

Revising ... Blow Ups

One hard part about writing is that I (the writer) know what I am trying to say. The picture or idea is so clear in my head! I write it down on paper but my audience doesn't get the same idea or image. Or the audience gets a watered-down, pale imitation of what I'm trying to say. WHY????

One reason may be that I (the writer) haven't included as much information about my idea or the picture in my head for my audience. This exercise is designed to add to the factual basis for your argument. We are practicing this technique on a descriptive paragraph – because background or factual groundwork is usually descriptive. But this technique can work on any portion of an argument.

1. Pick a paragraph – find one that is mostly descriptive
2. Number the sentences in the paragraph. (Some people start with the second sentence – I'll leave that up to you.)
3. Now . . . write sentence 1A about sentence #1
 . . . write sentence 2A about sentence #2 . . .
 . . . write sentence 3A about sentence #3 . . . and so on
4. You may also write sentences 1B and 1C, etc., if you wish.

CAVEAT: You may keep any, all or none of what you just added.

Bring your Blow Up paragraphs for critiquing.

Example: original

It was the summer I was 16. I pestered my dad until he let me drive his car out to the lake. It was a hot, still summer day. The six of us crammed ourselves into the car.

Out on old Highway 34, a motorcycle blew past us. Rounding "Dead Man's Curve," we saw the bike in a heap in the middle of the road.

Example: blow up

- (0) It was the summer I was 16. (1) I pestered my dad until he let me drive his car out to the lake.
 (1A) *It was his baby – a 1957 candy red Chevy convertible with fins.*
- (2) It was a hot, still summer day.
 (2A) *The air was so thick that the dust just hung in it.*
- (3) The six of us crammed ourselves into the car.
 (3A) *Swim suits under cut-offs, tee-shirts and flip-flops.*
 (3B) *With the cooler and beach towels, everybody was on everybody else's laps.*