



# PAGE A WRITER

## FOR EVERY WORD AT STAKE

### ESSAY ME HEALTHY: RESSURRECTING THE EMACIATED ESSAY

#### Diagnosing your Sick Essay

- Vague thesis - the essay must have a focus idea
- Poor paragraph development - Strong paragraphs means stronger impact, less reader confusion
- Problematic structure – Every language has rules for structure. Master your language's before you and break it
- Overused clichés – Generalizations, generic expressions, and overused expressions
- Weak beginning and ending

#### Address the Five Symptoms

1. Go Back to Your Outline (Structure check)
2. Assess Tone/Vocabulary (Diction, Nuance, Sound, Rhythm, Cadence)
3. Remove Redundancies (Conciseness check)
4. Check Consistency (Style check-grammar, punctuation, spelling)
5. Visualize/Imagine (Image check: Symbols, Metaphors, metonymic expressions)

### JOURNAL ENTRY IN 100 WORDS

(with mock revisions)

JOURNAL ENTRY	REVISION CHECKLIST
<p>A. The first time I climbed a mountain, it was Mt. Makulot in Cuenca, Batangas—the test climb for all beginners, they said. I wore the wrong shoes and stayed at the tail end, always catching up, breathless. Going down was worse. I slipped once, dust in my mouth, the dry earth steep and unforgiving. But at the summit, everything stopped. There was Taal Lake, glassy and quiet, cradled by ridges. I didn't speak. None of us did. The view didn't just stretch—it opened. That mountain was brutal, but it gave me something I didn't know I needed: awe.</p>	<p>CLOSE READING ESSAY A</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. First time mountain climbing is the subject</li><li>2. Wrong shoes – still generic, stayed at the tail end – can be more indicative of the effort</li><li>3. “But at the summit” – is the main transition device – contrasting the difficult climb with the sight afterwards. “Everything stopped” is cliché.</li><li>4. The progression employed – image led, but the image is clear only because everybody knows Taal.</li><li>5. Ending is quite lacking. Why does the writer need ‘awe’?</li><li>6. Tone is not sharp. So contrast even with the transition is weak.</li><li>7. Maybe what's missing is an establishment of the hard effort at climbing. The description here is still generic, that is, kind of everybody's description will go this way.</li></ol>

For Essay A

REVISIONS

1. **Clearer “first-climb”** – more vivid and specific framing of the experience as a *first* climb.
2. **Addressing the shoes detail** – this is now more concrete “thin, worn sneakers.”
3. **Transition** – from the generic “everything stopped” to a sharper physical transition (“trail narrowed into an edge...”).
4. **Taal description** – is now stronger for readers who don’t already know Taal
5. **Impact at Ending** – explains why awe mattered and how it was “earned.”
6. **Avoiding cliché** - the tone is sharper contrast between climb and summit.
7. **Visualizing Effort** – the physical strain and isolation emphasized.

The first time I climbed a mountain, it was Mt. Makulot in Cuenca, Batangas—the so-called “test climb” for beginners. I had on thin, worn sneakers better suited for a mall than a trail. Within the first hour, I lagged so far behind I could hear only the echo of the others’ laughter through the trees. My calves burned, my palms stung from clutching roots, and each step felt like I was carrying the mountain itself on my back. One wrong step on loose soil and I slid down, dust in my mouth, the slope dropping fast under me.

Then, we reached the summit. The trail narrowed into an edge, and beyond it, Taal Lake was so still it felt like it hadn’t moved in years, surrounded by ridges that seemed older than anything I’d seen. We didn’t know each other, but no one spoke. The climb had worn me out, but the view gave something back—something steady I couldn’t put into words. You can’t help but be in awe of the volcano, but without the effort, Taal is just another postcard view you’ve seen a hundred times.

- B. Today, a new friend—an elder, full of grace—bought me lunch. Lumpiang toge, kare-kare, and humba with rice. She drove her own car. Over the meal, we talked about the martial law years, how we were both too insulated then, unaware, until we met people who weren’t. Victims. Survivors. Friends. We didn’t argue, just listened. She took me to the bank afterward, then drove off with a smile. I watched her leave, grateful. It felt like a visit from someone I’ve always known. Some lunches nourish more than the stomach. This one fed something deeper. I think it was joy.

CLOSE READING ESSAY B

1. **Stronger hook** – “full of grace” could be replaced with a more concrete detail about her manner or appearance.
2. **Improve dialogue** – The martial law conversation is told in summary. Deepen the connection for the reader.
3. **Avoid sentimentality** - “It felt like a visit from someone I’ve always known”
4. **Avoid Cliches** – “Some lunches nourish more than the stomach” risks cliché. Also, “I think it was joy”

REVISIONS FOR ESSAY B

Today, a new friend—an elder with a warm, unhurried way—treated me to lunch. *Lumpiang toge, kare-kare, humba* with rice. She drove her own car and didn’t seem to mind the traffic. Over the meal, we spoke

	<p>about the martial law years—how we’d both been too sheltered then to see what was happening, until we met people who couldn’t escape it. Victims. Survivors. Friends. We didn’t debate; we just listened to each other’s remembering. Afterward, she took me to the bank, waved from her window, and drove off. I stood there watching her go, feeling the quiet ease of old familiarity in someone I’d only just met. Some meals stay with you longer than the taste. This one left me with a lightness I carried all the way home.</p>
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