

LANGUAGE REVISION – A WORKSHEET

exaggeration

Problem: **CERTAINTY**

GS Recommendation: Reflect uncertainty; speak probabilistically

Reason: You can't know; your nervous system is separated from events

PROBLEM STATEMENTS	REVISED STATEMENTS
"I know she's going to marry me."	
"My flight will arrive at 4:23pm."	
"The stock market is going to rebound."	
"I'm 100% positive she'll show up at the meeting."	

Problem: **ABSOLUTISM**

GS Recommendation: Temper the absolutes

Reason: Your nervous system is limited

PROBLEM STATEMENTS	REVISED STATEMENTS
"I'm always fighting with my girlfriend."	
"I never get up on time."	
"McDonald's never gets my order right."	
"Tech support always fixes my problem."	

Problem: **ALLNESS**

GS Recommendation: Temper the allness; speak more descriptively; use *etc.*

Reason: Your nervous system is limited; often you exaggerate

PROBLEM STATEMENTS	REVISED STATEMENTS
"I've picked up all of the crumbs."	
"In my bedroom there is a bed, a TV, and a light."	
"All of the gas stations are out of gas."	
"No one in the class likes me."	

lack of consciousness of abstracting

Problem: **FALSE OBJECTIVITY**
 GS Recommendation: Speak from your perspective
 Reason: Reflects consciousness of abstracting

PROBLEM STATEMENTS	REVISED STATEMENTS
"He's a horrible painter."	
"She's tall enough to play professional basketball."	
"The word 'rational' means 'operating in line with your goals.'"	
"There is no better way to write a paper than to structure it in the five-paragraph format."	

Problem: **PREDICATION**
 GS Recommendation: Speak more about the process; use descriptive verbs instead of be-verbs; mention that you label
 Reason: Reflects consciousness of abstracting

PROBLEM STATEMENTS	REVISED STATEMENTS
"Roses are red."	
"Popped popcorn is flowerlike."	
"You're anti-Semitic."	
"Gangs of teenagers roaming the streets are dangerous and need to be dealt with."	

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Problem: **IDENTIFICATION**
GS Recommendation: Describe what is done; mention that you label
Reason: Reflects consciousness of abstracting

PROBLEM STATEMENTS	REVISED STATEMENTS
"I'm a lawyer."	
"I'm a human being."	
"He's a good father."	
"Those homeless folks are loiterers."	

Problem: **ELEMENTALISM**
GS Recommendation: Use quotation marks when separating entities; use hyphens to conjoin separated entities
Reason: Reflects consciousness of abstracting

PROBLEM STATEMENTS	REVISED STATEMENTS
"Thoughts and feelings influenced the boy's choices."	
"Her mind was fine but her body was not."	
"We grow up privy to two worlds: a world of nature and a world of words."	
"I'm alive because of my heart."	

practicing linguistic revision

Below is a passage. Rewrite it using GS recommendations, while also keeping your writing strong. If possible, rewrite the passage using E-Prime (English without be-verbs).

THE ORIGINAL PASSAGE:

General semantics is really good stuff. I know everything there is to know about general semantics. Whenever I encounter any kind of word problem, general semantics always has advice that can solve the problem. You see, general semantics develops your intellect so you aren't dominated by your emotions. As a result of general semantics knowledge, you start to change the way you look at everything. General semantics teaches that the map is not the territory. That means, language is a representation of reality. That idea is wild. It is also very progressive. Nobody in this day and age really gets language. As a result, they are all so crazy. You should study general semantics. If you study general semantics, I'm certain you will fall in love with it.

YOUR REVISED PASSAGE: