

A Short Guide to Copia ¹			
Possible Changes		Example Sentence: "Your letter pleased me greatly"	
Original Form	Kinds of Variation	Original Content	Variation
Adjectives	to prepositional phrases	your	of yours, of your making
	added/intensified adjectives		your incomparable letter
Nouns	synonyms	letter	epistle, note, memo, missive
	whole phrases		words from your pen
	whole clauses		the lines which you jotted
	metaphor		gem, pearls of wisdom
Verbs	synonyms	pleased pleased me	delighted, refreshed
	passive construction		I was pleased by
	metaphor		flooded me (with joy)
Adverbs	synonyms	greatly	intensely, wonderfully
	adverbial phrases		in a big way, as only few things do
	opposites/negatives (<i>litotes</i>)		in no small scale
	similes		like food does a glutton
Statements	questions	Your letter pleased me greatly	Didn't your letter just thrill me?
	negatives		Your letter did in no way displease me.

“Exercise in expressing oneself in different ways will be of considerable importance in general for the acquisition of style.... Variety is so powerful in every sphere that there is absolutely nothing, however brilliant, which is not dimmed if not commended by variety... [Boredom] can easily be avoided by someone who has it at his fingertips to turn one idea into more shapes than Proteus himself is supposed to have turned into”²

¹ A tabular representation and adaptation of Erasmus of Rotterdam’s *De duplici copia verborum ac rerum* [*On Copia of Words and Ideas*]. 1512. Trans. Donald B. King and H. David Rix. Milwaukee, Wis.: Marquette University Press, 1963.

² Desiderius Erasmus, *Copia: Foundations of the Abundant Style: De duplici copia verborum ac rerum Commentarii duo*, trans. and ed. Betty I. Knott, in *Collected Works of Erasmus: Literary and Educational Writings 2*, ed. Craig R. Thompson, vol. 28 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978), 302.

“Your letter pleased me greatly”

Variations by Erasmus from *De copia*

Your letter mightily pleased me.
To a wonderful degree did your letter please me.
Me exceedingly did your letter please.
By your letter was I mightily pleased.
I was exceeding pleased by your letter.
Your epistle exhilarated me intensely.
I was intensely exhilarated by your epistle.
Your brief note refreshed my spirits in no small measure.
I was in no small measure refreshed in spirit by your grace's hand.
From your affectionate letter I received unbelievable pleasure.
Your affectionate letter brought me unbelievable pleasure.
Your pages engendered in me an unfamiliar delight.
I conceived a wonderful delight from your pages.
Your lines conveyed to me the greatest joy.
The greatest joy was brought to me by your lines.
We derived great delight from your excellency's letter.
From my dear Faustus' letter I derived much delight.
In these Faustine letters I found a wonderful kind of delectation.
At your words a delight of no ordinary kind came over me.
I was singularly delighted by your epistle.
To be sure your letter delighted my spirits!
Your brief missive flooded me with inexpressible Joy.
As a result of your letter, I was suffused by an unfamiliar gladness.
Your communication poured vials of joy on my head.
Your epistle afforded me no small delight.
The perusal of your letter charmed my mind with singular delight.
Your epistle was delightful to a degree.
Your letter affected me with extraordinary gladness.
As a result of your letter I was affected with singular gladness.
Your epistle was the great joy to me.
Your missive was to me a very great delight.
Your epistle was an incredible joy to me.
How exceedingly agreeable did we find your epistle!
You could scarce credit with relief I find your missive.
Your epistle was to us one of great delightfulness.
Your letter was very sweet to me.
Your letter was the source of singular gladness.
Your letter mad em positively jump for joy.
Your letter having arrived, I was transported with joy.
When your letter was delivered, I was filled with delight.
On receipt of your letter, an incredible delight seized my spirits.

Once I had read your affectionate letter, I was carried away with a strange happiness.
Your epistle poured the balm of happiness over me.
Your writing to me was the most delightful thing possible.
The fact that you had written to me was extremely pleasurable to me.
Your honoring me with a letter was the most agreeable of occurrences.
Your brief note mad me burst with joy.
How overjoyed I was by your letter!
I was both please and delighted that you communicated with me by letter.
When your letter arrived, you could have seen me jumping ro all the joy I felt.
That you paid your respect by letter was assuredly a satisfaction to me.
Nothing more wished for than your letter could have been growth me.
Your letter has reached us, and eagerly looked of rit was.
Nothing more desire than your letter could have ben brought us .
Not unpleasing was your epistle tome.
Your by no means displeasing letter has arrived.
your missive by no means failed of a welcome.
Your epistle was to me the sweetest of the sweet.
I read and reread your letter with great pleasure.
It was not without the greatest pleasure that I received your letter.
The man who delivered your letter conveyed a wealth of joy.
Wonderful to relate how your letter entranced me.
The pages I received from you sent a new light of joy stealing over my heart.
Your letter promptly expelled all sorrow from my mind.
I sensed a wonderful happiness in my spirits when your letter was handed me.
From your letter an unaccustomed happiness swept over my spirits.
Your letter cause me to rejoice to the full.
Because of your letter my whole self exulted with joy.
It is difficult to say how much happiness was occasioned in my by your letter.
I can hardly find word to express the extent of the joy to which your letter gave rise.
It is wonderful to tell what a ray of delight beamed forth from your letter.
Good God, what a mighty joy proceeded form your epistle!
Heavens, what causes for joy did id your letter provide!
Ye gods, what a power of joy did your missive supply!
The happiness occasioned by your communication is great than I can describe.
Your messenger brought me a deal of pleasure.
You could scarce credit he load of happiness your letter conveyed to my mind.
I cannot find word to tell the joys that your letter loaded on me.
Your letter heaped joy upon me.
I rejoiced greatly at your letter.
I found singular pleasure in your letter.
Your missive showered a wealth of gladness upon me.
At the sight of your letter the frown fled from my mind's brow.