

**Lesson Three**  
**(Mastery of Language)**

**Wordiness/ Exactness**

# Wordiness/exactness

**Avoid wordiness-repeat words only when needed for emphasis or clarity.**

Today, the best professional writers make each word count, avoiding the telegraphic as well as the verbose style. As you write and revise your composition, make sure that every word has a reason for being there and eliminate all the deadwood. When striking out unnecessary, meaningless, inappropriate words, keep in mind Allan Simpson's observation

«Every slaughtered syllable is a good deed.»

**Omit words or phrases that add nothing to the meaning:**

**Notice below that the words in brackets contribute nothing to meaning. Avoid such wordiness in your own writing.**

1. all (of the)new styles (in this day and age).
2. yellow (in color),small (in size),eleven (in number)
3. circulated (around),cooperated (together),inside (of)
4. true (facts), (erroneous) fallacies, a widow (woman)
5. (It was) in 1965(that), at 9A.M.(in the morning)

**Exercise: Without changing the meaning, strike out the unnecessary words in the following sentences. Write C after each sentence that needs no revision.**

1. As a usual rule, all of the new cars of today have factory guarantees.
2. It was in the year of 1964 that the joint partnership began to dissolve.
3. Architect James Hoban, the designer of the White House ,was born in Dublin.
4. One reason why we honor Lincoln is because of the fact that he saved the union.
5. The usual consensus of the majority is that Columbus discovered America.
6. Los Angeles is very different in various ways from the city of San Francisco.
7. In this day and time, it is difficult to find in the field of science a chemist who shows as much promise for the future as Joseph Blake shows.

## **2. If necessary, revise the structure of the sentence to avoid wordiness:**

Notice the following examples how changes in sentence structure reduce two sentences of sixteen words to one sentence of eleven, ten, nine and finally six words.

1. There was a mist which hung like a veil. It obscured the top of the mountain.
2. The mist hung like a veil and obscured the mountain top.
3. The mist, hanging like a veil, obscured the mountain top.
4. The mist, like a veil, obscured the mountain top.
5. The mist veiled the mountain top.

- **Exercise: Revise the structure of the following sentences to eliminate wordiness**
- 1. There were six farmers who volunteered.
- 2. When the Indians made tools, they used flint and bone as materials.
- 3. A new addition has been built at the side of the house, and this addition has been developed into a library.
- 4. My uncle was a tall man. He had a long nose .Over his right eye he had a deep scar.
- 5. In the last act of the play there is the explanation of the title of the play.
- 6. In the decade from 1950 to 1960, enrollments at universities doubled; in 1960
  - there were twice as many students as in 1950.