighborhood because we already have stores here as well as a mall downtown, and I do not think there would be enough business here to make a mall worthwhile.

2. Choose the missing transition word.
 - (A) However
 - (B) In addition
 - (C) As a result

3. Choose the best topic sentence for this paragraph.
 - (A) When we need to buy things that are not available in our neighborhood, we can go to the shopping mall downtown.
 - (B) The downtown shopping mall is one of the largest in our city and many people shop there.
 - (C) There is a large shopping mall downtown that is one of the major tourist attractions in our city.

4. Choose the missing supporting detail.
 - (A) Unfortunately, there are not any pretty parks or other nice places to take walks.
 - (B) However, there are several attractive building sites that would be perfect for a mall.
 - (C) It is far from all the other shopping areas in town, and I do not think many people would want to come over here to go shopping.

Question 3

Many families have pets. Do you think it is important for a family to have pets? Why, or why not? Use specific reasons and examples to develop your essay.

Essay 3

Many families have pets, and in my view this is a good thing.

(1) _____ . Owning a pet also provides children with the opportunity to develop a sense of responsibility and to learn some important life lessons, as well. I think every family should have at least one pet.

Certain kinds of pets make very good companions, and this is often the main reason families have them. Dogs, cats, birds, and other kinds of animals are fun for children to play with. Throwing a ball for a dog or teaching a bird to do tricks are pastimes that are both enjoyable and constructive. Having pets around can also give children a sense of security. A child who is afraid of the dark, (2) _____ , can feel comforted by having the family dog sleep in the same room.

Children who care for pets learn to develop a sense of responsibility. Pets need to be fed one or more times a day. This has to be done even if you are busy, tired, or just do not feel like doing anything. In addition, pets need attention from their owners every day. Dogs need to be walked, and all pets need to be petted or played with.

(3) _____ . They need to be bathed or brushed frequently. Children quickly learn that if they do not take proper care of their pets, then the pets suffer.

(4) _____ . They learn that all living creatures need proper care to grow and stay healthy. They learn about birth, and they learn how to cope with sadness when a beloved pet dies. Most of all, they learn that all of us, pets and people alike, want to have our needs met.

1. Choose the best general idea to complete the introduction.
 - (A) Dogs and cats are the most common pets to have.
 - (B) Pets make great companions for children.
 - (C) It can be quite expensive to own a pet.

2. Choose the missing transition word or phrase.
 - (A) therefore
 - (B) however
 - (C) for instance

3. Choose the missing supporting detail.
 - (A) In addition, pets like to be held and touched.
 - (B) Pets also have to be kept clean.
 - (C) Not all pets need a lot of exercise, however.

4. Choose the best topic sentence for this paragraph.
 - (A) Having pets around gives children the opportunity to learn some important things about life.
 - (B) Children are kept busy most of the time when they have pets to take care of.
 - (C) Pets are fun and interesting, and most children enjoy having them around.