



THREE LAST-MINUTE EDITING STRATEGIES

The [VWC](#) offers fantastic feedback for paper revisions, but what can I do when I am finishing an essay the night before the due date? As an admitted procrastinator, this happens to me frequently. I have had to learn to become my own editor. I use three guidelines to beat drafts into mean, lean, thesis machines:

1. **Print The Paper Out**—I believe it's easier to see other people's mistakes rather than my own. By printing out the paper to edit, it simulates the experience of reading someone else's work. It allows me to liberally use a red pen which can be sublime.
2. **Read The Paper Out Loud** – It's easy to miss mistakes with my eyes, but when I read my paper out loud, I can hear where my sentences fail. I notice when a sentence goes on too long (if I have to take a breath in-between reading a sentence) or when I miss a word.
3. **Be a Brutal Editor** – I am a serial killer of words. I look at every word and ask if the sentence would still make sense if I cut it. I whittle every sentence down to its essence. Not only does the writing sound smoother, but it's an easy way to catch mistakes.

For more tips to help you edit your own work, check out [this article on revising for coherence](#) and [this one on writing concisely](#). Good luck with final revisions and procrastination.

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