

# Ay31 - Class #4

*May 3, 2019*

How to Edit  
Writing with Direct Sentences  
Exercise on Editing  
Being Concise [if time]

# Announcements

Your second draft due in two weeks  
(Friday, May 17, end of the day).

What's due:

1. Your 2nd draft.
2. Brief description of changes from 1st to 2nd draft.

# How To Edit

1. Note that editing and proofreading are two different things.
2. Review (revised) first draft with science advisor.
3. Review the formatting/length requirements. Are you meeting them?
4. Review your audience — are you writing to them?

# How To Edit

5. Review your outline — is anything missing?
6. Sleep and reread (preferably aloud)
7. What are the 2-3 points that a reader will take away from your piece. Are these the points you desire?

# How To Edit

8. Read every sentence and ask:
  - How can I make this more clear?
  - How can I make this more precise?
  - How can I make this more concise?
  - Is the tone appropriate? (forthright)

# How To Edit

9. Check, recheck, and check again the most important parts of piece — title, abstract, first paragraph or lead/billboard
10. Check for exaggeration
11. Check for jargon
12. Check for overuse or misuse of metaphors
13. Check for irrelevant points and remove

# Write Direct Sentences by letting your subject do the work

It can be seen from the photometric data ...

*The photometric data show ...*

Due to the scarcity of red giants in the target field, the extent of dimming cannot be determined precisely.

*The scarcity of red giants prevents precise determination of dimming in the target field.*

From the rare earth elements follows the interpretation ...

*The rare earth element data show ...*

# Write Direct Sentences by letting your subject do the work

A major episode of star formation is suggested by the blue colors ...

*The blue colors suggest a major episode of star formation ...*

By looking at H-band photometry, you can see ...

*The H-band photometry shows ...*

In the Small Magallenic Cloud, it was observed that cepheids are common.

*Cepheids are common in the Small Magallenic Cloud.*



# Editing exercise

See handout — An abstract on super-Earths

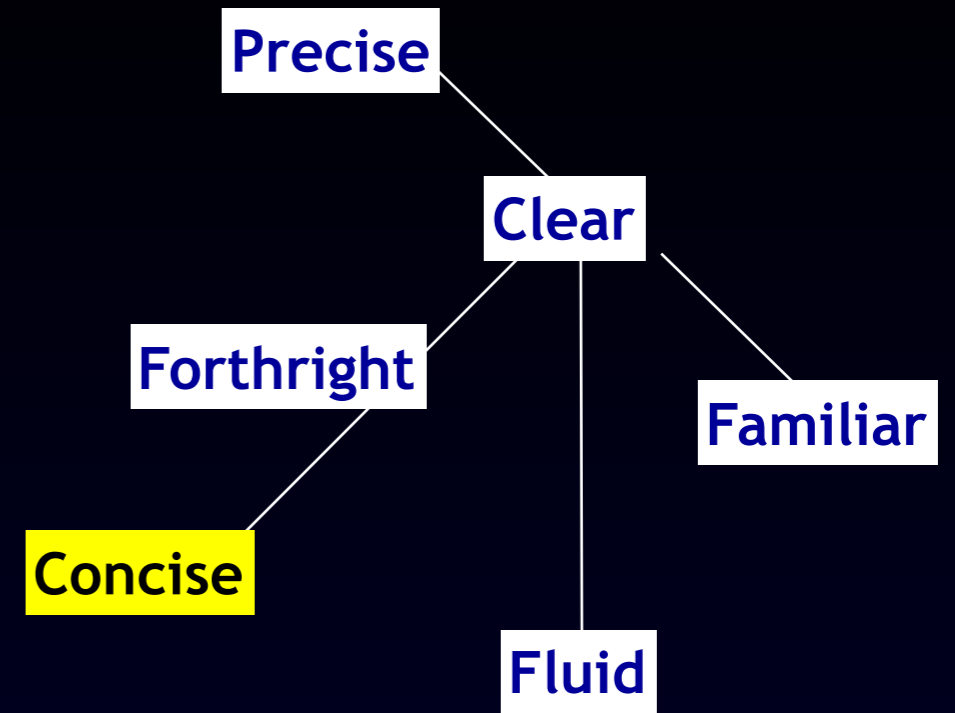
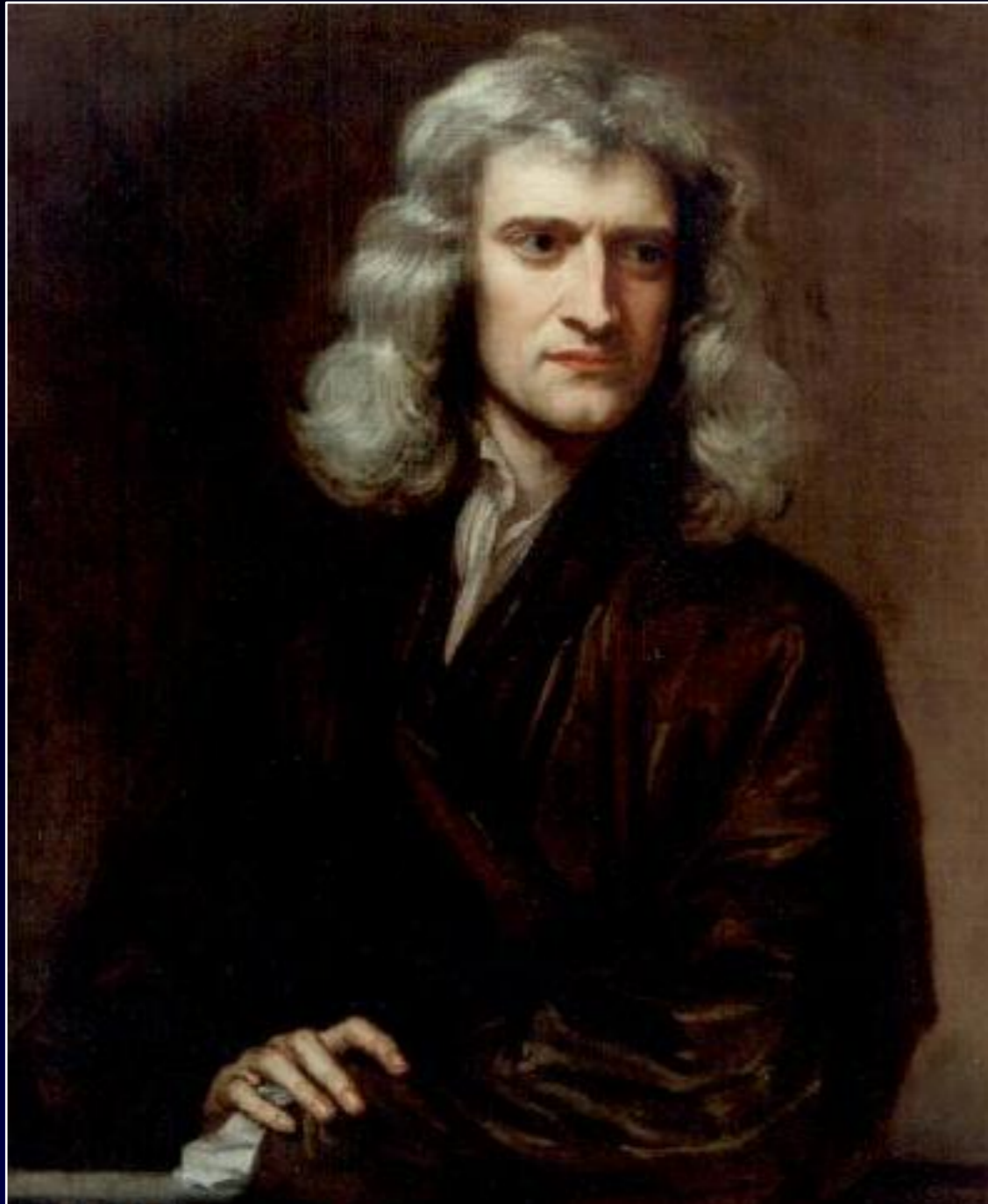
# Editing Reminders (during exercise)

Read every sentence and ask:

- How can I make this more clear?
- How can I make this more precise?
- How can I make this more concise?
- Is the tone appropriate? (forthright)

# Chapter 8

## Being Concise



More is in vain when less will serve.

Sir Isaac Newton

# To be concise, you should learn what kinds of words to cut

Redundancies

Needless adjectives and adverbs



Writing zeroes

Needless passive voice

# A redundancy is a *needless* repetition of words

absolute guarantee  
my personal opinion  
blended together  
bright green in color

guarantee

my opinion

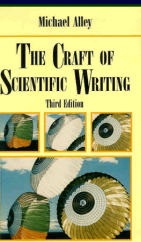
blended

bright green

# Many redundancies exist in scientific writing

already existing  
alternative choices  
at the present time  
basic fundamentals  
currently under way  
completely eliminate  
continue to remain  
currently being  
empty space  
first began  
had done previously

introduced a new  
mix together  
never before  
none at all  
now at this time  
period of time  
private industry  
separate entities  
start out  
still persists  
whether or not



# Writing zeroes are empty phrases that fatten sentences

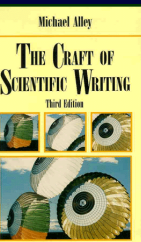
it is my intent to show that = 0

as a matter of fact = 0

as is well known = 0

it is noteworthy = 0

the presence of = 0



# Many phrases are near zeroes

at this point in time	=	now
at that point in time	=	then
has the ability to	=	can
has the potential to	=	can
in the event that	=	if
in the vicinity of	=	near
owing to the fact that	=	because
the question as to whether	=	whether
there is no doubt but that	=	no doubt



# When searching for writing zeroes, use your eraser

Vibration measurements made in the course of the Titan flight test program were complicated by the presence of intense high-frequency excitation of the vehicle shell structure during the re-entry phase of the flight.



Vibration measurements made in the Titan flight were complicated by intense high-frequency excitation of the vehicle shell during re-entry.

# Many adverbs are unnecessary

rather unique

**rather** unique

slows down



slows **down**

well proven

**well** proven

The achievement of our success relies very heavily on a rather detailed understanding of the somewhat complex processes that govern the gas velocities.



Our success relies on understanding the complex processes that govern the gas velocities.

# Needless passive verbs attract long phrases and words

It was then concluded that a second complete solar mirror field corrosion survey should be conducted in July to determine whether the tenfold annual corrosion rate projection was valid and to allow determination whether subsequent corrective measures would be effective in retarding corrosion propagation.

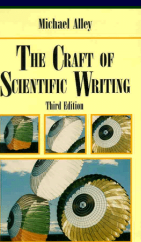
syllable count

83

We decided to survey the solar mirror field a second time in July to see whether the corrosion rate would increase tenfold as projected and to see whether stowing the mirrors in a vertical position would slow the rate.

syllable count

60



**In summary, to be concise, you should learn what kinds of words to cut**

**Redundancies**

**Needless adjectives and adverbs**



**Writing zeroes**

**Needless passive voice**