

Term: “Extraneous expressions”

Definition: While many words and phrases can fit under the extraneous expressions category, we consider a small set of repeat offenders “extraneous expressions” for the sake of the HS Writing Rubric. These are the phrases that we want to eliminate from student writing first and so these are the phrases we will consider extraneous:

- this shows
- maybe
- basically
- really
- the quote is
- the next example is
- this proves
- in which
- the key words

Example

“Baca states in the first stanza, ‘the cold cannot bite through’ (6). The hard ‘c’ sound is putting an end to something. **This shows** that every bad thing that is being done to them will not bring them down.”

Analysis: “This shows” is one of the worst repeat offenders within the extraneous expressions category as defined. A noun phrase must always follow this, otherwise it is a vague pronoun (what is the student referring to with the word this?). Additionally, “shows” is a weak, overused word.

Instead of “This shows”, the author could have written, “This alliteration emphasizes”.

Non-Example

“In I Am Offering This Poem, by Jimmy Santiago Baca, the poet **is giving the idea that** love is providing you with all that you need, for example guidance and comfort.”

Analysis: While the phrase, “is giving the idea that” is certainly extra and not necessary, we will not consider it an “extraneous expression” within the rubric. This error has more to do with active verbs and syntax than an elimination of extraneous expressions.