Color Coding

**Color Coding is a method that helps you visually see the way you’ve written your piece. Follow the directions to color code your piece and see your writing as a “reader”!**

1. Place **brackets** around the FIRST WORD of EVERY sentence.
2. **Underline** EVERY SENTENCE with 2 alternating colors (ex. Blue, pink, blue, pink).
3. **Circle** every “TO BE” verb (ex. *is, am, are, was, were, be, been, wasn’t, isn’t*, etc.)
4. **Cross out** overused VAGUE/NON-DESCRIPTIVE words: *very, a lot, this, that, really, is, because, next, then, thing*, etc.
5. Place a **triangle** around IT, IT’S, ITS.
6. Place a **rectangle** around THEIR, THERE, THEY’RE.

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1. Write every 1st word on a separate sheet of paper. You are only allowed to use the same 1st word TWICE within your piece. You must use another word if you’ve used the same word more than twice. FIX THIS IN YOUR PAPER.
2. Examine your sentences. If you see a colored line that extends for an unusually long distance. You probably have a run-on sentence. FIX THIS IN YOUR PAPER.
3. Examine the circled “to be” verbs. Re-read the sentence and use a livelier verb if possible. Check to make sure your subject and verb agree. (We was going to the store: subject and verb do not agree.)
4. Examine every crossed-out word. Find a more elaborate word for these “vague/non-descriptive” words and FIX THIS IN YOUR PAPER.