

## POST-WRITING: ORGANIZATION AND LANGUAGE/STYLE

### Purpose

This activity will show you how to use a rubric-aligned tool to evaluate and improve upon a piece of writing. A useful strategy for improving writing skills is to analyze samples as an editor, using peer drafts or your own graded essays.

### Process

1. Use either your essay on the Roman Empire and Han Dynasty (Unit 5) or this [sample essay](#) to complete this activity. Reminder: The prompt for this essay was: *How did states respond to the societal and political collapse after the fall of the Roman Empire and the Han Dynasty around 1200 CE?*
2. If you received any feedback on your own essay, make sure to review it, particularly feedback about the essay's organization.
3. Evaluate your essay (and any feedback you may have) or the sample essay using the checklist below. Only check a box if the essay met the criteria.

#### Step 1—Improve introduction and thesis/major claim.

Review each paragraph to be sure you have included a supporting claim for your thesis/major claim. (If you don't have a major claim, skip to the next section. Everything depends on a clearly stated claim!)

- ☐ There is a clear supporting claim early in the paragraph.
- ☐ The supporting claim is in keeping with the focus of the major claim. In other words, it is clearly related to the major claim.
- ☐ The evidence and reasoning help prove the supporting claim.

Think about and review the ordering of the supporting paragraphs.

- ☐ The paragraphs are ordered in the most logical way to structure the argument and support the thesis/major claim. (Note: If you do not check this box, we definitely recommend you go back and look at [Pre-Writing: Organization and Language/Style!](#))

## POST-WRITING: ORGANIZATION AND LANGUAGE/STYLE

Review each paragraph's transitions.

- ☐ There are transition words and phrases that make the organization clear by emphasizing your (or the author's) deliberate choices for ordering the paragraphs.

4. Now, go through each item on the checklists below to make sure all criteria related to organization are included in the essay.

### **Step 2—Review and improve structure of supporting paragraphs.**

Review the introduction. The introductory paragraph introduces the structure of your (or the author's) argument.

- ☐ A thesis/major claim is clearly stated.
- ☐ A quick preview of supporting claims is included in the thesis/major claim statement.
- ☐ A phrase is included in the thesis/major claim that addresses counterclaims.

### **Step 3—Improve the conclusion.**

Review the conclusion for clarity and significance without repetition.

- ☐ The argument is recapped (but not repeated) in a way that allows readers to make sense of how all the details and analysis add up.
- ☐ The argument is connected to the larger significance of the topic.

5. Finally, for any items you do not check off, it's time to revise! Use the unchecked boxes from step 1 and step 2 as guidance for what you can do to improve the essay. You can use the Organization Warm-Up to help guide your edits, as well.