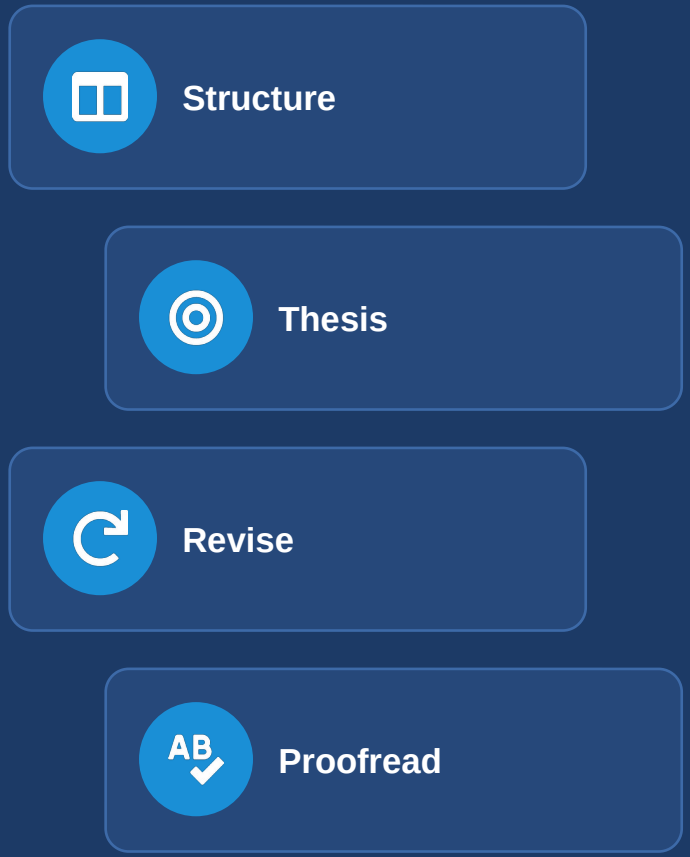
NBE3U Writing Back, Lesson 13

Essay Workshop

Revising, editing and proofreading a comparative essay



Today's goals

We are learning…

- To revise a comparative essay for content, organization, clarity and style.
- To edit and proofread our own and others' writing.

I can…

- Revise my draft using a routine.
- Correct spelling, including names and Nations.
- Refine word choice for precision.
- Proofread systematically with a log.

Today's plan

Time	What we're doing	You will…
0–10 min	**Structure**	Choose
10–20 min	**Thesis**	Revise
20–45 min	**Revise**	Revise
45–60 min	**Edit**	Edit
60–75 min	**Proofread**	Proofread

Big idea

A first draft gets the ideas down; revision makes them clear; editing and proofreading make them trustworthy. In an essay about writers who were often misnamed and misquoted, accuracy is a form of respect: every quotation, name and Nation must be exactly right.

Two ways to compare

Block

- Body 1–2: writer A.
- Body 3–4: writer B.
- Simple, but the comparison waits until the end.

Point-by-point

- Body 1: audience, both writers.
- Body 2: strategy, both writers.
- Body 3: effect, both writers.

Point-by-point usually compares more sharply. Choose one and stay consistent.

Sharpen the thesis

Weak	Sharp
Johnson and Zitkála-Šá both write about Indigenous people.	Johnson and Zitkála-Šá both turn their readers' gaze back on themselves, but Johnson persuades through performance and Zitkála-Šá through quiet testimony.
Eastman and Zitkála-Šá had different childhoods.	Read together, Eastman's memoir and Zitkála-Šá's essays reveal two educations: one built on relationship, one on routine.

Model: a comparative paragraph

Task: Point-by-point paragraph on audience.

Both writers knew their readers were the people they were criticizing. Johnson performed “A Cry from an Indian Wife” for Toronto's elite, praising the young soldiers before claiming that “by right, by birth” the land was hers. Zitkála-Šá, writing in the Atlantic Monthly, reported the “rude curiosity” of white passengers to readers who might have been among them. Johnson disarms her audience; Zitkála-Šá quietly implicates hers. Both make settler readers see themselves from the outside.

Why it works

Both writers in one paragraph.

Exact, short quotations.

Names the difference, then the link.

ARMS

Move	Ask yourself
Add	Where do I need more evidence or explanation?
Remove	What repeats, summarizes or wanders off topic?
Move	Is my strongest point in the best place?
Substitute	Which vague words can I replace with precise ones?

Revise your draft

On page 1:

1. Run the six checks.
2. Make at least one change for each ARMS move.
3. Rewrite your thesis.
4. Highlight your three biggest changes.

Editing for accuracy

names	Writers and Nations, spelled exactly. *Tekahionwake; Zitkála-Šá; Ohiyesa; Yankton Dakota.*
quotations	Copied exactly, old spellings kept. *“to-day,” “vict'ry” stay as written.*
terms	Today's terms in your own sentences. *First Nations, Métis, Inuit, the specific Nation.*
homophones	Words that sound alike. *its/it's, their/there, affect/effect.*

Precise word choice

Instead of…	Try…
shows	exposes, reveals, implies, indicts, dramatizes
bad / sad	cruel, unjust, humiliating, grief-stricken
talks about	argues, questions, protests, records
interesting	unsettling, ironic, striking, revealing

Partner proofreading

Swap drafts:

1. Read your partner's essay aloud, quietly.
2. Mark errors in pencil; don't fix them.
3. Return it; log each error and its rule on page 2.
4. Read your own essay backwards, sentence by sentence.

Before you submit

- Does my thesis compare, not just describe?
- Is every quotation exact and cited?
- Are all names and Nations spelled correctly?
- Have I logged my error patterns?

Exit ticket

1. Your revised thesis.

2. Your most important revision.

3. One error pattern you'll watch for.

Next class: Then and Now seminar.

Teacher reveal

Essay workshop: key points

Structures: Block (writer A, then writer B) or point-by-point (one idea per paragraph, both writers). Point-by-point usually compares more sharply.

Thesis: Names both writers, the shared strategy or difference, and why it matters.

ARMS: Add, Remove, Move, Substitute: revise for content and organization before editing.

Spelling: Writers' names and Nations exact; quotations copied exactly; check homophones.

Word choice: Replace vague words (“shows,” “bad,” “interesting”) with precise ones.

Proofreading: Read aloud, read backwards for spelling, and log your patterns.