**English Session One: Economic Language**

**Parthenogenesis Article**

Top Tips:

**Accept when a sentence is right.**

If it makes clear sense and gets the point across, it’s a good sentence. Leave it alone.

**Avoid the obvious.**

Avoid stating the obvious. Try not to repeat points that logically follow, or words that mean the same thing. If you have two points, or two words, that mean the same thing, pick one.

For example: *The Greek language from Greece* (Greek is from Greece? – of course!)

*A physical biological process* (both physical and biological relate to the body, you only need one)

**Avoid lots of small words.**

If a sentence has a lot of two and three letter words, you can probably lose a few. Small words (the, a, is, it, be, are, of, to, and, etc.) and short joining words (that, this, there, which, etc.) can sometimes be removed without losing the meaning of the sentence. Check by reading the sentence aloud after you’ve edited it. Does it still sound right? It can also be a sign that a sentence can be reworded more economically.

*Example*: *Another way* ***to*** *describe* ***this*** *would* ***be to say******that******it is*** *called female-only reproduction.*

*Another way to describe this would be female-only reproduction.*

**Choose your examples carefully.**

Your job is not to give every piece of information possible, but to choose the examples that will be remembered best. When faced with long lists of information and examples, choose the most interesting and the most diverse. Aim for one or two examples, never more than three. The brain won’t retain all that information.

*Example*: *This happens in some forms of snails, worms, spiders, birds, sharks, insects, reptiles, crayfish, starfish, snakes, amphibians and many other creatures.*

*This happens in some forms of spiders, birds and snakes.*

Spiders, birds and snakes are really diverse examples – they’re very different from one another. Saying sharks, crayfish and starfish is not, as they all live in the sea. If you have limited space to explain something, go for the widest examples as they will be more memorable than examples that are similar.

**Find the salient point.**

When faced with a chunk of information, look for the salient point – the most important piece of information. Then work out how to get that across as clearly as possible. Don’t be afraid to cut through words if they’re not adding anything to the point.

*Example*: *This process by which a creature makes babies without another creature, so one sex makes the baby without the other sex, one female without a male, is called asexual reproduction.*

*This process is called asexual reproduction.*

It can sometimes help to imagine you’re explaining it to a friend over lunch. We tend to use much more economic language when we speak than when we write. Try writing it as you would say it.

**Original Paragraph**

Parthenogenesis is a word from the Greek language from Greece meaning: *parthenos* meaning 'virgin' and *genesis* meaning 'creation'. It is a biological physical process which many plants and some animals are capable of doing themselves. It means the development of an embryo from an unfertilised egg. Another way to describe this would be to say that it is called female-only reproduction. They give birth to live young without male fertilisation. This happens in some forms of snails, worms, spiders, birds, sharks, insects, reptiles, crayfish, starfish, snakes, amphibians and many other creatures. This process by which a creature makes babies without another creature, so one sex makes the baby without the other sex, one female without a male, is called asexual reproduction. It does not happen in mammals, so humans are not able to reproduce this way.

**Suggested Improvements**

Parthenogenesis is from Greek: *parthenos* meaning 'virgin' and *genesis* meaning 'creation'. It is a biological process which many plants and some animals are capable of. It means the development of an embryo from an unfertilised egg. Another way to describe this would be female-only reproduction. It happens in some forms of spiders, birds and snakes. This process is called asexual reproduction. It does not happen in mammals, so humans are not able to reproduce this way.

In the example above, we have cut 60 words and made the meaning much clearer.