 From Mundane to Magnificent:

**How to Transform Your Writing**

So, you’ve managed to master the basic mechanics of grammar, spelling, and punctuation, but your writing still lacks pizazz, leaving readers with a bland aftertaste. Here are some easy-to-implement tips that will spice up your literary creations in no time!

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1. Read, Read, Read! Find books, magazines, articles, etc. on topics that intrigue you, and settle down to read just for the sake of pure enjoyment. Don’t have time due to your busy academic schedule? Then make it a personal goal to read at least one book during vacation time. When you read, you expose your mind to a wide array of new vocabulary words used in rich context as well as varied ways of constructing sentences. You’ll be amazed at how these terms and more complex grammar forms will surface later on when you’re writing.
2. Avoid repetition! Unless, of course, you’re doing it purposely to emphasize a point or the repeated word is a key term for the course you are taking. When you use the same word or the same type of sentence over and over, your writing becomes monotonous. So, try to paraphrase whenever possible. You can consult a thesaurus if you need help finding an alternative expression with a similar meaning. The latest version of Microsoft Word conveniently has a built-in thesaurus that you can access with a click of the mouse.
3. Don’t be too commonplace! Refrain from using tired, worn-out, overused words such as *nice, good, pretty*, etc. These adjectives have no spark and convey very little real meaning. Instead, try substituting with more gripping descriptors such as *generous, wholesome, tender-hearted, exquisite, gorgeous,* etc. You’ll leave your readers with a much more vivid sense of what you’re conveying.
4. Don’t use “anything” with the word *thing* in it! If someone were to say to you, “Hey, look at that thing!” would you have any idea what was being targeted? No, you would have to rely on a hand gesture or the direction of the speaker’s gaze. In other words, *thing* holds absolutely no content, other than to consume space on the page. It’s simply filler, a meaningless piece of fluff. There are a number of very sophisticated, academic-sounding words that basically mean *thing* but are infinitely more impressive: *aspect, factor, component, characteristic, element, trait,* and many others.

After you’ve written your rough draft, read and reread your composition. Consciously force yourself to implement these ideas when you write, and with patience and perseverance, your writing skills will blossom!