Reducing Wordiness

1. **Avoid superfluous words and unnecessary repetition.**
   **Wordy:** After descending down to the edge of the river, we boarded a small raft that was floating there on the surface of the water.
   **Better:** After descending to the edge of the river, we boarded a small raft.

2. **Reduce clauses and phrases.**
   **Wordy:** When they were trapped by a cave-in, the miners waited for rescue.
   **Better:** Trapped by a cave-in, the miners waited for rescue.
   **Wordy:** We decided that we would get an early start.
   **Better:** We decided to get an early start.
   **Wordy:** Dr. Brown, who is the chief surgeon, will operate.
   **Better:** Dr. Brown, the chief surgeon, will operate.
   **Wordy:** She greeted everyone in a cordial manner.
   **Better:** She greeted everyone cordially.

3. **Avoid overwriting.**
   **Wordy:** Illumination is required to be extinguished upon vacating these premises.
   **Better:** Turn out the lights when you leave.
   **Wordy:** The theatrical performance commenced at the stipulated time.
   **Better:** The play began on time.
   **Wordy:** When a resident of a facility for the health-challenged was wrongfully administered a health-reviving solution, a negative patient care outcome was the result.
   **Better:** The hospital patient died when he was given the wrong medication.

4. **Avoid unnecessary details.**
   **Wordy:** Last winter the squash tournament was won by Barry Stebbins with a racquet he had purchased two months before from a friend of his who had bought a new one made of catgut and who sold Barry his old one for $8.50.
   **Better:** Last winter the squash tournament was won by Barry Stebbins with a racquet he had bought from a friend for $8.50.
   **Still better:** Last winter Barry Stebbins won the squash tournament with a second-hand racquet.
5. Avoid repetitious, inflated or wordy phrases.

**Wordy:** In all necessary essentials, the work is completed and finished.
**Better:** In all essentials, the work is finished.

**Wordy:** In the event that it becomes impossible for the participants to reach agreement on the proposal, it will be necessary for them to reach a consensus of opinion on how to proceed on with the project.
**Better:** If the participants cannot agree on the proposal, they will need to reach consensus on how to proceed with the project.

- **Omit the filler phrases "it is," "there is," and "there are" at the beginning of sentences.**

  **Wordy:** It is expensive to upgrade computer systems.
  **Concise:** Upgrading computer systems is expensive.

- **Replace passive verbs with active verbs. In passive constructions, the subject of the sentence is being acted upon; in active constructions, the subject is the actor.**

  **Wordy:** Rain forests are being destroyed by uncontrolled logging.
  **Concise:** Uncontrolled logging is destroying rain forests.

- **Substitute strong verbs for "-tion" and "-sion" words whenever possible.**

  **Wordy:** I submitted an application for the job.
  **Concise:** I applied for the job.

In this article it discusses some tips for teachers and for parents to make the transition to kindergarten a successful and positive one.

**Examples of common wordy expressions:**

- Repeat again
- Recur again
- At this point in time
- Long length
- Rise up
- Loquacious talker
- Few in number
- Join together
- Necessary need
- First beginnings
Cooperate together
Meet up with
Visible to the eye
Revert back

Back up
Consensus of opinion
In order to
By means of
On condition that
With the exception of
As a result of
Close proximity
Combine together
Final end