

# MERRIMACK COLLEGE WRITING CENTER

## REVISION ACTIVITY: “LISTING” A PARAGRAPH

This activity forces you to see a paragraph or paragraph sequence in a totally different way.

### Instructions

First, do the following:

1. Save your draft under a new file name.
2. In the new file, remove any tabs or indentations that mark the beginning of the paragraph.
3. Set the whole document to single space by selecting all, then setting spacing to single.
4. After each period, hit enter twice, so that your paragraph looks like the example below:

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*This is a paragraph that I am writing as an example for a writing activity in which you convert a paragraph or paragraphs into a single list.*

*Notice that my document is single spaced, and that I hit return after the period ends each sentence.*

*Once I have the list created, it will be easier for me to determine a number of things: if I have engaged in unnecessary repetition, if each sentence stands alone as a complete thought, if my paragraph may be choppy, and if my ideas actually connect.*

*A choppy paragraph has sentences of similar length.*

*Those sentences will appear in a row.*

*They may likely have the same structure.*

*They might not even be sentences.*

*Which would be a problem.*

*Did you catch that error?*

*I intentionally created it for you, so that you could see an example of the kinds of issues that become clearer when you make the paper “new” to your perspective.*

*Good luck revising!*

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### Look for a Number of Issues

Once you have created your “list paragraph,” you can more easily see any number of issues:

1. Choppy sentences will appear the same length. Try sentence combining, or breaking sequences of long sentences, to create varied lengths, and thus eliminate choppiness.
2. Watch for first word repetition; although it is often a good rhetorical strategy, repetition of non-impactful words or phrases can reduce the quality of your work.
3. If and when citations appear at the end of a sentence, you will be able to see them more clearly in order to check them against the samples in your handbook.
4. Read your sentences in random order, or in reverse, to see if they make grammatical sense standing alone.
5. Read your sentences in pairs to see if the transitions of ideas from one to the next makes sense.

