Exercise: Revise an Argument

Go through this checklist as you revise your essay.
→ Print your paper.
→ Underline your thesis statement.
→ Underline every topic sentence in each paragraph in your paper.
  ☐ Make sure:
    ✓ That every paragraph has a topic sentence;
    ✓ There is only one topic sentence per paragraph.

Now, go back and read only the underlined sentences in your paper.
→ Every topic sentence should relate directly to your thesis statement. Your topic sentences will support your thesis statement, advance your argument, and clearly transition your ideas.
→ Do your topic sentences:
  ☐ Support your thesis statement?
    ✓ Do you need to change the order of paragraphs (or information in the paragraph) to clarify or advance your argument?
    ✓ Or do you need rewrite your thesis to reflect the new direction your paper is taking?
  ☐ Advance your argument?
    ✓ Are your topic sentences different from each other?
    ✓ Do you need to brainstorm more points?
  ☐ Transition between ideas clearly?
    ✓ What should be moved or deleted to clarify your idea?
    ✓ What should be added to make your argument flow better?
  ☐ Form a beginning, middle, and end to your argument?
    ✓ Do you clearly introduce your argument to the reader?
    ✓ Is there enough evidence in the body of your essay?
    ✓ Is there a conclusion to your argument?

Confirm that your essay has flow.
☐ You should be able to read every underlined sentence (your thesis statement and each topic sentence). They will flow coherently, and make a mini-essay that clearly outlines your argument.
  ✓ Are all points covered well?
  ✓ What is skipped?
  ✓ Do you repeat yourself?
  ✓ Is your argument in an order that makes sense to the reader?
☐ Think about what you need to add, delete, or move, to ensure your argument convinces the reader.