

MONSTERS! INK!

LESSON TWELVE

WRAP IT UP! & MAKE IT SHINE!

The final stage in the revision/writing process—polishing—consists of editing and proofreading. Working on the final polished draft is an exciting time for any author. Like a marathon runner, the end of the race is nearing and you know that all your hard work is going to pay off soon.

It's an interesting time. It's not just copying your last draft onto clean paper or typing it on a keyboard so it can get printed out, but you aren't writing an entirely new story either!

For this stage, your goal is not to make major revisions but simply to smooth off the edges of your work for its final presentation—much like a sculptor applying finishing touches to artwork before casting. The artist doesn't remold the clay at this point but gently sculpts and shapes, making only slight alterations to his or her masterpiece to achieve final form. Like the artist, your job in this final stage of writing is to use your sculpting tools, incorporating editing and proofreading suggestions from your peers, as well as your own final edits as you carefully write or type your final draft and ready your story for presentation.

Once their texts have been reviewed, and students have feedback from classmates, and instructor, they can incorporate the changes they want to make, polish up their stories, and write the final draft of their text.

It is recommended that each student's story is typed (by them—for those in appropriate grades) for their final draft! This can make adding additional revisions and making final changes during 'polishing' easier rather than having to hand write the text again, or using an eraser, though it can be done!

This final version will:



- Incorporate ideas and language from the peer editing, self/co-authorship editing, feedback, and revision sessions
- Be carefully organized and sequenced
- Be as vivid & interesting as possible
- Have students' incorporated changes as they carefully write (youngest grades) or **type** their final drafts of their stories.

POLISHING | HOW TO CRAFT A FINAL DRAFT

First, read your paper silently, checking for general readability: if you stumble over words in the same section every time, so will your readers. Second, try reading it aloud. Hearing yourself read your written words aloud is different from reading silently, thus, it allows you to better identify areas that might need work.

Review your paper further as you re-write with the following editing checklist items in mind:

- Word Choice:** Delete repetitive or unnecessary words and phrases. Ever notice how some people tend to talk a lot without ever really saying anything? After listening to a person talk like this, you might feel exhausted, frustrated or confused—or all three. The same thing can happen with wordy writing. It's important for writers to try to learn how to get to the point without losing important descriptive wording and/or sacrificing tone, style and rhythm. The best way to do this is to eliminate unneeded words or phrases. When reviewing each sentence, ask yourself, "What is the main point or the goal of this sentence?" If you find information there that doesn't pertain or is merely saying what's already been said in the sentence, simply get rid of it. You will find your stripped down sentences are easier to read and understand and will help the overall flow of your paper.



- Make sure you've used strong and descriptive words, especially verbs. For instance, many writers have the habit of using the verb, "get" (or one of its forms) in their sentences. Depending on sentence context, of course, stronger and/or more descriptive verbs will replace "get." Example: The company *got* a large return on its investment. Edited: The company *earned* a large return on its investment.

Check for consistent use of verb tense. So that readers aren't lost, it's important for a writer to remain in the same tense throughout his or her paper. Granted, sometimes writers have to temporarily roll back time to tell a related or supporting story, so it's appropriate to change the tense for this. However, it should be apparent to your reader when and why you switch tenses. Example: Yesterday, I ate apples; today, I eat bananas; tomorrow, I will eat grapes. Transition words and phrases can let readers know when there's a tense switch by announcing a time/period and/or place/setting change.

Verify the use of strong and varied transitions. As with place and time, transition words and phrases are used to create stronger connections between ideas in writing. Transition words have many purposes, such as introducing something new or changing the direction of thought. See the lists of partial categories below:

- **Addition** furthermore, further, also, moreover, first, even more, next,...
- **For example** for instance, to illustrate, specifically,...
- **Comparison** similarly, likewise, in similar fashion,...
- **Contrast** yet, after all, however, nonetheless, on the other hand,...

Remember the acronym FANBOYS for the seven coordinating words that take a comma beforehand when used to join two sentences together.

- for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so → F.A.N.B.O.Y.S.
- Example: He is busy, so I will not bother him.
- If you are not using one of the seven FANBOYS to join two sentences together but are using words such as the ones listed below to join sentences, you don't need a comma beforehand. (An exception occurs when the sentence is extremely long, and it's not practical or appropriate to shorten it. In this case, a comma breaks up the length.)
 - after, although, as, as if, as long as, as though, because, before, even if, even though, if, if only, now that, once, rather than, since



POLISHING | HOW TO PROOFREAD

Proofreading is the last phase of the writing process, the final check prior to submission. Why? Because if you proofread too early, you could waste your time fixing typos in a paragraph that you ultimately decide to delete completely. This doesn't mean that if you see a mistake when you're revising that you can't fix it. It just means don't waste your time looking for mistakes until you get to the proofreading phase.

The key to proofreading is to make the text seem strange. Strange to you. You wrote the text, you've read it a thousand times, and you know what it says, or what you think it says. You are so familiar with it that while reading, your brain fills in the gaps and corrects the mistakes in your writing.

Making the text seem strange will make those typos, double words, and punctuation problems jump out, begging to be noticed.

One way to solve the text familiarity problem is to ask someone else to read your paper to you. If that's not possible, you can read it out loud to yourself. Hearing it with your ears is not the same as hearing it inside your head, though you could still run into the familiarity problems and read it correctly out loud, leaving the mistakes on the page.

It can be hard to look at your story over and over again. Since you wrote it, you know what you meant to say. So sometimes your brain skips over minor errors on the page. That's okay — it happens to all of us! Here's another great trick for finding those pesky mistakes and making your story 'strange' to you again. Read the paper backwards - yes, backwards - from the last paragraph to the first, sentence by sentence. And it's even better if you read it backwards out loud. You're not reading for meaning this time, and reading backwards allows you to see the text anew with all its warts. This way, you're looking less at the content and more at the technical stuff. Your brain switches out of "autopilot" and finds the places where you accidentally wrote "saw" instead of "was" or "te" instead of "the."

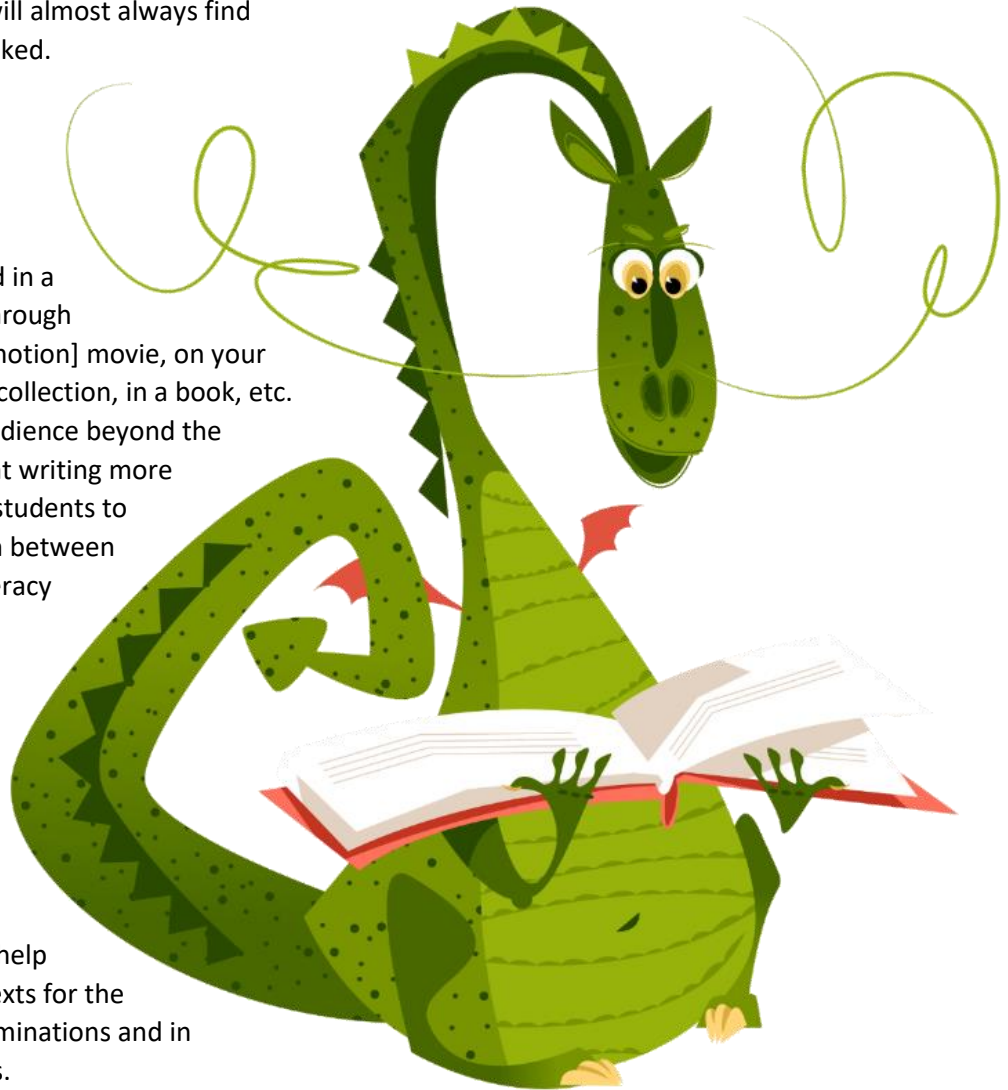


Definitely try to get an outside opinion on your writing before you hand in your final draft because "fresh eyes" will almost always find something you overlooked.

PUBLISHING!

Encourage students to understand that their works will be published in a variety of ways, e.g., through their (upcoming stop-motion) movie, on your program website, as a collection, in a book, etc. Having an authentic audience beyond the classroom gives student writing more importance and helps students to see a direct connection between their lives and their literacy development.

Note: If the complete writing process — prewriting, drafting, revising and editing, polishing, and publishing— is used regularly, students will develop skills that will help them to write better texts for the English classroom, examinations and in future writing activities.



SAMPLE SUPPLY LIST LESSON TWELVE

LESSON MATERIALS

- Rough drafts from Lesson Eleven, with marks and remarks from peer & self-review sessions, from each co-authorship & the instructor, ex. highlighter marks, sticky note comments, etc.
- Pencils
- Computers, if possible, for each co-authorship
- Paper

PACING GUIDE:

THIS LESSON HAS BEEN DESIGNED TO TAKE ONE TO TWO 75-MINUTE SESSIONS TO COMPLETE.

THIS PROCESS MAY TAKE MORE OR LESS TIME DEPENDING ON THE NEEDS OF YOUR CLASSROOM AND THE ABILITIES OF YOUR STUDENTS.