



*Illinois Valley Community College
Writing Center*

CLICHÉS

Clichés are overused expressions or ideas that should be replaced with more precise and original language. Since many people are familiar with clichés, they lack impact. While it is not unusual for clichés to appear in a first draft, they should be revised to something more powerful and inventive before your essay is handed in. Be creative and think of an original way to express your ideas.

Here are some examples of common clichés:

<i>Hard as a rock</i>	<i>White as a sheet</i>	<i>Dead as a doornail</i>
<i>Bury the hatchet</i>	<i>Pass the buck</i>	<i>Slowly but surely</i>
<i>In this day and age</i>	<i>Free as a bird</i>	<i>Too good to be true</i>
<i>Smart as a whip</i>	<i>Light as a feather</i>	<i>Water under the bridge</i>

For example, instead of writing that someone always “slept like a log,” you could write that they “could snooze through a tornado siren.” Replace clichés with original, natural wording.



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