

十天学游泳日记的五个毛病：天天记流水账、每天一个道理

检查一组十天学游泳的观察日记，十个孩子里有八个会犯下面几个毛病。对照着改，比重新写一篇快得多。

毛病一：十天每天都写，每天都很短。十则日记挤在一起，每则两三行，像值日表。改法是合并：把没有新进步的几天并成一两句过渡，腾出篇幅给第一天、第五天、第十天这三个关键日子，让它们各占一段完整的文字。

毛病二：每则日记结尾都要讲一个道理。今天坚持就是胜利，明天失败是成功之母，十天下来道理排成一排，日记就成了语录。改法是删：结尾只留当天的动作或感觉，比如水从下巴往下滴，道理让读者自己悟。

毛病三：满篇都是开心极了、真高兴。同一句高兴重复十遍，读者反而高兴不起来。改法是换证据：高兴的时候你在干什么？可能是扒着池边冲教练挥手，可能回家路上跟妈妈说了三遍。把动作写出来，高兴就不用再喊了。

毛病四：关键日子没有细节。第五天能漂浮了，只写今天我学会漂浮了，一句话就把最值钱的一天打发掉。改法是回到现场提问：当时谁托着你？身体是绷着还是松着？耳朵在水里听到了什么？把三个问题的答案写进去，这一天就立住了。

毛病五：十天的变化没有对比。观察日记写的是变化，可第十天和第一天长得一模一样，变化就没被看见。改法是呼应：第十天顺手提一句第一天，比如十天前的我连脸都不敢进水，今天数到十二下就碰到了池壁。前后一对照，十天的分量就出来了。

改的顺序也有讲究：先删道理，再补细节，最后调结构。道理删掉最省事，也最见效；细节补上了，篇幅自然就够；结构放到最后调，因为哪几天值得详写，要等细节补完才看得出来。反过来先调结构，往往会把还没写细的日子误判成不重要。

最后自查四问：详写的是不是只有三个关键日子？结尾还有没有硬讲的道理？开心这类词是不是超过两次？第一天和第十天能不能互相呼应？四问都过关，这组观察日记就站得住了。

Five Problems in a Ten-Day Swimming Diary: Daily Laundry Lists and a Moral Every Day

Check a set of ten-day swimming diaries, and eight out of ten children will have made the mistakes below. Revising against the list is faster than rewriting the whole set.

Problem one: every day gets an entry, and every entry is tiny. Ten two-line notes stacked together read like a duty roster. Fix by merging: compress the days without new progress into one or two bridging sentences, and give the space to day one, day five, and day ten, letting each hold a full paragraph.

Problem two: every entry ends with a moral. Perseverance today, mother of success tomorrow, and after ten days the diaries become a quote collection. Fix by deleting: keep only that day's action or sensation at the end, such as water dripping from the chin, and let readers find the meaning themselves.

Problem three: the page is full of so happy and great joy. The same joy repeated ten times stops being joyful. Fix by swapping in evidence: what were you doing while happy? Waving at the coach from the pool edge, or telling your mother three times on the way home. Write the action and the shouting becomes unnecessary.

Problem four: the key days have no details. Day five learned to float, and one sentence, I learned to float today, spends the most valuable day in ten. Fix by returning to the scene with questions: who held you? Was your body stiff or loose? What did your ears hear underwater? Answer those three and the day stands up.

Problem five: no contrast across the ten days. An observation diary is about change, yet day ten looks identical to day one. Fix by echoing: on day ten, mention day one in passing, such as the me who could not wet my face ten days ago touching the wall after twelve counted strokes. Put the two side by side and the weight of ten days appears.

The order of revision matters too: delete the morals first, then add details, then adjust structure last. Deleting morals is the cheapest and most visible fix; once details are in, the length fills itself out; structure comes last because which days deserve detail only becomes clear after the details exist. Adjust structure first and you will misjudge unfinished days as unimportant.

Final four-question self-check: are only the three key days written in full? Is any moral still forced at the end? Do words like happy appear more than twice? Do day one and day ten answer each other? Pass all four and the diary set stands firm.