**ENGLISH DEPT S3 HOMEWORK**

**Absurdity, Redundancy, Tautology and Verbosity**

**ABSURDITY…**

Anything which is absurd is utterly foolish and unreasonable.

**TASK 1: Explain what is absurd in the following:**

* A father wrote to his son, “I enclose a postal order. If you do not receive this letter, please let me know at once.”

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* It is much safer to travel in a car than in a train, because in a train accident hundreds of people may be injured, while in a car accident there are never more than a few people injured.

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* The storm, which began yesterday, has continued for three days without a break.

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Okay, ABSURDITY is easy enough to avoid. The others (Redundancy, Tautology and Verbosity) are easier traps to fall into.

They are, believe it or not, common errors…

**REDUNDANCY…**

is the use of superfluous words or phrases, when their meaning is already clear from other words or phrases…

* I must decline to accept your offer.

**TASK 2: Rewrite the following sentences, avoiding all the redundant phrases…**

The winner of the beauty contest will fly to Paris, with all expenses paid, and will stay two nights in a luxury hotel without needing to spend a penny.

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The judge dismissed two members of the jury, because he had reason to believe that one sixth of the jury had already made up their minds on the verdict and in view of their bias could not be relied upon to base their verdict on the evidence.

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**TAUTOLOGY…**

is the use of an extra word or phrase which pointlessly repeats an idea in the sentence…

* The two girls, who are both alike, both agree with each other completely.

If two girls are alike, then there is no need for the word ‘both’; if two girls agree, it is obvious they both agree.

The sentence should be rewritten as follows:

* The two girls, who are alike, agree with each other completely.

**TASK 3: Discuss with a partner the sentences below. Rewrite them, leaving out any words/phrases you consider tautological…**

* The annual insurance premium due is to be paid every year.

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* “I’m not sure whether to cut this cake into two equal halves or into four quarters.”

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* The soldier died from fatal wounds.

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* “Please repeat that question again.”

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* “Assemble together in the hall!”

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* “Notice how I have not omitted any important essentials in the scheme I have introduced as a new innovation.”

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**VERBOSITY…**

is the use of too many words or too long words, where brevity would be more effective…

You should never use more words in a sentence than are necessary to express the meaning.

However, don’t cut out words simply for the sake of being brief, or you might lose some good qualities, such as variety, imagination and - above all – accuracy.

Look at some of the common examples of verbosity below…

* **‘due to the fact that…’** for **‘because…’**
* **‘I am of the opinion that…’** for **‘I think…’**
* **‘reach a decision…’** for **‘decide…’**
* **‘at this moment in time…’** for **‘now…’**

There is a well-known proverb which implies that **undue multiplicity of personnel assigned either concurrently or consecutively to a single function involves deterioration in the resultant product as compared with the produce of an exact sufficiency of personnel.**

**TASK 4: How is this proverb usually written?**

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**I can…**

**improve my expression by avoiding ABSURDITY, REDUNDANCY, TAUTOLOGY and VERBOSITY**