

Exercise on Conciseness (from the Scott, Foresman Handbook)

Wordy parts of these sentences are underlined.

Condense sprawling phrases (pg. 288)

1. On the occasion of the newspaper's seventy-fifth anniversary, the governor visited the editorial offices.

For the newspaper's seventy-fifth anniversary, the governor visited the editorial offices.

2. Regardless of the fact that I have revised the speech three times, I still don't like my conclusion.

Even though I have revised the speech three times, I still don't like my conclusion.
Despite revising the speech three times, I still don't like my conclusion.

Cut nominalizations

1. The registrar's note is a clarification of the school's admissions policy.

The registrar's note clarifies the school's admissions policy.

2. It is a matter of substantial disputation among sociologists whether the gentrification of urban neighborhoods is a beneficial process to inner-city residents.

Sociologists dispute whether the gentrifying of urban neighborhoods is a beneficial process to inner-city residents.

Sociologists dispute whether gentrifying urban neighborhoods benefits inner-city residents.

Condense long verb phrases to focus on the action.

1. Many people are of the opinion that the federal government has grown too large.

Many people believe the federal government has grown too large.

2. An almost equal number of people hold the conviction that many citizens have need of services provided by federal programs.

An almost equal number of people believe many citizens need services provided by federal programs.

Eliminate doublings and redundancies.

1. I realized that if I were ever to reach law school, I would have to increase my competitiveness in the skill of written prose composition.

I realized that if I were ever to reach law school, I would have to improve my writing.

2. Ellen to me is a daytime talk type of television show.

Ellen to me is a daytime television show.

Eliminate surplus intensifiers.

The Grand Canyon is a quite unique geological treasure in northwestern Arizona, basically formed by the relentless power of the Colorado River cutting a gorge for many, many eons through solid rock. Standing at the edge of the canyon is a totally awesome experience. The canyon walls drop far into the depths, thousands of feet, a seriously deep drop, exposing very different layers of limestone, sandstone, and volcanic rock. These really magnificent canyons recede into the distance like ancient castles, an absolutely remarkable panorama of color and shadow.

The Grand Canyon is a geological treasure in northwestern Arizona, formed by the relentless power of the Colorado River cutting a gorge for eons through rock. Standing at the edge of the canyon is an awesome experience. The canyon walls drop into the depths, thousands of feet, exposing different layers of limestone, sandstone, and volcanic rock. These magnificent canyons recede into the distance like ancient castles, a remarkable panorama of color and shadow.

Cut down on expletive constructions.

1. There are many different ways to fulfill the science requirement at most colleges.

Students can fulfill the science requirement at most colleges many ways.

2. It is usually the case that liberal arts majors are more suited for science courses that are geared to the history of the field.

Most liberal arts majors are more suited for science courses that are geared to the history of the field.

Most liberal arts majors prefer science courses geared to the history of the field.

Cut the number of prepositional phrases.

1. J.R.R. Tolkien was the author of one of the most popular series of fantasy novels about the battle between good and evil forces in the distant past of the fictional world of Middle Earth.

J.R.R. Tolkien wrote the popular series of fantasy novels about the battle between good and evil forces in the world of Middle Earth.

2. Tolkien's series *The Lord of the Rings* focuses on the adventures of a genial hobbit by the name of Frodo Baggins and his sidekick by the name of Sam who, along with Frodo, becomes involved in the race to destroy a ring of magical but evil powers.

Tolkien's series *The Lord of the Rings* focuses on the adventures of a genial hobbit named Frodo Baggins and his sidekick, Sam, who become involved in the race to destroy a magical ring with evil powers.

Cut relative pronouns (that, which, who, whom) when you can do it without changing the meaning of a sentence.

1. Some of the people who might be willing to endure a little less environmental consciousness are parents of children whom environmental education programs have turned into Green Police.

Some of the people willing to endure a little less environmental consciousness are parents of children where environmental education programs have turned into Green Police.

2. Second graders who used to read Dr. Seuss stories suddenly can't wait to locate "Tips to Save Our Planet" in the daily newspaper, which carries dozens of slick, unrecycled inserts.

Second graders who used to read Dr. Seuss stories suddenly can't wait to locate "Tips to Save Our Planet" in the daily newspaper with dozens of slick, unrecycled inserts.

Condense sentences into clauses and clauses into phrases or words.

1. In the event that you are in proximity to Green County this weekend, you should not miss the opportunity to visit the autumn Concours d'Elegance, and annual exhibit of classic cars.

If you are near Green County this weekend, be sure to visit the autumn Concours d'Elegance, and annual exhibit of classic cars.

2. There is the possibility that you may have the chance to touch and feel many quite unusual and different vehicles, from dowdy Edsels with gearshift buttons in the middle of their steering wheels to tiny Corvairs with air-cooled engines under louvered desk lids at the back.

You may have the chance to touch different vehicles, from dowdy Edsels with gearshift buttons in the middle of their steering wheels to tiny Corvairs with air-cooled engines under louvered desk lids at the back.