

## English Comments on Essay 1: Aluminum Crystal Task

Feb. 29, 2004

There were few serious mathematical errors remaining in the essays although there were a number of omissions and minor mistakes. I will now address problems in writing style.

1. Pick a viewpoint. Decide who you are and who you are writing for. This is essential to organizing the essay. If you are writing one letter to Coach Meyer and then a memo to the supervisor, then you can't expect the supervisor to have read the letter.

2. My dad had a writing motto. "Tell'em what your gonna tell'em. Tell'em. Tell'em you told'em." Another version of this is that an essay not has to be well organized, it has to be seen to be well organized. Make sure that the reader understands the flow of the article.

3. Make the key verb active instead of an infinitive. Replace 'there is a need to describe the AGI' with 'I will now describe the AGI'

4. Parallelism. It is essential to keep the person and tense constant. Do not switch from I, to you, to one. Descriptions of procedures should be in the third person. Imperative is usually easiest. Do not switch from past to present and back. There may be a progression of tenses.

5. Whenever you use a pronoun, look for the referent. If you replaced the pronoun with the referent, would the second clause make sense. 'Since sample B has the highest AGI, it concludes that sample B is strongest aluminum.' This is easy to fix. Change 'it concludes' to 'I conclude' or, even better, delete concludes altogether. (Probably it was supposed to refer further back to 'the AGI method' but it doesn't; it refers to Sample B.

6. Avoid run-on sentences and comma splices.