

Integration

Revising and Editing

In a role-playing game, gaining experience and leveling up characters is crucial. In most games, a player can improve upon their characters' skills once their characters have gained enough experience points. However, many of these same games also allow characters to improve their skills as they use them. For example, a character who fights with a sword can enhance his combat skill by engaging in more battles. As a younger gamer, I used the "leveling up" approach as my only method of bettering my characters' abilities, but I quickly noticed that my characters would easily be outperformed by other characters of the same level. At that point in time, I knew I needed to develop a different progression strategy.

Similar to this process, I once viewed revising and editing as merely finding the errors in my writing. I didn't view it for what it really was—a tactic to *strengthen* my writing. In my experience before English 1102, I simply skimmed my essays for basic grammatical errors and made sure Point A got connected to Point B. I never really focused on *how* to connect these points; I just assured that the connection got made. I saw revising and editing as a one and done deal, not as a constant, ongoing process.

My revising and editing process has changed a lot throughout this semester. First of all, I've stopped trying to make the elusive "perfect draft" from the beginning. I now write what comes to mind first, and even if it doesn't sound quite right, or I know that I'm missing something, I write it, anyway. As I revise, I mark off areas of interest with brackets so that I can easily find them later. Typically, these points cover big ideas such as "explain more" or "incorporate xyz idea," but they also call attention to small edits such as punctuation problems and ineffective repetition. A coordinated highlighting system further breaks down my initial revisions and emphasizes which type of revisions I need to perform. In addition to this revising and editing process, I often include a section in red text at the beginning of my project entitled "Overall Fixes" that focuses on the global revisions I need to pay attention to when drafting the next version of my project. As I sculpt my new draft, I remove the highlighting and the brackets, and I integrate my new ideas into my old ones, similar to how I now integrate skill practice into my gameplay.

The following highlighting strategy was used for the entire revision process regarding the introduction of my Fiction Project:

Something needs to be added.

When a phrase is highlighted in purple, it means I have nothing to work with initially. I know I need *something* there to better my paper, but I am currently not sure what that something is.

Different word/phrase.

If a word or phrase is highlighted in green, it typically means that it is serving as a placeholder. I know the idea I am trying to convey, but I don't want to forget it while trying to think of the proper way to phrase it.

Reword sentence.

Blue highlighting indicates that an entire sentence need to be reworded. The sentence could be faulty because it is riddled with grammatical errors, worded confusingly, or inconsistent with the rest of the paragraph.

Punctuation.

Any marks or comments highlighted in red mean that I have used incorrect punctuation.

Citations.

Anything highlighted in yellow is related to citations. A citation is either incomplete or incorrect, and I need to fix the citation for my next draft.

Draft One

Overall Fixes: Find a better way to explain Stokols' theory. Furthermore, the organization is, well, *not organized*, and that's a problem. I'm jumping around from idea to idea, and I need them to flow into each other. I'll need to reorganize some of my thoughts.

[A REAL INTRODUCTION, PLEASE - MAKE IT SNAZZY] Disillusionment, as defined by Daniel Stokol, occurs when reality does not live up to expectations (Stokol ??). This can happen through either personal or neutral thwarting on behalf of the [THING] a person is becoming disillusioned with (Stokol ??). [AWKWARD SENTENCE] The [PERSON] either feels their expectations were not met because of

uncontrollable circumstances or because they were personally victimized (Stokol ??). While one may simply be told to lower their expectations; this will not change that disillusionment is an inevitable part of life that [WE] are all predisposed to experience. Building expectations out of common occurrences is natural to human behavior, but it is simply unreasonable to assume that all of these expectations can be met all of the time. Perhaps, then, [WE] should examine where these expectations come from.

[TRANSITION; In XYZ year...] Psychologist Jean Piaget theorized that children undergo a self-centered stage, where they only view the world in terms of themselves (McLeod). They develop certain expectations that their surroundings will adapt to their wants and needs (given that the parent has generally provided these) [AWKWARD SENTENCE]. Generally, this is considered a healthy exploration of self and surrounding. However, some caretakers have difficulty with forcing their children to experience this disillusionment, which can lead to more traumatic experiences [down the line - OR THE LIKES OF]. For example, young children are typically fed by their parents, but as they get older, most realize that they can no longer expect their parents to feed them and must begin feeding themselves. However, if the parents continuously ensure that the child never has to make their own food, the child may be very surprised and confused when a friend's parent asks them to make something on their own [BETTER EXAMPLE]. Either way, this is a [MILD] form of disillusionment [BECAUSE THE CHILD HAD HIGH EXPECTATIONS THAT WERE NOT MET].

Analysis

Having my character practice once doesn't perfect their skills, and revising my project once doesn't make it suitable for submission. Whenever I return to my project to edit it, I have had more time to think about the ideas I am trying to explore and express. When looking back at my first draft, I often find that it appears childish and ineffective. However, I can still identify the concepts I am trying to explain, and I have a better understanding of how to explain them. My second draft doesn't solve each of the individual problems with my first draft. Instead, it acts as a comprehensive solution. By making my global revisions first, many of my local revisions become obsolete. I have new words and sentences to work with, so abiding by all of my original revisions would be impossible. The following draft is the result of adding my initial edits and revisions. The highlighted portions of this new draft illustrate the revisions I plan to employ when crafting my third draft.

Draft Two

Overall Fixes: I *really* need to incorporate *The House in Paris* earlier. Does Stokols's definition still make sense in this context? I also need to work on my transitions; it gets a little choppy sometimes. Where, exactly, is my thesis?

An old adage says to “hope for the best, prepare for the worst, expect nothing, and you’ll never get hurt” (CITE??). While these words may seem to provide sound advice, they can be contrasted against Alfred, Lord Tennyson’s “’Tis better to have loved and lost / Than never to have loved at all” (Tennyson).

[TRANSITION] While [ONE] may simply be told to lower their expectations, [THIS] will not change that disillusionment is an inevitable part of life that humanity is predisposed to experience. Building expectations out of common occurrences is natural to human behavior, but it is simply unreasonable to assume that all of these expectations can be met all of the time. [BUT] where do these expectations come from?

In 1936, Psychologist Jean Piaget theorized that children undergo a self-centered stage, where they view the world only in terms of themselves (McLeod). It was Daniel Stokols who explained how [THIS] could be problematic later in life. According to Stokols’ “Toward a Psychological Theory of Alienation” disillusionment is when a person “begins with high levels of involvement and expectation only to arrive at, or be jolted into, an extremely unfavorable situation” (31). [TRANSITION] There are two paths to becoming disillusioned. The first path “involves a *neutral thwarting* – that is, one which does not emanate directly from [O], is not specifically directed at [H], and is perceived by [H] as being unintentional” whereas the second path “involves a *personal thwarting* – that is, one which stems directly from [O], is specifically directed at [H], and is perceived by [H] as [intentional]” (Stokols 32, 33). Furthermore, [IT IS STATED] that each of these paths – *neutral* and *personal thwarting* – has two potential outcomes depending on “the salience of desirable alternative relationships” (Stokols 34). A person who feels that salient alternatives are available to their current status will have an “adaptive” strategy to problem solving (Barber 161). According to Stokols, the potential outcomes of disillusionment with regard to types of thwarting and alternatives are as follows: isolation, reintegration, subjugation, or rebellion (35).

Analysis

As I finish making my second round of revisions, I notice that my paper feels much more unified than it did originally. When I look at my third draft to see if it functions efficiently enough to become my final, I have much less to revise and edit than I did with my first or second drafts. For the most part, I have all the pieces I

need, and I simply have to worry about rewording certain sentences and phrases so that they better add to my overall argument. My second round of revisions have been applied to this next draft, and the highlighted portions illustrate the final edits I plan to make before my paper is ready for submission.

Draft Three

Overall Fixes: How much of Stokols's theory is *necessary*? I should better tie my thesis - as well as my general introduction - into *The House in Paris*. Also, I use passive voice a lot, and I should probably do something about that.

An old adage says to “hope for the best, prepare for the worst, expect nothing, and you’ll never get hurt”. While these unattributed words may seem to provide sound advice, [THEY CAN BE EASILY CONTRASTED AGAINST] Alfred, Lord Tennyson’s “’Tis better to have loved and lost / Than never to have loved at all” (Tennyson). Expressed truthfully, to love is to be exposed, to be vulnerable; to hurt and be hurt, but also to forgive and be forgiven. Love, by all standards, defies the notion of preparation simply because love is not rational. Contrary to [THIS], many people, such as Karen Michaelis and Max Ebhart of Elizabeth Bowen’s *The House in Paris*, grow up believing that love is supposed to “be safe” and easy like “furniture or the dark” (Bowen 87, 159). To grow up, to grow into oneself, is to develop expectations and have them quickly crushed. The process of disillusionment is an essential element of the human experience, one that cannot be avoided with any amount of preparation.

To understand why disillusionment [CANNOT BE EVADED], it is important to accurately define what it means to be disillusioned. According to Daniel Stokols’ “Toward a Psychological Theory of Alienation” disillusionment occurs when a person “begins with high levels of involvement and expectation only to arrive at, or be jolted into, an extremely unfavorable situation” (Stokols 31). Stokols states that there are two paths to becoming disillusioned. The first path “involves a *neutral thwarting* – that is, one which does not emanate directly from [the cause of disillusionment], is not specifically directed at [the disillusioned person], and is perceived by [the disillusioned person] as being unintentional” whereas the second path “involves a *personal thwarting* – that is, one which stems directly from [the cause of disillusionment], is specifically directed at [the disillusioned person], and is perceived by [the disillusioned person] as [intentional]” (Stokols 32, 33). Furthermore, it is stated that each of these paths – *neutral* and *personal thwarting* – has two potential outcomes depending on “the salience of desirable alternative relationships” or, essentially, “the extent to

which [the disillusioned person feels] 'caught' or 'trapped' in an unsatisfying situation" (Stokols 34; Barber 155). A person who feels that salient alternatives are available to their current status will have an "adaptive" strategy to problem solving (Barber 161). According to Stokols, the potential outcomes of disillusionment with regard to types of thwarting and alternatives are as follows: isolation, reintegration, subjugation, or rebellion (Stokols 35).

Analysis

Upon fixing the last few errors present within my third draft, I arrived at my final version of my Fiction Project introduction. My thesis is clearly visible in my final edition, and my introduction efficiently explains the scope of my project. As I have built up my characters through practice, I have built up my writing through revisions. The process doesn't happen all at once, but the step-by-step nature of revision and practice is what makes them effective.

Final

An old adage says to "hope for the best, prepare for the worst, expect nothing, and you'll never get hurt." While these unattributed words may seem to provide sound advice, Alfred, Lord Tennyson's "'Tis better to have loved and lost / Than never to have loved at all" distinctly contrasts against them (Tennyson). Expressed truthfully, to love is to be exposed, to be vulnerable; to hurt and be hurt, but also to forgive and be forgiven. Love, by all standards, defies the notion of preparation simply because love is not rational. Contrary to this truth, many people, such as Karen Michaelis and Max Ebhart of Elizabeth Bowen's *The House in Paris*, grow up believing that love is supposed to "be safe" and easy like "furniture or the dark" (Bowen 87, 159). Max and Karen spend the entirety of the novel being disillusioned about love because the prominent figures in their lives have groomed them into ideal dolls instead of real people. They are forced to learn that the disillusionment process is an essential element of the human experience, one that cannot be avoided with any amount of preparation.

To understand why Max and Karen cannot avoid disillusionment, it is important to define accurately what it means to be disillusioned. According to Daniel Stokols' "Toward a Psychological Theory of Alienation," disillusionment occurs when a person "begins with high levels of involvement and expectations only to arrive at [...] an extremely unfavorable situation" (Stokols 31). Stokols states that there are two paths to becoming

disillusioned. The first path “involves a *neutral thwarting* – [which] is perceived by [the disillusioned person] as being unintentional” whereas the second path “involves a *personal thwarting* – [which] is perceived by [the disillusioned person] as [intentional]” (Stokols 32, 33). Furthermore, it is stated that each of these paths – *neutral* and *personal thwarting*–has two potential outcomes depending on “the salience of desirable alternative relationships” or, essentially, “the extent to which [the disillusioned person feels] ‘caught’ or ‘trapped’ in an unsatisfying situation” (Stokols 34; Barber 155). A person who feels that salient alternatives are available to their current status will have an “adaptive” strategy to problem solving (Barber 161). According to Stokols, the potential outcomes of disillusionment with regard to types of thwarting and alternatives are as follows: isolation, reintegration, subjugation, or rebellion (Stokols 35). By following Max and Karen’s development throughout the novel, the reader can identify the causes of their illusion and their subsequent paths to disillusionment.