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21L.004 Reading Poetry

Spring 2009

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Reading Poetry

Paper #4 Revision, 5-6 pages

Due: SES #26

Rewriting and Revision: A Distinction

Choose the paper with the lowest grade to revise. If you have equal grades, choose the paper that you most want to reconsider. If that paper is Paper #1, part of your task will be to reconsider your original idea and develop it in a longer paper.

You have plentiful writing experience and control of basic essay structures. You understand that the poem itself is your one true authority and that in its surfaces lie the wonderful depths that can continue to open meanings for you as readers and thinkers, as you consider the various approaches of internal/external structures, space and time, who speaks, language, grammar and syntax, among others.

In rewriting, a writer rereads and rewrites a draft of the whole – clarifying and extending the fitness of its parts in a whole structure. In rewriting, the writer becomes aware of the relationship of parts (paragraphs) to whole (essay). For example, a good conclusion reflects the hypothesis of the beginning and the development of that by the middle. Further, it strives for a new idea derived from your analysis that could not have realized before writing the paper.

In revision, the writer has a new vision of his/her idea and, to incorporate the vision or put it into perspective, recasts the whole. Such discovery depends on luck and readiness; luck is ungovernable, but rewriting, because it is a state of readiness intensified by slowed pace and close focus, may be the occasion of a new vision.

Revision means that the writer has discovered a deeper or more original idea, hidden but implicit in his/her mind and his/her writing. Attentive rewriting can find it and bring it out onto the page.

Rewriting involves establishing correctness of spelling, syntax, and punctuation, including paragraphing. It is a given that you will resolve any recurring issues of grammar and syntax. Good writing is made of consequential sentences. Good paragraphs begin with a decisive topic sentence idea that governs it throughout.

Of these, it is revision that can move the work most radically forward, sometimes changing it profoundly. It is also a step we cannot demonstrate exactly or require anyone to take. There should be *significant* changes to your essay, and I should not need to look very hard to see that there are significant changes. Be bold.

With that understanding, good luck with your final paper.