

我踩过的四个坑：学详略得当的时候最容易错的地方

从流水账改到有重点，我用了两个月，中间掉进过四个坑。每个坑我都是先摔进去，才知道旁边写着路牌。写出来给学弟学妹们，摔进去之前看一眼，能省一半时间。

第一个坑，只删不补。第一次按老师说的删，我把大象、长颈鹿、吃饭全删了，交上去一篇一百多字的作文，以为这就是有重点。老师批了四个字：删了，然后呢？我才明白删只是把地方腾出来，腾出来的地方要拿细节去填，不然作文不是变精了，是变短了。补救办法：每删一件事，就往重点段里加一个我亲眼看到的画面，删三个加三个，篇幅基本不塌。

第二个坑，重点段里全是形容词。我知道要写细，就把很好玩改成特别好玩，又加了壮观、有趣、不可思议。老师读给全班听，问这段里你们看见了什么，没人答得上来。形容词是我给猴子的评价，读者要的是猴子本身。补救办法：数动词。我给自己定了个数，重点段里至少四个动作动词，抠、掰、闻、送就是这么凑出来的，凑够了，画面自己就站起来了。

第三个坑，删得太狠，把必要交代也删了。我改第二篇的时候把时间地点全删了，开头直接是老猴子剥橘子。老师问，这只猴子在哪儿？我什么时候看见的？我答不上来，读者也答不上来。详略得当不是什么都不要，去动物园、什么时候、跟谁去，这些一句话就能交代完的东西要留，留一句，剩下的篇幅才敢全给重点。补救办法：开头用一句话把时间地点人物说清，我数过，一句话够了，多了就是又想去讲清单。

第四个坑，以为重点就是字数最多。有同学发现老师说要详写重点，就把重点段写到六百字，全文八百字，结果读起来还是累，因为六百字里有一半还是在跳来跳去很好玩。重点不是字数多，是慢下来。我后来改的重点段只有一百八十字，但里面只有剥橘子一个动作，拆成了四步。补救办法：看一段里有几个动作在慢放，慢放一个就够，慢放五个等于没有慢放。

四个月过去，我的作文本上红圈从一学期九个变成一学期两个。我把四个坑反过来编成四句自查：删了要补画面，重点要数动词，开头留一句交代，一段只慢放一个动作。每次交作文前念一遍，四句全过，我才敢写名字。从流水账到有重点，没有什么天赋的事，就是这四个坑各摔一次，然后学会绕开。

Four Pits I Fell Into: Where Learning Detail and Brevity Goes Wrong

It took me two months to go from running accounts to focused writing, and I fell into four pits along the way. I only learned the signposts after falling in. I write them here for younger students, so a glance before falling in can save half the time.

Pit one: deleting without replacing. The first time I followed the instruction to cut, I deleted the elephants, giraffes and lunch, and handed in an essay of just over a hundred characters, thinking this was focus. The teacher wrote four characters: deleted, and then? I finally understood that deleting only clears space; the space must be filled with detail, or the essay does not become sharp, it becomes short.

Fix: for every event deleted, add one picture I actually saw into the key paragraph; cut three, add three, and the length does not collapse.

Pit two: the key paragraph full of adjectives. Knowing I should write in detail, I changed very fun to extremely fun, and added spectacular, amusing, incredible. The teacher read it aloud and asked what the class could see; nobody could answer. Adjectives are my verdicts on the monkey; the reader wants the monkey itself. Fix: count verbs. I set myself a rule of at least four action verbs in the key paragraph; pick, break, smell, put-in were gathered that way, and once the count is met, the picture stands up by itself.

Pit three: cutting too hard, deleting even the necessary setup. In my second revision I removed all time and place and opened straight on the old monkey peeling the orange. The teacher asked: where is this monkey? When did you see it? I could not answer, and neither could the reader. Detail and brevity do not mean keeping nothing; going to the zoo, when, and with whom, all things one sentence can cover, must stay, exactly one sentence, so the remaining space can be safely given to the focus. Fix: open with one sentence covering time, place and people; I counted, one sentence is enough, more means drifting back to the checklist.

Pit four: believing focus means the most characters. A classmate heard the teacher say expand the key part, and wrote the key paragraph to six hundred characters in an eight-hundred-character essay, which still read as tiring, because half of those six hundred characters were still jumping around, very fun. Focus is not more characters; it is slowing down. My final key paragraph was only one hundred and eighty characters, but it contained a single action, peeling the orange, split into four steps. Fix: count how many actions are in slow motion in one paragraph; one slow motion is enough, five slow motions equal none.

Four months later, the red circles in my notebook dropped from nine per term to two. I inverted the four pits into a four-line self-check: after deleting, add a picture; in the focus, count verbs; keep one setup sentence at the start; slow-motion only one action per paragraph. I recite the four lines before every submission, and only sign my name when all four pass. Going from running accounts to focus is not a matter of talent, just falling into each pit once and then learning to walk around it.