

Making a Roadmap

A Roadmap is an “after the fact” or “post-draft” outline that functions as a diagnostic for revision—in particular, for revising an essay’s argument. A conventional outline is a preliminary “pre-writing” plan to sketch out what an essay *will* argue by providing a breakdown of each paragraph’s claim-evidence-analysis. In a Roadmap, you *outline what each paragraph argues*, that is, the *main Assertion claim each paragraph makes about an argument*. Each point on a Roadmap should briefly paraphrase or summarize the argument strategy of each essay paragraph.

If an individual Roadmap entry doesn’t convey a single Assertion claim that supports the argument, that’s a sign that a particular paragraph needs to be revised—it may have too many ideas and need to narrow its focus. If a Roadmap entry summarizes content but does not rephrase an Assertion claim, that’s a sign that the paragraph either lacks an assertion or “I SAY” claim and is a summary or descriptive paragraph, but not an A-C-E argument paragraph.

Because Roadmaps paraphrase & outline what each paragraph *argues*, they are useful writing, thinking, and revision argument tools. They are good revision tools for examining whether or not an argument has a *rhetorical strategy*—a logical shape or trajectory. A good Roadmap will show the rhetorical strategy—or logic—of an argument. You will be able to see if there are gaps in the argument, whether or not your reasons actually support the “I SAY” claim made in your Thesis Assertion, and decide if paragraphs are in the best order.

Lastly, *Roadmaps are also excellent reading tools*—if you write a Roadmap entry for each paragraph of an essay or book chapter you have been assigned to read, you will have a series of statements that outline the author’s argument.

Essay I Roadmap Instructions: A Roadmap of a Revision-In-Progress Draft is itself a “work in progress.” Your Essay I Revision may have different information or be organized differently to reflect how you revised your essay.

- Read your Revision-In-Progress & identify the Thesis claim & Assertion claim of each ACE paragraph.
- Write a Roadmap that paraphrases the “I SAY” Assertion claims that comprise your argument.
- Each Roadmap entry should contain 1-2 sentences that paraphrase the major I SAY claim of each paragraph in your essay [what the paragraph is about + what the paragraph is doing].
- The first entry of your Roadmap should paraphrase your Thesis statement. You can begin with “In this paragraph, I contend that...” or “My thesis argues that...” if it helps you get started.

Write sentences that state exactly what each paragraph conveys—*NOT what you WANTED to convey*.
Compose sentences that state exactly what paragraphs convey—*NOT how you plan to revise them*.

- The length of a Roadmap = number of paragraphs in an essay.
 - If you have MORE than 1 Assertion claim in an ACE paragraph, you can divide it into two.
 - If a Roadmap has 5 entries, you may have written a 5-paragraph essay.
 - Check to see that you have written ACE paragraphs that start with “I SAY” assertions
 - Check to see if the Thesis contains a list; if Thesis contains a list, revise so that it avoids a list.
- Do not summarize the content of the ENTIRE paragraphs; *paraphrase the I SAY claim your Assertion makes, i.e. what your argument is doing in each paragraph*.
 - If a paragraph summarizes instead of analyzes evidence, it’s a sign that the assertion should be revised to make a stronger “I SAY” claim.
 - You might write “Paragraph 3 summarizes Jay’s ideas about ocularcentrism, but doesn’t make a claim about it”: this indicates that you have to revise the paragraph so it doesn’t just summarize Jay, but uses evidence from Jay to support your Assertion claim and, therefore, your argument.
- If your paragraph includes several different topics or focuses or ideas, write down all of them in the Roadmap entry. This will show you that this paragraph needs to be broken up into different smaller paragraphs, or that some of that information might need to be deleted.

After you have finished the Roadmap, write a paragraph that analyzes what you have realized about the essay’s argument organization or argument strategy & brainstorms strategies for revising your essay.