

[MUSIC PLAYING]

INSTRUCTOR: Wordiness-- wordiness means that you are using more words than are necessary to convey your meaning clearly and concisely. Wordiness often arises when a writer uses overly complex phrasings in an attempt to sound professional. In most cases, wordiness is not grammatically incorrect, but it is usually best to aim for clear direct writing that avoids redundancies and other unneeded words.

Let's consider this paragraph from a paper about global warming. Start revising for wordiness by simplifying complex phrases. Inflated phrases such as "at this point in time" and "due to the fact that" are wordy and distract from your meaning. Delete these phrases and replace them with simpler words like "now" and "because."

Sentences and clauses that begin with expressions like "there is," "there are," "there were," and "there has been" usually lead to wordiness. When possible, revise these constructions by opening the sentence or clause with a clear subject. Another way to reduce wordiness is to eliminate redundant words. Redundancies are phrases with unnecessary repetitions, such as "true fact" and "frozen ice caps." Facts are true by definition, so the word "true" should be deleted. And ice is always frozen, so the word "frozen" should be eliminated.

To be concise, remove unnecessary words. Delete meaningless modifiers, such as "very." Also, remove unhelpful details that distract from the main point, such as "it is safe to say that." Remember, wordiness may confuse or bore readers. Be concise to keep their attention focused on the main idea.