

Revising and Editing

How do artists use critique to shape and clarify their ideas?

How do writers use revision to shape and clarify their ideas?

LESSON OVERVIEW

Students will revise text they selected from previous writings to make sure it clearly says what they want it to say. Then, students will edit their writing to correct standard rules of language.

LENGTH OF LESSON: Two or three 45-minute sessions

KEY IDEAS THAT CONNECT VISUAL ARTS AND WRITING

Visual Art

- Artists critique and rework their art before they consider it complete.
- Critique is a process of observing, analyzing, and interpreting works of art.
- Critique can help artists shape ideas and clarify the meaning of their work.

Writing

- Writers revise and edit their writing before they consider it finished.
- Revision and editing are two different processes.
- Revision is a process of reworking the parts of writing such as detail, voice, word choice, and fluency.
- Editing is checking a text for standard rules, such as spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.
- Revision can help shape ideas and clarify the meaning of the text.
- Editing can make written texts easier to read.

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

Students will:

Visual Art (optional activities)

- Participate in a student critique
- Rework or re-create an artwork, incorporating changes to some aspect of the work

Writing

- Revise a written text
- Edit a written text

FOR THE TEACHER

Break the revision process into manageable pieces by directing it at just one of the traits of writing at a time. Depending on your availability to work individually with students, you may choose a trait for all students to rework, or you may want to encourage students to choose a part of their writings to revise themselves. Breaking the process into small parts will help students understand the steps they can take to improve their writing.

Different types of text may be appropriate for different students. The writing students select may depend on the book forms they have chosen. For example, a poem, short story, phrase, lyric, or recipe may be appropriate depending on the book form and the student's skill level. →

Recruit volunteers to help you provide individual attention to students and ask students who finish to help others revise and edit their work. You can also ask your principal or another special person to review or edit the students' writing. Knowing that their work will be read by a VIP will motivate students and provide you with some extra assistance.

Collect a variety of completed texts to share with students so they will understand what is achievable and what the possibilities are for their own writing. Instead of choosing examples written by students in your class, use student writing from other classes or previous years.

SUPPLIES

- Student journals
- Text selected from previous lessons
- Computer for typing text (optional)

VOCABULARY

Revision is a process of reworking the parts of writing such as ideas, organization, voice, word choice, and fluency.

Editing is a process of preparing a text for presentation by correcting standard rules of language such as spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.

Traits of writing are the building blocks for creating literary works. The traits include ideas, organization, voice, word choice, and sentence fluency.

INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN: OBSERVE, CREATE, AND REFLECT

Introduction

Explain to students that revision is a way to expand their ideas and help others understand what they mean to say. Revision does not mean they need to completely rewrite their texts; it means that they can choose a part of their writing, such as details, voice, word choice, or fluency, to emphasize or to rework. Revision can be messy and, like collage, it is a process of moving parts and adding pieces until the text communicates what the writer intends.

Likewise, good editing makes writing easier for others to read. Language standards are much like road signs, that tell the reader where to begin, pause, and stop. To edit is to check that spelling, capitalization, and punctuation are correct so the reader knows how to read the writing. Writers use these rules to clarify and emphasize what they have to say.

Observe: Look and Discuss

Choose a variety of “complete” texts, such as a short story, recipe, poem, or lyric, and discuss how each type has a unique way of expressing ideas and moods and of emphasizing different traits of writing. What is the importance of organization in a recipe compared to that of a poem?



Create: Revision and Editing*Revision*

Pair students with a partner and tell each student to read his or her partner's text twice—first for fun and then more slowly, paying attention to parts of writing such as voice, word choice, etc. If you choose one trait for the class to revise, have students focus on that trait while they read. Have each student complete the following sentence stems about their partner's text. Students can either write their answers or talk with their partners about their responses:

- While reading your text, I noticed _____.
- You caught my attention when _____.
- I would like to know more about _____.
- I think your text is about _____.

Have partners discuss how they can use each other's comments to revise their writing. For example, if a student wants to know more about some aspect of the text, that is a good place for the writer to add more details or "juicier" or more specific words. Or, if the partner thinks the text is about one thing, but the writer means something else, have the students discuss what the writer can do to make his or her meaning clearer.

Choose from the following writing activities to help students revise their writing. These activities can be done individually or in groups of two or three.

Ideas are what the text is about—the message of your writing.

- Read your text all the way through. Find a part of your writing you think is really important—such as a phrase, description, or detail that captures or expresses your idea well. Why is this part so important? What more can you say about it?
- What do you want the reader to understand or to learn? Find a detail that perfectly expresses your meaning. What can you add to other details to make them as strong as this one? Choose one detail to revise.
- What are you trying to say with this writing? Write one short sentence describing what your piece is about. What parts of your writing support your idea? What more can you add to these parts?

Organization is the arrangement of your ideas throughout the text.

- What is the main idea of your text? Underline details, words, and phrases that support your idea. Are there other parts that do not support the idea? Find one part that seems to wander from the topic. What does this part do for your text? Rewrite the part so it addresses your idea or ask yourself if it should even be in your text.
- Underline all the important parts of your text and reread them. Are they in an order that will make sense to your audience? If not, decide which one of the underlined parts could be moved to another place in your text to help make the meaning clearer.



- Reread your text.
 - Did you say what you wanted to say? Did you complete your thought? If you feel the text does not express your idea or that you still have more to say, find a place that needs more detail or explanation and keep writing!
 - Does it make sense to you and to others? Ask a partner to read your text and underline a part that makes sense and a part that could be clearer. Rewrite the part that is confusing.

Voice is what makes the text yours—your feelings, personality, and opinions expressed through words.

- Read through your text, then reread the parts where your voice stands out—places where your individuality and personality shine through. What did you do to express your voice? Find a place where your voice is not as clear and revise it.
- Are you writing about something that is important to you? Mark a place that expresses something important to you. Then mark a place that doesn't seem as important. Rewrite the less important part, or ask yourself if you need that part at all.

Word choice refers to your use of expressive, specific words that create visual images in the reader's mind.

- Underline three of your juiciest words. Then underline two of the most boring words and think of more remarkable words you can use to replace them. For example, "boring" could be replaced with the words "mind-numbing," "tedious," "dreary," or "irksome."
- Underline a word or phrase that creates a vivid image in your mind. Then find another sentence in which you could create a rich image. For example, "the sky was blue" could become "the sky glimmered with indigo and gold."
- Find two places in your writing where you could include at least one of the five senses. Describe how something feels, sounds, tastes, smells, or looks.

Sentence fluency is the way your words sound when read aloud.

- Read your text out loud. Which parts sound the best? What do you like about how these parts sound? Are they smooth and rhythmic, or do they have a strong beat? Find one or two spots that could sound more interesting and revise them so you like the way they sound when read aloud.
- Ask someone to read your text out loud. Revise any areas they can't read easily or that don't sound the way you want.
- Read your text and notice how each sentence begins. If all the sentences begin the same way, rewrite a few sentences so that they begin differently.
- Experiment with short and long sentences. A variety of short and long sentences usually makes a text feel smooth to read. However, using all short sentences or very long sentences might help create a mood or express how a character feels.

Editing

One way to approach editing is to organize expert groups. Divide the class into four or five groups; each group will learn and be responsible for a particular editing skill (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, subject-verb agreement). When using expert groups, all student texts are reviewed by each expert group and then returned to the individual writers. Students can also work individually or in small groups to edit their work.



Choose editing goals that suit the skill level of your students and clearly explain your editing guidelines to your students. Some principal fourth-grade editing standards are below:

Spelling: Correct the spelling of grade-level words, including roots, affixes, inflections, and syllable constructions.

Capitalization: Capitalize the first word in sentences and quotations; proper nouns; organizations; works of art; titles of books, movies, and music; and names of magazines and newspapers.

Punctuation: Use correct ending punctuation, commas in direct quotations and in a series, and apostrophes.

Subject-verb agreement: Make sure the verb always agrees with its subject. Some examples and explanations are below.

- **Verbs** are action words. For example, run, walk, eat, sleep, play, do, and make are all verbs.
- **Subjects** are the people or things that are doing the action of the verb. For example, in the following sentences, I, Auntie, Michael and They are the subjects:

I run.

Auntie walks.

Michael eats a lot.

They sleep at night.

The subject of a sentence can be singular (one) or plural (many).

The **car** is new. (singular)

The **cars** are new. (plural)

The verb form can change depending on whether the subject is singular or plural.

Single subject = single verb; plural subject = plural verb.

The **pizza** (singular subject) **was** (singular verb) hot.

The **pizzas** (plural subject) **were** (plural verb) hot.

Hint: The letter “s” is added to the third person singular. This is the way most regular verbs in the present tense work:

	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
First person	I like bananas.	We like bananas.
Second person	You like bananas.	You like bananas.
Third person	He / She / It likes bananas.	They like bananas.

She likes to make books. (correct)

She like to make books. (incorrect)

We like playing. (correct)

We likes playing. (incorrect) →

Reflect

Have students respond to one of the following prompts in their journals.

- What is getting easier for me in the writing process?
- What I like about my text is _____.
- I chose to write about this idea because _____.

LESSON EXTENSIONS**Visual Arts and Writing**

- Ask students to revise a well-known text, choosing one writing trait to alter. For example, rewrite the poem “Roses are red, Violets are blue, Sugar is sweet, And so are you” focusing on word choice to make it more interesting.
- Have students re-create a well-known artwork, making a change in one of the elements of art that will alter the meaning of the piece.