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Editing Written Work with GAI

Word choice

Topic sentences

Concision

Grammar

Cohesion / Flow / Transitions

Tone

Feedback

**Note: always ensure no client-identifying information is included in the prompt.

Word Choice Exercise:

Offer a sentence to GAI and ask for 10 alternative word choice options.

Example

Sentence: He had two daughters, but his relationships with both children's mothers were turbulent.

Prompt: Please offer 10 word choice suggestions for the word "turbulent" in the prior sentence.

Response:

Here are ten alternative word choices for "turbulent" in your sentence, each with a slightly different nuance:

1. **Strained** – emphasizes tension and difficulty.

2. **Rocky** – suggests instability and ups and downs.
3. **Contentious** – highlights frequent arguments or disputes.
4. **Volatile** – implies unpredictability and emotional intensity.
5. **Tumultuous** – suggests chaos and disorder.
6. **Troubled** – conveys a history of issues or challenges.
7. **Discordant** – implies ongoing conflict or lack of harmony.
8. **Fractious** – suggests frequent disagreements or irritability.
9. **Unstable** – emphasizes lack of consistency and reliability.
10. **Combative** – highlights hostility and constant fighting.

Topic Sentence Exercise:

Offer a paragraph to GAI and ask it to identify 5 possible topic sentences for the paragraph. Ask students to assess if the sentences capture the main point they were trying to convey from the paragraph. If not, ask if this is GAI, or if the main point may not be conveyed by the information within the paragraph.

*Note – also can used to draft suggested headers for a section of a brief/memo.

Example

Paragraph:

Mr. X had a difficult upbringing and battled substance abuse from a young age. (Ex. A, ¶¶.) His childhood included abandonment, running away, dropping out of school, and being sent to rehab in his teens. He had two daughters, but his relationships with both children's mothers were turbulent. When his oldest daughter was X-years-old, he sent her to live with a family member out of state. When his second daughter was X-years-old, she was taken by CPS. His failure as a father accelerated his downward spiral of addiction. Mr. X's criminal record spans his life from when he was twenty years old to his early thirties in 20XX.

Prompt: Please provide 3 possible topic sentences for the paragraph.

Response:

1. Mr. X's early life was fraught with instability, substance abuse, and strained relationships, which fueled his struggles and eventual criminal record.
2. Mr. X's childhood and early adulthood were marked by adversity, including family instability, substance abuse, and legal troubles that shaped the course of his life.
3. A difficult upbringing, struggles with addiction, and fractured family relationships contributed to Mr. X's long history of personal and legal challenges.

Revision prompt: Please offer 3 more topics sentences that are more concise than those above.

Response:

1. Mr. X faced early hardships that led to addiction and legal struggles.
2. Instability and substance abuse defined Mr. X's early life.
3. Mr. X's troubled past fueled his struggles with addiction and the law

Concision Exercise:

Offer a paragraph to GAI and ask it to make the text more concise by reducing the word count by 10% (or 20%). Ask it to offer 2-3 alternatives. Ask students to review each suggestion one at a time and determine if accurately conveys their meaning and if they prefer it. After the exercise (or more than one time trying it), ask them if the exercise helped them identify tendencies in their own writing that they can watch for.

Example

Paragraph:

Mr. X's troubled past fueled his struggles with addiction and the law. Mr. X had a difficult upbringing and battled substance abuse from a young age. (Ex. A, ¶¶.) His childhood included abandonment, running away, dropping out of school, and being sent to rehab in his teens. He had two daughters, but his relationships with both children's mothers were turbulent. When his oldest daughter was X-years-old, he sent her to live with a family member out of state. When his second daughter was X-years-old, she was taken by CPS. His failure as a father accelerated his downward spiral of addiction. Mr. X criminal record spans his life from when he was twenty years old to his early thirties in 20XX.

Prompt: Please offer two possible revisions that make the text more concise by 10% and point out the changes specifically made.

Response:

Here are the two revised versions with **specific changes** highlighted and explained:

Revision 1 (More Concise & Streamlined)

Revised Paragraph:

Mr. X's troubled past fueled his struggles with addiction and the law. **He faced** substance abuse from a young age, **compounded by** abandonment, running away, dropping out of school, and **teen rehab**. His relationships with both daughters' mothers were turbulent. His oldest daughter **was sent** to live with family out of state, while CPS took his second daughter. His parental failures deepened his addiction. His criminal record spans from age 20 to his early 30s in 20XX.

Key Changes:

1. "Mr. X had a difficult upbringing and battled substance abuse from a young age." → "He faced substance abuse from a young age, compounded by..."

- Combines two sentences for better flow and concision.
- 2. **“His childhood included” → Removed**
 - Unnecessary lead-in; the key details follow naturally.
- 3. **“being sent to rehab in his teens” → “teen rehab”**
 - Shortened for brevity.
- 4. **“When his oldest daughter was X-years-old, he sent her to live with a family member out of state.” → “His oldest daughter was sent to live with family out of state.”**
 - Passive construction avoids repetition of “he” and streamlines the sentence.
- 5. **“His failure as a father accelerated his downward spiral of addiction.” → “His parental failures deepened his addiction.”**
 - More concise without losing meaning.

Revision 2 (Further Simplified & Direct)

Revised Paragraph:

Mr. X’s difficult upbringing led to lifelong struggles with addiction and the law. He faced abandonment, **ran away, dropped out, and entered rehab as a teen**. His relationships with his children’s mothers were unstable. His oldest daughter **was sent** to live with family, and CPS took his second. The loss of his children worsened his addiction. His criminal record spans from age 20 to his early 30s in 20XX.

Key Changes:

1. **“Mr. X’s troubled past fueled his struggles with addiction and the law.” → “Mr. X’s difficult upbringing led to lifelong struggles with addiction and the law.”**
 - More direct; removes “fueled” for a clearer cause-effect structure.
2. **“abandonment, running away, dropping out of school, and being sent to rehab in his teens.” → “abandonment, ran away, dropped out, and entered rehab as a teen.”**
 - Uses active voice and eliminates “being sent to” for conciseness.
3. **“His relationships with both children’s mothers were turbulent.” → “His relationships with his children’s mothers were unstable.”**
 - “Unstable” is a more concise synonym for “turbulent.”
4. **“When his oldest daughter was X-years-old, he sent her to live with a family member out of state.” → “His oldest daughter was sent to live with family.”**
 - Eliminates “he sent her” for a smoother sentence.
5. **“His failure as a father accelerated his downward spiral of addiction.” → “The loss of his children worsened his addiction.”**
 - More direct and emotional impact.

Grammar Exercise:

Offer a section of text to GAI and ask it to identify all uses of passive language, and to suggest 2 alternative options for each. Ask students to review the suggestions and

determine if: text identified was passive language, if use of passive in section was intentional, and if any alternative is preferred.

*Note: can be modified for any grammar issue that student identifies as having.

Example

Paragraph:

Mr. X's troubled past fueled his struggles with addiction and the law. Mr. X had a difficult upbringing and battled substance abuse from a young age. (Ex. A, ¶¶.) His childhood included abandonment, running away, dropping out of school, and being sent to rehab in his teens. He had two daughters, but his relationships with both children's mothers were turbulent. When his oldest daughter was X-years-old, he sent her to live with a family member out of state. When his second daughter was X-years-old, she was taken by CPS. His failure as a father accelerated his downward spiral of addiction. Mr. X criminal record spans his life from when he was twenty years old to his early thirties in 20XX.

Prompt:

Please identify any passive voice in the following paragraph. For each instance, please offer two options for revision.

Response:

Here are the instances of passive voice in the paragraph, along with two options for revision for each:

1. **"being sent to rehab in his teens."**

- *Passive voice:* "being sent to rehab in his teens."
- **Option 1:** "His family sent him to rehab in his teens."
- **Option 2:** "He went to rehab in his teens after intervention from others."

2. **"she was taken by CPS."**

- *Passive voice:* "she was taken by CPS."
- **Option 1:** "CPS took her."
- **Option 2:** "Child Protective Services removed her from his custody."

Tone Exercise:

Offer a selection of text to GAI and ask it to modify the tone. Be clear about the tone you want to use (i.e. "professional but firm"; "professional and friendly"; "like a law school professor"). Filter the text through GAI using 2-3 different tones.

*Note: this has been particularly helpful for students to use when they are emotionally charged in a response, for example, in responding to the opposing side. Writing the email initially without trying to filter can also serve a venting function.

Example:

[Context – email from opposing party after several unanswered emails from students trying to confirm a location to meet for settlement negotiations.]

Hi T,

Haven't gotten any updates from you regarding finding a safer place for us to meet. Please give us a few places to choose from and also have your client present to meet, thanks! We can't be in a high crime, drug infested neighborhood.

Student's proposed answer:

Dear Mr. X,

It seems like you are purposefully ignoring our emails. We reached out to you on Wednesday afternoon. In that email we suggested a location and requested your confirmation to our meeting time. Since we did not hear from you, we assumed that you were no longer interested in meeting then. In the future we would greatly appreciate more prompt responses regarding scheduling so that we can all be properly prepared. We have no intention to make you come to a part of the city that makes you scared, and we have and will continue to be sensitive to this and suggest meeting spots accordingly. Alternatively, if you have locations in mind, please let us know. As I said in a previous email, Client will not be present for meetings, but he will be available by phone in the event that we need to relay an offer to him.

Prompt: Please provide an alternative response with a goal of continuing communication, and with a professional and empathic tone.

Response:

Dear [Recipient's Name],

We are concerned you may not be receiving our emails. We did reach out to you on Wednesday afternoon with a suggested location and a request for confirmation of our meeting time; did you receive that email? Since we did not receive a response, we assumed that the proposed meeting would not move forward as planned. Our intention was never to leave you uninformed, and we regret any misunderstanding. We value open and timely communication, especially when it comes to scheduling, as it allows all parties to be fully prepared.

We also want to assure you that we are mindful of your concerns regarding meeting locations. If you have specific locations you would prefer, please let us know, and we will do our best to accommodate them.

Additionally, as previously mentioned, Client will not be present for meetings, but he will be available by phone if needed to relay an offer.

We appreciate your time and look forward to continuing our discussions. Please let us know how you'd like to proceed.