

## Writing Revision: Reverse Outlining



What is Reverse Outlining?	Why Reverse Outline?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Often students discover what they want to write about only once they start writing a draft</li> <li>• Because of this, first drafts inevitably depart from what was envisioned in the planning stage</li> <li>• Reverse Outlining is a revision technique that helps revise completed drafts by outlining what has already been written, and highlighting where a paper departs from its original argument</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It's quicker: instead of revising the whole paper, it gives targeted steps, focused on the key parts</li> <li>• It's flexible: Reverse outlining can help revise the intro/thesis to match the body or revise the body to match the intro/thesis</li> <li>• It's efficient: instead of only cutting material, reverse outlining helps you incorporate tangents and off-topic sections of your paper</li> </ul>

## Outline

## Revise

### Steps of Reverse Outlining

Step 1: Prepare	Step 2: Left Column	Step 3: Right Column	Step 4: Incorporate	Step 5: Reorder	Step 6: Signpost
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If possible, print your paper to remove the temptation to edit</li> <li>• Take a blank sheet of paper and draw a line down the middle</li> <li>• Title the left side "Main Topic" and the right side "Argument"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the left column, write the main topic of each paragraph using as few words as possible</li> <li>• In your paper, highlight the topic sentence of each paragraph (generally the first or second sentence in a paragraph)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In your intro paragraph, highlight the thesis of your paper (your main argument)</li> <li>• In the right column of the outline, write how each paragraph relates to and supports your thesis in 1-2 sentences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compare the main-points column (left) of the outline to your thesis.</li> <li>• If your main topics depart from your thesis, either revise the thesis to incorporate the off-topic paragraphs or revise the paragraphs fit the thesis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the right column to check your argument</li> <li>• Is there a paragraph order that's clearer for the reader?</li> <li>• Does each paragraph flow logically to the next?</li> <li>• If so, revise the order of your paragraphs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signpost each part of the paper to the reader, especially transitions and topic sentences</li> <li>• Ensure topic sentences are at the top of each paragraph and connect to the paragraph above and the support below</li> </ul>

### Reverse Outline Example

*Thesis: Katniss Everdeen is self-destructive and creates as much danger for herself as she faces from others.*

#### Main Idea

*Body 1: She volunteers to fight in the games.*

*Body 2: Shooting the apple out of the pig's mouth.*

#### Argument (How it supports the thesis)

*She chose to compete. This puts herself in danger from others.*

*This puts a big target on her back, putting her in danger when she didn't have to be.*

### Revision vs Proofreading

- Students often confuse proofing and revision
- Proofreading is the process of finding surface errors, like grammar and punctuation.
- Revision is the process of improving a paper's argument, organization, readability, and focus
- Students worry more about proofing, even though revision has a far larger impact on a paper's grade

## Reverse Outlining Practice

Below you are given a partially complete reverse outline with only the thesis/argument complete. Work backwards and fill in the mainpoints from the argument provided, and then use the area on the right to revise the given argument & thesis and reorder the paper.

<u>Main Idea (Fill In)</u>	<u>Argument (How it Supports Thesis)</u>	<u>How Would You Revise the Argument?</u>	
<b>Main Topic:</b>	<b>Thesis:</b> Apple markets products that appeal to individuality	<b>Thesis:</b>	
1).	1). By entering the phone market in 2007, Apple began to focus on the end-user's need for connection.	1).	Reorder? <input type="checkbox"/>
2).	2). Apple stores build trust with technology, have friendly sales staff, and are inviting.	2).	<input type="checkbox"/>
3).	3). Siri creates a relationship between individuals, instead of between a technology & its user	3).	<input type="checkbox"/>
4).	4). Apple has focused on end-user experience since their 1984 Super Bowl commercial	4).	<input type="checkbox"/>
5).	5). When users see themselves in their device, they trust the technology more.	5).	<input type="checkbox"/>
6).	6). Conclusion: Individuality will continue to be the driving force behind Apple's devices	6).	<input type="checkbox"/>