

How to say nothing in 500 words

[Linguistics](#), [Language](#)



In Paul Roberts's essay “ How to Say Nothing in 500 Words”, the author gives us nine tips that we can use to be a more productive writer:

- “ Avoid the obvious” in which we should make a list of the things that immediately come to mind and not use them in your writing
- “ Take the less usual side” which most people will avoid. He also mentions that trying to predict what the teacher wants is not a good way to choose a topic
- “ Slip out of abstraction” by not using vague topics but to go into detail instead
- “ Get rid of the obvious padding” by beginning with more real content so you don't have to add fluff.
- “ Call a fool a fool” meaning that you should get to the point and not be apologetic
- “ Beware of pat expressions” which are common phrases that everybody uses. Next is to use “ Colorful words” to paint a picture or cause emotion
- “ Colored words” usage which has associations either good or bad that are common to us from past experiences
- Finally, he warns against using too many “ Colorless words” which have been utilized so much that the meanings have been diminished.

I agree with what Paul has written because I have made each one of these mistakes, especially trying to find as many words as possible to fill up a page. I found that he used examples in a way that made his points clear and easy to understand. The text is a little dated but well written with the exception of some spelling and grammar mistakes. In one sentence that

stood out to me, he used every one of the “ colorless words” that he had listed, which was barely understandable. I plan on using the ideas from this essay in my future writing in hopes that I will not get a grade of “ D. ”