According to the Purdue OWL, Higher Order Concerns (HOCs) are elements that make up the “bigger picture” of the paper. HOC examples: thesis statement, hypothesis, audience, purpose, focus, organization, development, etc.

If not addressed, can make the paper harder to read. HOCs should be addressed first and identified as early as possible.

HOCs are “higher” order because they are more essential to the meaning of the writing.

According to the Purdue OWL, Lower Order Concerns (LOCs) are more minor elements that make up the paper. LOC examples: grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, citation style/formatting.

Encourage students to read certain sections of the paper aloud to identify grammatical error patterns in their work.

After HOCs are addressed, identify the LOCs in order to ensure the clarity and to polish the overall paper.