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Over the course of the semester, I did not do too much revising. My first two papers had minimal mistakes. However, in my first paper, “Forever Young,” I began to stray away from the discussion of direct aspects of the photo and therefore I strayed away from the prompt. This may be attributed to the fact that because I was so passionate about my topic of “optimism,” my focus naturally began to shift toward my thoughts and opinions instead of staying on topic. I received a 90 on this paper. My teacher had this to say: “...I think you could have done more with your photo and tied each piece of analysis to something going on in the image. Being able to clearly link your ideas to the photo instead of just the themes the photo suggests or brings up is your next goal for further revisions of this essay. Good work, overall.” Below, I show how I revised the two main areas that were marked by my teacher.

First Draft

“...Many kids in Africa who grow up poor and without toys to play with, take plants, plastic bags or whatever they can get their hands on, roll them up, and create a ball that can bring hours of fun. While they cannot drive to a store and buy a toy, children stay positive and create their own fun, making the best of what they are given. An adult in this situation may instead, sit and dwell, sad because he or she cannot afford a soccer ball. By making these connections, the photo teaches us the importance of focusing on what we have rather than what we do not.”

Nice thinking here, but can you tie this paragraph back to what's going on in the image more?
Tareva Johnson
09/26/2011 09:40



Revised Draft

“...Many kids in Africa who grow up in poor conditions, such as the poor village seen in the picture, do not have toys to play with, so they take plants, plastic bags or whatever they can get their hands on, roll them up, and create a ball that can bring hours of fun(Carlin, Time Magazine). While they cannot drive to a store and buy a toy, children stay positive and create their own fun, making the best of what they are given. An adult in this situation may instead, sit and dwell, sad because he or she cannot afford a soccer ball. This is displayed in the photo as we see the child make the best out of what he has by running through the street with excitement and a smile, instead of sitting around being unhappy(which may possibly be what the people in the background of the photo are doing). By making these connections, the photo teaches us the importance of focusing on what we have rather than what we do not.”

In my revised draft, I back up my statements with evidence by referring to specific aspects of the photo such as “running” and the boy's “smile.”
Ravi Srivastava



First Draft

“It is natural to assume that as the young boy of the photo grows up, he will lose some of his happiness. Why must this be the case? We want the boy to remain optimistic as he is in the moment of the photo and we want him to have the best adult life he can. Because we have these hopes for the boy, we must see that those hopes can be applied to our lives as well. We should wake up and say to ourselves, “Yes! Today will be a great day!” Our good thoughts will help us make the best of the day to come.”

Can you relate this idea to something in the photo?
Tareva Johnson
09/26/2011 09:42



Revised Draft

“It is natural to assume that as the young boy of the photo grows up, he will lose some of his happiness as he begins to realize the reality that he is growing up on the dirt roads of a poor village. Why must this be the case? We want the boy to remain optimistic as he is in the moment of the photo and we want him to have the best adult life he can. Because we have these hopes for the boy, we must see that those hopes can be applied to our lives as well. We should wake up, put on a smile like the young boy, and say to ourselves, “Yes! Today will be a great day!” Our good thoughts will help us make the best of the day to come.”

These highlighted areas show where I added direct references to the photo to support my claim that “It is natural to assume...he will lose some of his happiness...”
Ravi Srivastava



In these two revision displays, I initially made claims about my photo without providing evidence. When writing on any topic, evidence is essential for a writer to achieve credibility with his or her audience. In this paper, I was very passionate about the subject of optimism because optimism is a personal quality that I cherish. When writing about something you are passionate about, it can be tempting to get off topic when you are eager to share your opinion. The revisions for this paper taught me that even if I am passionate about the topic I am writing about, it is important to make sure that what I say remains directly connected to my thesis and is backed up by clear evidence.