



## Read Backwards

### How It Works

This technique helps students catch localized errors like spelling mistakes. Students who struggle with finding their own spelling or grammatical mistakes should read their essays from the end to the beginning, one sentence at a time, to look for errors.

### Why It Works

Backwards reading prevents students from being distracted by **what** they are saying and allows them to focus only on **how** they are saying it. It allows them to isolate individual sentences, determining if they make sense and are written correctly on a sentence level.

I use this technique for students who face particular difficulty in seeing their own sentence-level errors or who proofread their work too quickly. The process of reading sentence-by-sentence from the end of the essay to the beginning forces students to slow down and interrupts their implicit sense that they already know what this work says and therefore don't have to read it too carefully.

This technique is disruptive in useful ways: it lessens students' sense of familiarity with their own writing so they can see it through fresh eyes.