

随笔最容易翻的三个车：记流水账、想头贴上去、素材像摆姿势

随笔看着自由，其实最容易翻车，因为它没有故事情节兜底，写砸了读者一眼就看出来。以那些在溪边度过的下午为例，三个最常见的翻车处，逐个给判断标准和改法。

翻车一：记成流水账。早上出发，到了溪边，捉了虾，睡了午觉，吃了西瓜，回家了。素材全用上了，可读起来像值日记录。判断标准很简单：把每个句子的时间词和行程词圈出来，圈出来的比没圈的多，就是流水账。改法：砍掉到、去了、吃完这类词，直接从手伸到石头底下写起。捉虾写掌心那一下痒，乘凉写光斑在胳膊上晃，一个素材一个具体感觉，账就没了。

翻车二：想头贴上去。叙完捉虾，来一句这件事让我明白了坚持就是胜利；叙完乘凉，来一句大自然真美好。想头和事情对不上，像膏药贴在脸上，读者一看就知道是硬凑的。判断标准：把想头单独抽出来读，如果这句话换任何一件事都能用，就是贴上去的。改法：回到刚叙的那件小事，从里面挑一个最扎人的点。捉虾一下午只捉到三只，扎人的点不是坚持，是白忙也开心，想头就写成捉虾图的是手伸下去那一瞬的屏住气。只属于这件事的想头，才立得住。

翻车三：素材像摆姿势。捉虾一段、乘凉一段、回家一段，各写各的，中间没有呼吸，像三个姿势摆给老师看。判断标准：删掉中间两段，第一段和最后一段接不接得上？接得上，说明段落之间没有联系。改法：让素材之间递心情。捉虾段人绷着，乘凉段人松下来，回家段人舍不得，三个素材按心情排一条线，摆姿势就成了度过。心情线排好之后，素材的顺序就不能再动，哪怕某个素材写得更顺手，也要服从心情，因为随笔记的是一段下午，不是三份作业。

改稿按顺序来：先砍时间词行程词，再换想头，最后排心情线。改完通读一遍，出声读，读起来像跟人说今天下午的事，不像在交作业，这篇随笔就成了。

Three Ways Informal Essays Capsize: Running Accounts, Pasted-On Thoughts, Posed Materials

An informal essay looks free, but it capsizes most easily, because it has no plot to fall back on; once it goes flat, readers see it at a glance. Take those afternoons by the stream as the sample: three most common capsizes, each with its test and its fix.

Capsize one: it turns into a running account. In the morning we set out, arrived at the stream, caught shrimp, took a nap, ate watermelon, went home. Every material got used, yet it reads like a duty roster. The test is simple: circle the time words and travel words in every sentence; if you circle more than you leave, it is an account. Fix: cut words like arrived, went to, finished eating, and start right at the hand sliding under the stone. Write the itch of a whisker in the palm for shrimp, the wobbling light spot on the arm for the nap, one concrete sensation per material, and the account is gone.

Capsize two: the thought is pasted on. Narrate the shrimp, then add this event

taught me that persistence wins; narrate the nap, then add how wonderful nature is. The thought does not match the event, a plaster stuck on the face, and readers know it is forced. The test: pull the thought out alone and read it; if the sentence would fit any other event, it was pasted on. Fix: go back to the small event just narrated and pick its sharpest point. An entire afternoon caught only three shrimp; the sharp point is not persistence but that even wasted time felt good, so the thought becomes: catching shrimp was for the held breath in the instant the hand went down. A thought belonging only to this event can stand.

Capsize three: the materials pose. One paragraph shrimp, one paragraph nap, one paragraph going home, each to itself, no breathing between them, three poses struck for the teacher. The test: delete the middle paragraph, do the first and last join? If they do, the paragraphs never touched. Fix: let the materials pass a mood along. In the shrimp paragraph the body is taut, in the nap it lets go, at going home it is reluctant; arrange the three along one mood-line, and posing becomes spending. Once the mood-line is set, the order of the materials can no longer change; even if one material is easier to write, it must obey the mood, because the essay follows one afternoon, not three assignments.

Revise in order: first cut the time and travel words, then replace the thoughts, at last arrange the mood-line. When done, read the whole piece aloud; if it sounds like telling someone about this afternoon, not like handing in homework, the essay has made it.