

Eliminate Empty Words and Phrases – 1

Vague terms and nouns (such as *to be* verbs, *involve*, *center around*, *aspect*, *element*, *factor*, *field*, *kind*, *nature*) can lead to wordy sentences.

We were arguing about
~~The nature of our argument involved~~ whether to go to the
^
7:15 or the 9:45 show.

worried
The frost ~~was worrisome~~ to the citrus growers.
^

Intensifiers (such as *very*, *more*, *most*, *best*, *quite*) and other modifiers can also be empty words. As you revise, consider whether every adverb and adjective is necessary.

He bore a ~~very~~ strong resemblance to his father. [unnecessary intensifier]

The sweater was ~~an~~ *absolutely* perfect fit. [unnecessary adverb]

Her hometown was ~~rather~~ typical of small-town America.
[unnecessary adverb]

Many empty phrases (such as *I think, in my opinion, I am going to discuss, as you know, and needless to say*) can be eliminated from a sentence without affecting its meaning. Others, including the following examples, can be reduced to a single word.

CHANGE

along the lines of
as of that date
at present
at that point (time)
at this point (time)
by means of
by using (utilizing)
due to the fact that
during that period
for the purpose of
for the reason that
in order to
in spite of the fact that
in the event that
in the neighborhood of
owing to the fact that
so as to
the fact that
through the use of
until such time as

TO

like
then
now
then
now
by
with
because
then
for
because
to
though, although
if
about
because
to
that
with
until