

## The DARE Formula

Whether you're checking an essay or an exam question, use the DARE formula:

**D = Directions.** Always make sure that you understand the directions of a test or essay assignment. If you don't understand what is expected, ask the professor. This is important. You don't want to lose points. Use the directions as a check list to see that you've included all requirements.

**A = Arrangement.** Check your arrangement of information. Do you have a thesis statement (purpose statement, proposition, topic + focus of paper or exam question)? Place the thesis statement at the end of the introduction. You may want to include your main points to be discussed. Then start each body paragraph with a topic sentence about each point. Use transitions (*in addition, also, as compared to, likewise, etc.*) to link one point to the next. Check that your conclusion restates the thesis statement and reviews each point. In an argument essay, you may wish to include a call to action in the conclusion. (Use words like *should, must, and ought.*) Example: "Given these reasons, Wesley College *must* become a leader in turning Delaware green by conserving energy, collecting trash, and recycling materials."

**R = Revision.** Read your essay or test question slowly to yourself by looking at each word. Check your sentence structure, spelling, and punctuation. Make sure that the professor can read your answers easily. If you're working on the word processor, pay attention to any red (spelling) and green (usage) zigzagging lines, and right-click on the word or phrase to learn of any suggestions. Remember that it's your paper. The program doesn't know your purpose, so you're the one to choose whether to make a change or not.

**E = Effort.** Make an effort. To do so will benefit you. Use your energy to check citations, format, and neatness. Take your draft to the Writing Center so that tutors can help you fine tune your paper.

Always understand the directions of the assignments and review your arrangement or organization of your essay or answer. Then take time for revision. Make an extra effort to check all parts.