

You've Got Style: Revising Punctuation (20 points)

In this exercise, you are being asked to rewrite or revise an excerpt from a published writer's work. Focus on the use of the colon and the exclamation point (although you may also edit for the use of the comma and coordinating conjunction or the semi-colon – each appropriate change and explanation will earn three bonus points). Here is your assignment:

1. Identify at least two specific instances where you either add or remove a colon or exclamation point; this may entail some re-writing of the original sentence or replacing the colon or exclamation point with another stylistic option for punctuation. Neatly and legibly on the text, indicate your changes and number each change: #1, #2, etc. **(five points per each appropriate change involving a colon or exclamation point, ten points total).**

2. In one or two sentences, explain and defend each revision, noting how your change alters the tone, mood, rhythm, style, or meaning of the original **(five points for each thoughtful and developed explanation, ten points total).**

From "The Black-Eye-of-the-Month Club" (*The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*) by Sherman Alexie

So I draw because I want to talk to the world. And I want the world to pay attention to me.

I feel important with a pen in my hand. I feel like I might grow up to be somebody important. An artist. Maybe a famous artist. Maybe a rich artist.

That's the only way I can become rich and famous.

Just take a look at the world. Almost all of the rich and famous brown people are artists. They're singers and actors and writers and dancers and directors and poets.

So I draw because I feel like it might be my only real chance to escape the reservation.

I think the world is a series of broken dams and floods, and my cartoons are tiny lifeboats.

Explanation of change #1:

Explanation of change #2

Additional explanations of changes for bonus points:

From "Seeing" (*Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*) by Annie Dillard

When I was six or seven years old, growing up in Pittsburgh, I used to take a precious penny of my own and hide it for someone else to find. It was a curious compulsion: sadly, I've never been seized by it since. For some reason I always "hid" the penny along the same stretch of sidewalk up the street. I would cradle it at the roots of a sycamore, say, or in a hole left by a chipped-off piece of sidewalk. Then I would take a piece of chalk, and, starting at either end of the block, draw huge arrows leading up to the penny from both directions. After I learned to write I labeled the arrows: SURPRISE AHEAD or MONEY THIS WAY. I was greatly excited, during all this arrow-drawing, at the thought of the first lucky passer-by who would receive in this way, regardless of merit, a free gift from the universe. But I never lurked about. I would go straight home and not give the matter another thought, until, some months later, I would be gripped again by the impulse to hide another penny.

Explanation of change #1:

Explanation of change #2

Additional explanations of changes for bonus points:

From "Chapter 11: Saved" (*The Autobiography of Malcolm X*) by Malcolm X

I saw that the best thing I could do was get hold of a dictionary--to study, to learn some words. I was lucky enough to reason also that I should try to improve my penmanship. It was sad. I couldn't even write in a straight line. It was both ideas together that moved me to request a dictionary along with some tablets and pencils from the Norfolk Prison Colony school.

I spent two days just riffling uncertainly through the dictionary's pages. I'd never realized so many words existed! I didn't know which words I needed to learn. Finally, just to start some kind of action, I began copying.

In my slow, painstaking, ragged handwriting, I copied into my tablet everything printed on that first page, down to the punctuation marks.

I believe it took me a day. Then aloud, I read back, to myself, everything I'd written on the tablet. Over and over, aloud, to myself, I read my own handwriting.

Explanation of change #1:

Explanation of change #2

Additional explanations of changes for bonus points: