



# *Actions*

~Presentation Group 2~

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# UNDERSTANDING HOW WE EXPRESS JUDGEMENTS



Praise words	Abusive words
Clear, Direct, Concise	Unclear, Indirect, Abstract, Dense, Complex

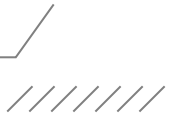




# TELLING STORIES ABOUT CHARACTERS AND THEIR ACTIONS



A. Once upon a time, as the walk through the woods was taking place on the part of Little Red Riding Hood, the Wolf's jump out from behind a tree occurred, causing her fright.



# TELLING STORIES ABOUT CHARACTERS AND THEIR ACTIONS

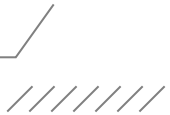
A. Once upon a time, as the walk through the woods was taking place on the part of Little Red Riding Hood, the Wolf's jump out from behind a tree occurred, causing her fright.

B. Once upon a time, Little Red Riding Hood was walking through the woods, when the Wolf jumped out from behind a tree and frighten her. ➔



## Principle of Clarity 1: **Make Main Characters Subjects**

A. Once upon a time, as the walk through the woods was taking place on the part of *Little Red Riding Hood*, the *Wolf's* jump out from behind a tree occurred, causing *her* fright.







## Principle of Clarity 1: **Make Main Characters Subjects**

A. Once upon a time, as the walk through the woods was taking place on the part of *Little Red Riding Hood*, the *Wolf's* jump out from behind a tree occurred, causing *her* fright.

B. Once upon a time, *Little Red Riding Hood* was walking through the woods, when *the Wolf* jumped out from behind a tree and frighten her.





# FAIRY TALES AND ACADEMIC OR PROFESSIONAL WRITING



A. *The Federalists'* argument in regard to the **destabilization** of *government* by *popular democracy* was **BASED** on *their* **belief** in the **tendency** of *factions* to **FURTHER** *their* self-interest at the expense of common good.





# FAIRY TALES AND ACADEMIC OR PROFESSIONAL WRITING



A. *The Federalists'* **argument** in regard to the **destabilization** of *government* by *popular democracy* was **BASED** on *their* **belief** in the **tendency** of *factions* to **FURTHER** *their* self-interest at the expense of common good.

B. The *Federalists* **ARGUED** that *popular democracy* **DESTABILIZED** government, because *they* **BELIEVED** that *factions* **TENDED TO FURTHER** *their* self-interest at the expense of the common good.



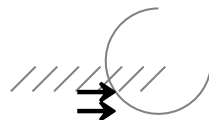


# VERBS AND ACTIONS



*A sentence seems clear when its important **actions** are in **verbs**.*

A. Our **lack** of data **PREVENTED** **evaluation** of UN **actions** in **targeting** funds to areas most in **need** of **assistance**.





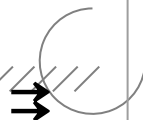
# VERBS AND ACTIONS



*A sentence seems clear when its important **actions** are in **verbs**.*

A. Our **lack** of data **PREVENTED** **evaluation** of UN **actions** in **targeting** funds to areas most in **need** of **assistance**.

B. Because we **LACKED** data, we could not **EVALUATE** whether the UN **HAD TARGETED** funds to areas that most **NEEDED** **assistance**.





A **noun** derived from a **verb** or **adjective** has a technical name: ***NOMINALIZATION***.

The word illustrates its meanings: When we nominalize *nominalize*, we create the nominalization *nominalization*.





# DIAGNOSIS AND REVISION:

## CHARACTERS AND ACTIONS



Our principle is this:

**Verbs** as **actions**, and **subjects** as **characters**.

Revision is a three-step process:





# DIAGNOSIS AND REVISION:

## CHARACTERS AND ACTIONS



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Revision is a three-step process:

Diagnose







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## CHARACTERS AND ACTIONS



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**Verbs** as **actions**, and **subjects** as **characters**.

Revision is a three-step process:

Diagnose → Analyze





# DIAGNOSIS AND REVISION:

## CHARACTERS AND ACTIONS



Our principle is this:

**Verbs** as **actions**, and **subjects** as **characters**.

Revision is a three-step process:

Diagnose → Analyze → Rewrite



# SOME COMMON PATTERNS

You can quickly spot and revise  
**five common patterns** of *nominalizations*.

1. The nominalization is the subject of an empty verb such as *be*, *seems*, *has*, etc.

A. Change the nominalization to a verb:  
intention → intend

# SOME COMMON PATTERNS

You can quickly spot and revise  
**five common patterns** of *nominalizations*.

1. The nominalization is the subject of an empty verb such as *be*, *seems*, *has*, etc.

B. Find a character that will be the **subject** of that **verb**:

The **intention** of *the committee* IS to audit the records.



# SOME COMMON PATTERNS

You can quickly spot and revise  
**five common patterns** of *nominalizations*.

1. The nominalization is the subject of an empty verb such as *be, seems, has*, etc.

C. Make that character the **subject** of the new **verb**:

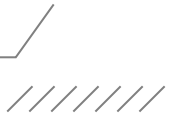
✓ *The committee* **INTENDS** to audit the records.





2. The **nominalization** follows an empty **verb**: The *agency* CONDUCTED an **investigation** into the matter.

A. Change the **nominalization** to a **verb**:  
investigation → investigate





2. The **nominalization** follows an empty **verb**: The *agency* CONDUCTED an **investigation** into the matter.

B. Replace the empty **verb** with the new **verb**: conducted → investigated  
✓ The *agency* INVESTIGATED the matter.



• • • • • ⇒  
• • • • •  
3. One nominalization is the subject of an empty verb and a second nominalization follows it: Our loss in sales WAS a result of their expansion of outlets.

A. Revise the nominalization into verbs: loss → lose expansion → expand



3. One nominalization is the subject of an empty verb and a second nominalization follows it: Our loss in sales WAS a result of their expansion of outlets.

B. Identify the characters that would be the subjects of those verbs:

*Our* loss in sales was a result of *their* expansion of outlets.

3. One nominalization is the subject of an empty verb and a second nominalization follows it: Our loss in sales WAS a result of their expansion of outlets.

C. Make those characters subjects of those verbs:  
we lose they expand

3. One nominalization is the subject of an empty verb and a second nominalization follows it: Our loss in sales WAS a result of their expansion of outlets.

D. Link the new CLAUSES with a logical connection:

- ❑ To express simple cause: because, since, when
- ❑ To express conditional cause: if, provide that
- ❑ To contradict expected causes: though, unless

3. One nominalization is the subject of an empty verb and a second nominalization follows it: Our loss in sales WAS a result of their expansion of outlets.

D. Link the new CLAUSES with a logical connection:

Our loss in sales → we LOST sales  
was the result of → because  
their expansion of outlets → they EXPANDED outlets



4. A **nominalization** follows *there is* or *there are*:  
There IS no **need** for *our* further **study** of this  
problem.

A. Change the **nominalization** to a **verb**: need →  
need study → study





4. A **nominalization** follows *there is* or *there are*:  
There IS no **need** for *our* further **study** of this problem.

B. Identify the **characters** that should be the **subjects** of the **verb**:  
There is no **need** for *our* further **study** of this problem.

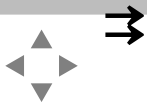




4. A **nominalization** follows *there is* or *there are*:  
There IS no **need** for *our* further **study** of this problem.

C. Make that **character** the **subjects** of the **verb**:  
no need → we need not  
our study → we study  
✓ We **NEED** not **STUDY** this problem further.





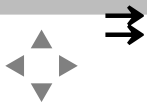
5. Two or three **nominalizations** in a row are joined by **prepositions**:

We did a **review** of the **evolution** of the brain.

A. Turn the first **nominalization** into a **verb**:  
review → review







5. Two or three **nominalizations** in a row are joined by **prepositions**:

We did a **review** of the **evolution** of the brain.

B. Either leave the second **nominalization** as it is, or turn it into a **verb** in a clause beginning with *how* or *why*:

First, we **REVIEWED** the **evolution** of the *brain*.


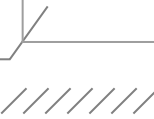
First, we **REVIEWED** how the brain **EVOLVED**.





## QUICK TIP

When you revise a complicated sentence, you will have more than one **character-action** clause.





# SOME HAPPY CONSEQUENCES



When you consistently rely on **verbs** to express key **actions**,  
your readers benefit in many ways:

1. Your sentences are more **concrete**,  
because they will have **concrete**  
**subjects** and **verbs**.





## SOME HAPPY CONSEQUENCES



When you consistently rely on **verbs** to express key actions, your readers benefit in many ways:

2. Your sentences are more **concise**. When you use **nominalizations**, you have to add **articles** like *a* and *the* and **prepositions** such as *of*, *by*, and *in*. You don't need them when you use **verbs** and **conjunctions**.





## SOME HAPPY CONSEQUENCES



When you consistently rely on **verbs** to express key **actions**,  
your readers benefit in many ways:

3. The **logic** of your sentences is **clearer**. When you nominalize **verbs**, you link **actions** with fuzzy **prepositions** and **PHRASES** such as *of*, *by*, and *on the part of*. But when you use **verbs**, you link clauses with precise subordinating **conjunctions**...  
such as *because*, *although*, and *if*. ➔ . . . . .



# SOME HAPPY CONSEQUENCES



When you consistently rely on **verbs** to express key **actions**,  
your readers benefit in many ways:

4. Your sentences tell a more **coherent** story.

**Nominalizations** let you distort the sequence of **actions**.





# A COMMON PROBLEM SOLVED



Why are we so often right about the writing of others and so often wrong about our own?

It is because we all read into our own writing what we want readers to get out of it. The reader who is most familiar with its content will likely find it clearest. Clarity is in the eye of more or less informed beholders.





## A COMMON PROBLEM SOLVED



That is why we need to look at our own writing in a way that is almost mechanical, that sidesteps our too-good understanding of it. The quickest way is to underline the first seven or eight words of every sentence. If you don't see in those words a **character** as a **subject** and a **verb** as a specific **action**, you have a candidate for revision.







# A QUALIFICATION: USEFUL NOMINALIZATIONS



To turn nominalizations into verbs, the trick is to know which to keep and which to revise. Keep these:

1. A **nominalization** that is a short **subject** that refers to a previous sentence:

✓ These arguments all depend on a single unproven claim.

✓ This decision can lead to positive outcomes.





# A QUALIFICATION: USEFUL NOMINALIZATIONS



To turn nominalizations into verbs, the trick is to know which to keep and which to revise. Keep these:

1. A **nominalization** that is a short **subject** that refers to a previous sentence:

Those **nominalizations** link one sentence to another in a cohesive flow.





# A QUALIFICATION:



## USEFUL NOMINALIZATIONS

To turn nominalizations into verbs, the trick is to know which to keep and which to revise. Keep these:

2. A short **nominalization** that replaces an awkward *The fact that*:

The fact that she **ADMITTED** guilt impressed me.

✓ Her admission of guilt impressed me.





# A QUALIFICATION:



## USEFUL NOMINALIZATIONS

To turn nominalizations into verbs, the trick is to know which to keep and which to revise. Keep these:

2. A short **nominalization** that replaces an awkward *The fact that*:

But then, why not this: ✓ *She* **IMPRESSED** me when *she* **ADMITTED** her guilt.





## A QUALIFICATION:



### USEFUL NOMINALIZATIONS

To turn nominalizations into verbs, the trick is to know which to keep and which to revise. Keep these:

3. A **nominalization** that names what would be the **object** of the **verb**:

I accepted *what she REQUESTED* [that is, *She requested something*].

✓ I accepted her **request**.





## A QUALIFICATION:



# USEFUL NOMINALIZATIONS

To turn nominalizations into verbs, the trick is to know which to keep and which to revise. Keep these:

3. A **nominalization** that names what would be the **object** of the **verb**:

This kind of **nominalization** feels more concrete than an abstract one. However, contrasts *request* above with this next sentence, where *request* is more of an **action**.





# A QUALIFICATION:



## USEFUL NOMINALIZATIONS

To turn nominalizations into verbs, the trick is to know which to keep and which to revise. Keep these:

3. A **nominalization** that names what would be the **object** of the **verb**:

Her **request** for **assistance** CAME after the deadline.

✓ She **REQUESTED** **assistance** after the deadline.





# A QUALIFICATION:



## USEFUL NOMINALIZATIONS

To turn nominalizations into verbs, the trick is to know which to keep and which to revise. Keep these:

4. A **nominalization** that refers to a concept so familiar to your readers that to them, it is a **virtual character**:

✓ Few problems have so divided us as **abortion on demand**.

✓ The Equal Rights **Amendment** was an issue in past **elections**





## A QUALIFICATION:



# USEFUL NOMINALIZATIONS

To turn nominalizations into verbs, the trick is to know which to keep and which to revise. Keep these:

4. A **nominalization** that refers to a concept so familiar to your readers that to them, it is a **virtual character**:

✓ Taxation without **representation** did not spark American **Revolution**.





# A QUALIFICATION:



## USEFUL NOMINALIZATIONS

To turn nominalizations into verbs, the trick is to know which to keep and which to revise. Keep these:

4. A **nominalization** that refers to a concept so familiar to your readers that to them, it is a **virtual character**:

Those **nominalization** name familiar concepts: *abortion on demand*, amendment, elections, taxation, representation, revolution.





# A QUALIFICATION:



## USEFUL NOMINALIZATIONS

To turn nominalizations into verbs, the trick is to know which to keep and which to revise. Keep these:

4. A **nominalization** that refers to a concept so familiar to your readers that to them, it is a **virtual character**:

You must develop an eye for distinguishing **nominalizations** expressing common ideas from those you can revise into **verbs**:





## A QUALIFICATION:



### USEFUL NOMINALIZATIONS

To turn nominalizations into verbs, the trick is to know which to keep and which to revise. Keep these:

4. A **nominalization** that refers to a concept so familiar to your readers that to them, it is a **virtual character**:

There is a **demand** for **repeal** of the **inheritance tax**.

✓ We **DEMAND** that Congress **REPEAL** the **inheritance tax**. ⇒





# CLARITY, NOT SIMPLEMINDEDNESS



Your readers want you to write clearly. but not in Dick-and-Jane sentences. Some argue that all sentences should be short, no more than fifteen or twenty words. But many mature ideas are too complicated to express so compactly. There are ways to revise too-short, too-simple sentences into a style that is readable but still complex enough to communicate complex ideas.






## SUMMING UP

Make main **characters** the **subjects** of your **verbs**;  
make those characters' important **actions** your **verbs**.

Fixed	Subject	Verb	
Variable	Character	Action	

Keep in mind that readers want to see **characters** not just *in* the **subject**, instead, they want to see the **character** *as* the **subject**.





## GLOSSARY

**Actions**: Prototypically, action is expressed by a **verb**: *move, hate, think, discover*. But actions also appear in **NOMINALIZATIONS**: *movement, hatred, thought, discovery*. Actions are also implied in some **adjectives**: *advisable, resultant, explanatory, etc.*





## GLOSSARY

**Adjective:** A word you can put *very* in front of: *very old*, *very interesting*. There are exceptions: *major*, *additional*, etc. Since this is also a test for **ADVERBS**, distinguish adjectives from adverbs by putting them between *the* and a **noun**: *The **occupational** hazard*, *the **major** reason*, etc. Some nouns also appear there: *the **chemical** hazard*.







## GLOSSARY

**Clause**: A clause has two defining characteristics :

1. It has a sequence of at least one **SUBJECT** + **VERB**.
2. The **verb** must agree with the **subject** in number and can be made past or present.

By this definition, these are clauses:

She left    that they leave    if she left    why he is leaving





## GLOSSARY

**Clause**: A clause has two defining characteristics :

1. It has a sequence of at least one **SUBJECT** + **VERB**.
2. The **verb** must agree with the **subject** in number and can be made past or present.

These next are not, because the **verbs** cannot be made past tense nor do they agree in number with the putative subject:

for them to **go**                      her **having gone**





## GLOSSARY

**Gerund**: A **NOMINALIZATION** created by adding *-ing* to a **VERB**:

when she **left** we were happy. → her **leaving** made us happy.





## GLOSSARY

**Simple Subject:** The simple subject is the smallest unit inside the **WHOLE SUBJECT** that determines whether a **VERB** is a singular or plural:

[The [books] (simple subject) that are required reading](whole subject) **are** listed.

The **simple subject** should be as close to its **verb** as you can get it.

If **a book** is required reading, **it** is listed.





## GLOSSARY

**Whole Subject:** You can identify a whole subject once you identify its **VERB**: Put a *who* or a *what* in front of the **verb** and turn the sentence into a question. The fullest answer to the question is the **whole subject**:

The ability of the city to manage education is an accepted fact.





## GLOSSARY



**Whole Subject:** Put a *who* or a *what* in front of the verb and turn the sentence into a question. The fullest answer to the question is the whole subject:

Question: **What** is an accepted fact?

Answer (and whole subject): the ability of the city to manage education.





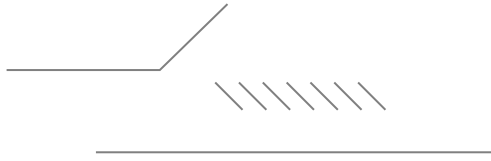
## GLOSSARY

**Whole Subject:** You can identify a whole subject once you identify its **VERB**.

Distinguish the **whole subject** from the **SIMPLE SUBJECT**:

The **ability** of the city to manage education **is** an accepted fact.





**Thank You for Your Attention  
Have a Great Day :)**

