

II

writeShop®

New Look!
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Content!

Student Workbook



an incremental writing program

Kim Kautzer and Debra Oldar

Printing Instructions

WriteShop I & II Student Workbooks (Digital)

It is recommended that you print pages **single-sided**, since many of the pages must be used independently of adjoining pages.

These include (but are not limited to) Skill Builders, brainstorming worksheets, and Student and Teacher Writing Skills Checklists.

WriteShop

an incremental writing program

WriteShop II

by Kim Kautzer and Debra Oldar

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for help, comments, questions, or ordering information

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Fourth Edition

**This book is dedicated to our sons, Ben and Brian. Thank
you for blazing this trail with us. You guys are troopers!**

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Introducing *WriteShop II*

Welcome to *WriteShop II*! Now that you feel comfortable writing descriptive, informative, and narrative compositions, you're ready to put your new skills to work! Many compositions in *WriteShop II* will ask you to combine these three writing styles to produce interesting, lively narratives.*

When you reach Lesson 24, however, you'll begin learning a new style of writing---persuasion. Chances are you're already skilled at persuading (or at attempting to persuade)! It's a rare person indeed who has never tried to convince someone to see things his or her way!

Children's persuasive skills begin developing as babies, when they learn that certain behaviors can manipulate Mom or Dad. Certainly you have watched a demanding toddler throw a tantrum in the grocery store when his mother refuses to buy Super Choco-Bars. But older kids try their hand at winning over their parents, too. You probably know of a friend who has nagged and pleaded with her parents, begging for a special privilege. You'll agree that even if either of these unbecoming methods works to twist the arm of a weary parent, there are more successful and sophisticated ways to convince someone to agree with, or at least understand, your point.

WriteShop II will teach you to write many types of essays. Each one will help you learn to express your opinion and then develop and support it with facts, details, and examples. With practice, you will become a skilled essay writer. Furthermore, you'll learn to choose wise words so that you persuade your readers without arousing their defensiveness or hostility. Learning to express your opinion with conviction is important . . . but expressing your opinion in a gentle yet convincing manner is even better.

By now you have discovered that *WriteShop's* step-by-step approach has given you the necessary tools to develop and improve your writing skills. Continue practicing. Before you know it, your ability to communicate on paper will soar to new heights, and you'll be writing with even greater confidence and style.

Reminder: Your teacher will want to use the accompanying *Teacher's Manual*. This student book is not intended for you to work through completely on your own. First, it does not contain any answer keys to lesson activities or *Skill Builders*. Second, it does not provide complete instructions for the teacher. Finally, it does not contain the tools your teacher needs to edit and evaluate your writing.

*If you are new to the program, turn the page for suggestions on starting fresh with *WriteShop II*.

Getting Started

If you have never used *WriteShop* before, it's important that you and your teacher review certain important concepts prior to beginning Lesson 17. Since one of *WriteShop*'s main goals is to help you focus on style, you'll notice a number of style-related terms used frequently throughout the program, including "synonym," "concrete words," "weak words," and "sentence variations." Your teacher will probably want to review Lesson 1 with you (see Teacher's Manual) to help familiarize you with these and other important *WriteShop* concepts.

Furthermore, make sure you carefully read the entire Introduction section of your notebook. You'll find helpful tools and tips, including common *WriteShop* terms, a glossary of sentence variations, and page layout guides.

Lessons 17, 18, and 19 provide review of two key *WriteShop I* lessons---descriptive and informative writing. Lessons 20-24 will offer narrative writing exercises. Finally, Lessons 24-30 will teach you the basics of persuasive and essay writing. All of these assignments require you to use a wide variety of sentence types. Although Lessons 17-19 provide some practice with the sentence variations introduced in *WriteShop I*, you may still need even more. *Easy Writing* by Wanda Phillips (ISHA Enterprises) is a great resource for learning and/or reviewing many of the sentence variations used in both *WriteShop I* and *II*.

Also, be sure to take advantage of the Word Lists in the back of your notebook. When searching for "just the right word" as you write, you can turn to this excellent resource for dozens of helpful synonyms.

Finally, remember to carefully read the directions for each assignment. They are clearly written and easy to follow. You should have no trouble jumping into *WriteShop II*. Enjoy the adventure!

The Writing Process: Easy as 1-2-3-4-5

When writing your assigned compositions, always follow these steps:

1. **Brainstorm.**

- ☐ Never skip this important step. It gets your ideas flowing so you can write!
- ☐ You can brainstorm in many ways, such as making lists, mind-maps, charts, Venn diagrams, word banks, writing clusters, outlines, etc. (many of your *WriteShop* assignments will already include brainstorming suggestions).

2. **Write a "sloppy copy."**

- ☐ It does not have to be neat---just make sure it's readable!
- ☐ Be sure to skip lines as you write (double-space if typing).
- ☐ Check your "sloppy copy" against the "Content" and "Style" sections of your Writing Skills Checklist, making necessary corrections.

3. **Write your first revision.**

- ☐ This copy should be neatly written.
- ☐ Continue the practice of double-spacing or skipping lines.
- ☐ When finished, check your revised copy against the "Mechanics" section of your Writing Skills Checklist, making necessary corrections.
- ☐ Recheck your paper for content/style, and make corrections.
- ☐ Do not rewrite yet (unless your paper is too marked up to be readable).

4. **Hand in your work.**

- ☐ Put your brainstorming sheet on the bottom of your stack.
- ☐ "Sloppy copy" goes on top of that.
- ☐ First revision goes on top of "sloppy copy."
- ☐ Student Writing Skills Checklist goes on the very top.
- ☐ Staple everything together.
(Note: Your teacher will staple the Teacher Writing Skills Checklist on top of your paper.)

5. **Write your final draft.**

- ☐ Make any corrections suggested on the Teacher Writing Checklist.
- ☐ Type or neatly rewrite your final draft, paying close attention to details.
- ☐ Staple your final draft on top of the Teacher Writing Skills Checklist, and hand in with all copies of this composition.

Sample Page Models

Page Model for Compositions Handwritten on Notebook Paper

1. All work written on notebook paper must use the headings shown in the following sample. Remember: *always* indent the first line of every paragraph.
2. Get into the habit of writing on *every other line*. This leaves space for editing your work. (It is not necessary to skip lines for Skill Builders or other daily work.)
3. Do not write on the back of the page; instead, continue on a second sheet of paper. Staple multiple copies together.

●	First and Last Name
	Date
	Draft ("Sloppy Copy," etc.)
	<u>Title</u> (underline the title)
	(skip this line)
	Indent the first line of a paragraph.
	(skip this line)
	(skip this line)
	(skip this line)
●	(skip this line)
	(skip this line)
	(skip this line)
	(skip this line)
●	

Page Model for Typed Compositions

1. All typed work must use the headings shown in the following sample. Indent the first line of every paragraph about a half-inch (about 5 letters).
2. You must double-space the body of the paragraph. This leaves space for editing your work. Type your name and date, single-spaced, in the upper right-hand corner. Then triple-space before typing the title, which should be centered. Double-space after the title to begin the body.
3. **IMPORTANT:** Use a standard font, like Times New Roman, Ariel, or Helv, preferably in 12- to 14-pt. Do not use bold print or excessively large or fancy fonts.
4. Do not print on the back of the page; instead, continue on a second sheet of paper. Staple multiple copies together.

(Leave a 1 to 1½ -inch margin all around your paper)

First and last name
 Date
 Draft (!st Revision, etc.)

(triple-space after heading)

Title
(double-space after title)

Indent ½" (about 5 letters) for each new paragraph.

Double-space the body of the composition. Double-spacing leaves plenty of room for editing.

If the composition requires a second or third paragraph, do not increase the spacing *between paragraphs*. The spacing *between* the paragraphs should be the same as the spacing of the body.

Ingredients for a Tasty Paragraph

Think of your paragraph as a cookie jar. The most important part of the jar is what's inside . . . it doesn't matter how decorative the jar is; it's what's inside that counts.

A paragraph contains several sentences that discuss and develop one thought. It is held together by *one main idea*. Without that common thread, you have just a group of separate sentences, not a paragraph.

Suppose someone gives you a gift. If you open it and find a jar marked "COOKIES," what do you expect to find in the jar? Cookies, right? Imagine finding a carrot in there, too! Wouldn't that be strange? All the *sentences in a paragraph need to be about the same subject*, or the paragraph will be just as surprising. Consider reading a paragraph about surfing and finding in it a sentence about shopping along the pier. That would be like the jar of cookies with a carrot in it!¹

Next, think about taking the jar out of the box and finding no lid on it. Would that work? A jar without a lid would let the cookies spill out. It certainly would not be a complete cookie jar. A paragraph must also have a kind of lid, or it feels incomplete. *The "lid" of a paragraph is a good, interesting beginning sentence* that gets a paragraph off to a good start.

Finally, imagine that your jar of cookies arrived with the bottom broken out. What would you expect to happen? A jar without a bottom would not be a complete jar. Its contents would fall out. *An ending sentence that makes the paragraph feel closed* is the "bottom" of a paragraph. Without it, the paragraph does not feel finished.

So, remember the three "ingredients" for a strong paragraph:

1. **One main idea.**
2. **An interesting topic sentence to introduce the reader to your subject.**
3. **An ending, or closing, sentence to sum up your paragraph.**

¹Credit for the "carrot in a cookie jar" idea goes to Susan Bradrick, *Understanding Writing* (Port Orchard, Wash.: Bradrick Family Enterprises, 1991).

Choosing a Topic and Closing Sentence

TOPIC SENTENCES

Your topic sentence introduces the reader to your paragraph. It should be general enough to cover all that you will write about and interesting enough to catch your reader's attention.

Let's say you decide to write about apples. You observe an apple carefully and discover whether it is sweet or tart, juicy or mushy, red or green, smooth or waxy. Here are some possible TOPIC SENTENCES. Read each sentence, and discover why each would be a good or poor choice to introduce your paragraph:

☐ I love to snack on fruit.

- This is *not* a good topic sentence because it is too general. Your paragraph is not about fruit; it is about apples.

☐ Apples are sweet and juicy.

☐ Apples are crisp and tart.

☐ Apples are red and round.

- These are *not* good topic sentences either; they are too specific. You are not writing your entire paragraph about how sweet and juicy your apple is---only a sentence or two. The same goes for the other two examples. The paragraph is about your apple, inside and out. Don't be too specific with your topic sentence.

☐ Apples make terrific snacks.

☐ I enjoy nothing better than a tasty apple.

☐ My mouth waters at the thought of a delicious apple.

- These are *good* topic sentences! They tell the reader what the paragraph will be about---apples. They let you save the details about color, flavor, and texture for the body of the paragraph.
- NOTE: These examples of topic sentences are *simplistic*. As you progress in your writing skills, your topic sentences will become more complex.

CLOSING SENTENCES

Follow the same rule when choosing a closing sentence. You want your closing sentence to *sum up* what you have said in the body of the paragraph:

I can't wait to devour my Jonathan apple. Its bright red color and smooth skin appeal to my sense of sight. I know that when I bite into it my taste buds will welcome that fresh burst of flavor. This apple could prove to be the crunchiest, crispiest, most mouth-watering piece of fruit I've ever enjoyed.
Nothing is more satisfying than a fresh autumn apple.

Glossary of Writing Terms

"Carrot in a cookie jar": A phrase or sentence that is either unrelated to the topic of the paragraph OR detracts from the paragraph's unity of thought.

Concise, conciseness: Using the fewest words possible to convey clear meaning. It is helpful to avoid slang, as well as vague, weak, and repeated words. Choose a few concrete words, rather than many unclear words, to communicate concisely.

Concrete, concreteness: Using colorful, descriptive, precise nouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs to appeal to the reader's five senses.

Content: The purpose of a composition is to convey meaningful ideas to others. This is first accomplished through its *content*, which includes the subject matter, the title, and the purpose of the written piece (typically to describe, inform, narrate, or persuade, but also to encourage, amuse, instruct, or comfort).

Descriptive writing: Describing objects, scenery, experiences, etc., through vivid, well-chosen, sensory words to paint a word picture in the reader's mind.

Graciousness: Writing that demonstrates qualities of good taste and satisfies godly ideals of attitudes, thoughts, and speech. Gracious writing honors God and treats the reader with respect.

Informative writing: Informative writing, also called expository writing, is designed to explain. Factual details are presented in a sensible and organized manner. As with descriptive writing, specific, vivid words must be used to develop the subject matter clearly and logically.

Mechanics: Writing mechanics include the skills of spelling, punctuation, and grammar.

Narrative writing: Often thought of as a *story*, narrative writing combines elements of description and explanation to recount an experience, event, or occurrence.

Paragraph: A division of a piece of writing typically formed by a group of three or more sentences. A true paragraph forms a unit of thought. Its first word is always indented. Generally, a paragraph has an introduction (topic sentence), some form of development (body), and a conclusion (closing sentence).

Parallelism: A pattern of repeated, similarly constructed phrases or sentences that use the same part of speech. Example A: Susan is *loyal*, *kind*, and *truthful* (each of these is an adjective). Example B: Exercising regularly helps teens *gain* strength, *develop* coordination, and *feel* more energetic (each is a verb).

Persuasive writing: Persuasive writing, also known as argumentation, presents facts and supporting details in a logical order to prove or disprove a point, to influence the reader's thinking or behavior, or to change someone's mind about an issue.

Sentence: A group of words that expresses a complete thought in the form of a statement, command, exclamation, or question. It contains at least a verb and a noun, and begins with a capital letter and ends with a punctuation mark.

Style: Style generally refers to writing technique. In order to express yourself meaningfully, you need to select specific words and organize them in a specific way.

Synonym: A word having the same or nearly the same meaning as another in the same language. *Enormous* and *large* are synonyms.

Wordy, wordiness (also known as "**verbose**" or "**flowery**"): The use of more words than are needed to express an idea; emphasizing style at the expense of thought.

Glossary of Sentence Variations

Using a variety of sentence types in one's writing creates a more interesting composition. The following parts of speech make effective sentence starters.

NOTE: For further discussion, explanation, or examples, rely on a good English handbook such as *Rod and Staff* or *ABeka*. Also, *Easy Writing* gives extensive practice with many of these sentence variations.

Adverb/adverbial phrase: Modifies a verb. Tells how, when, where, and to what extent (how much or how long). Many times an adverb will end in -ly.

Gratefully, Scott accepted the gift from his aunt.

Yesterday a sudden storm interrupted our barbecue.

Appositive: A specific kind of explanatory word or phrase that identifies or renames a noun or a pronoun. It is placed by the word it explains and is set off by commas. The exception is something that is essential to the meaning of the sentence. In the last example below, "Jackie" is essential if there is more than one older sister. This, then, is *not* set off by commas.

Marty, who lives next door, drives an old truck.

The women in navy suits, flight attendants for Worldwide Airlines, boarded the plane.

My older sister Jackie lives in Florida.

Infinitive: The simplest form of a verb, written as "to + verb" (to run, to shout, to eat). It takes practice to use an infinitive sentence starter yet avoid using a "to be" word.

To play the piano with skill **is** difficult. (not recommended; uses a "to be" word)

To play the piano with skill **requires** hours of diligent practice. (better; uses a concrete verb)

Metaphor: A word picture comparing things that are basically unlike but have striking similarities. A form of "to be" often expresses the comparison.

Puffy white clouds were marshmallows in the morning sky.

Jesus said, "I am the Bread of Life."

Soldiers at attention, the row of trees guarded the old mansion. (*Note: Comparison between trees and soldiers is made without the use of a "to be" word.*)

Paired adjectives: A pair of related adjectives used to begin a sentence. As with participles, the subject must agree with the adjectives.

Incorrect: Serene and peaceful, the cradle held the sleeping infant. (The crib is not serene and peaceful.)

Correct: Serene and peaceful, the sleeping infant lay in her cradle. (The sleeping infant is serene and peaceful.)

Paired adjectives may be opposites, often useful in showing conflict of emotions or to demonstrate "in spite of" or "nonetheless." Notice the use of *but* or *yet*.

Scared but willing, Mark crept to the edge of the high dive.

Elderly yet fun-loving, Grandpa joined us for a round of miniature golf.

Participle/participial phrase: A participle is a verb form. Adding "ing" to a verb forms a *present* participle. To form a *past* participle, add "ed" or "en."

Looking at the moon, the dog began to howl. (present participle)

Stunned by the fall, the cowboy rested before remounting his horse. (past participle)

The subject of the sentence must closely follow the participle. The participle and the subject must agree with one another, thus avoiding a **misplaced modifier**.

Incorrect: Trembling with fear, the stream was difficult for Casey to cross. (The stream did not tremble with fear.)

Correct: Trembling with fear, Casey crossed the stream with difficulty. (Casey trembled with fear.)

Prepositional phrase: Prepositions are relational words that usually tell *where* ("near," "beside") or *when* ("before," "since"). A prepositional *phrase* begins with a preposition and ends with its object ("near the boat," "beside still waters," "before church," "since early this morning"). Here are sentences that begin with a prepositional phrase:

Between lunch and dinner, the children played contentedly on the beach.

Under the bridge, a homeless drifter huddled in his thin blanket.

Note: *Beware of mistaking a subordinate conjunction for a preposition. A subordinate conjunction becomes a preposition only if it has an object:*

Incorrect: After the boys escaped from the burning building, they dashed to safety. ("The boys escaped" is an independent clause. In this case, "boys" is a subject, not an object. Therefore, "after" is a subordinate conjunction, not a preposition.)

Correct: After escaping from the burning building, the boys dashed to safety. ("Escaping" is a special verbal called a gerund, which functions as a noun. In this sentence, it serves as the object of the preposition.)

Correct: After dark, the boys escaped to safety. ("dark" is the object of the preposition.)

See Skill Builder p. 12-9 for further explanation and examples or look in your English handbook.

Simile: The difference between a metaphor and a simile is the use of the word "like" or "as" to make the comparison.

Puffy white clouds floated like marshmallows in the morning sky.

Laurie thought Daddy's beard felt as rough as sandpaper.

Like soldiers at attention, the row of trees guarded the old mansion.

Subject-verb: The subject appears at or near the beginning of the sentence; the verb follows. This is the most common (and most overused) sentence type.

Susie wandered along the path.

Five birds sat on Mr. Spreckel's picket fence.

Subordinate conjunction: This expresses relationship between the main clause and the subordinate clause. It may begin a sentence or appear within a sentence. We encourage students to begin at least one sentence with a subordinate conjunction for yet another alternative to the subject-verb opener. Here is a partial list:

after	although	as	because	before	even though
if	since	though	unless	until	when
whether	while				

Incorrect: Before sunrise, John's neighbors arrived to help build the new barn.
("Sunrise" is the object, making "before" a preposition.)

Correct: Before the sun came up, John's neighbors arrived to help build the new barn. (Do not make the mistake of assuming that "before the sun" is a prepositional phrase. "The sun came up" is a *clause*, making "before" a subordinate conjunction.)

Transition words (also called coordinate conjunctions): These words often connect thoughts between sentences and paragraphs. Some are useful as conclusions. They are usually followed by a comma. Here are some possible transition words:

accordingly	also	additionally	besides	consequently	furthermore
however	instead	likewise	meanwhile	nevertheless	therefore

Furthermore, a well-trained dog will not chew or dig.

Therefore, young children should be taught to speak a second language.

WriteShop I at a Glance

Lesson Number	Lesson Title	Lesson Focus	Skill Builder Focus
1	Describing an Object	Concrete Writing	Concrete Writing
2	Describing a Pet	Conciseness	Using a Thesaurus
3	Describing a Person	Learning to Edit	Paired Adjectives
4	Describing a Circus Performer	Concrete Writing	Topic Sentences
5	Describing a Food	Sensory Description	Choosing Appropriate Titles; Its vs. It's
6	Describing a Season	Limiting Narration	Choosing Concrete Season Words; Using Similes
7	Describing a Place	Limiting Narration	Present Participles
8	Explaining a Process	Informative Writing	Arranging in Time Sequence Order
9	Writing a Factual Paragraph	Informative Report; Avoiding Plagiarism	Introductory Participial Phrases; Participles as Similes
10	Writing a Concise Biography	Conciseness	Appositives; "-ly" Adverbs
11	Introducing Journalism	News Article	Five Ws; Writing a Lead Paragraph
12	Writing a Narrative of an Emotional Event	Narratives	Prepositional Phrases
13	Writing a Narrative of Another Person's Experience	Conducting an Interview	(no Skill Builder)
14	First-Person Point of View	Point of View; Personification	Using Personification
15	First-Person Point of View	Limited Omniscience	Tense Agreement
16	Third-Person Point of View	Omniscience	Past Participles

WriteShop II at a Glance

Lesson Number	Lesson Title	Lesson Focus	Skill Builder Focus
17	Describing an Object	Reviewing Concreteness	Reviewing Paired Adjectives, Similes, Present Participles
18	Describing a Place	Reviewing Sensory Description	Reviewing Prepositional Phrases, Adverbs, Appositives
19	Writing a Short Report	Outlining	Reviewing Personification; Using Past Participles as Adjectives
20	Exaggeration	Descriptive/Informative Descriptive/Persuasive	Communicating Clearly; Incorrect Word Usage; Overly Descriptive Writing
21	First-Person Point of View, Part 1	Limited Omniscience; Descriptive Narration	Writing Descriptive Narration
22	First-Person Point of View, Part 2	Limited Omniscience; Changing Points of View	Descriptive Narration
23	Narrative Voice	First and Third Person Narration	(no Skill Builder)
24	Writing an Ad	Persuasive Writing	(no Skill Builder)
25	Opinion Essay	Developing Points through Outlining	Using Parallelism
26	Letter to the Editor	Developing Points through Outlining	(no Skill Builder)
27	Compare or Contrast Essay	Organizing Information	(no Skill Builder)
28	Compare or Contrast Essay	Organizing Information	(no Skill Builder)
29	Essays That Describe or Define	Developing Points through Outlining	(no Skill Builder)
30	Timed Essays	Writing within a Time Limit	(no Skill Builder)

Lesson Plan Overview: Two- or Three-Year Track

If you are using both *WriteShop I* and *WriteShop II*, choose this track to complete both books in two or three years. If you are only using one or the other, use this track to complete the single volume in a year or so.

Days 5, 7, and 9 contain no assigned writing. On Days 7 and 9 your teacher will be evaluating your composition. Also, Day 10 is available in case your paper needs one more revision. Plan to complete *every exercise*. With the exception of copying and dictation, each activity is directly related to the goal of writing a composition within the two-week period.

	Day One	Day Two	Day Three	Day Four	Day Five
Primary Student Writing Focus	Pre-Writing Activities	Practice Paragraph	Brainstorming	Sloppy Copy	
Skill Builder	Day One	Day Two	Day Three		
Copying/ Dictation			Copying		Dictation

	Day Six	Day Seven	Day Eight	Day Nine	Day Ten
Primary Student Writing Focus	First Revision		Final Draft		Second Final Draft (if needed)
Teacher/ Parent Editing		Edit student's first revision		Grade student's final draft	
Copying/ Dictation		Copying		Dictation	

Lesson Plan Overview: One-Year Track

Fast-paced, this track covers both *WriteShop I* and *WriteShop II* in one year. If you are only working through one of these books, it is possible to complete it in a single semester.






This track requires more work and is definitely more intense. Prepare to make writing a priority this year if you choose the one-year track. Expect to spend more time each day on your writing than you might otherwise. In addition, turn in each assignment promptly to your teacher so she can edit and return it right away. Then you will not fall behind.

Plan to complete *every exercise* within the lesson. With the exception of copying and dictation, each activity is directly related to the goal of writing a composition within the one-week period.

Day One's activities may take more time than your teacher plans for you to spend that day on *WriteShop*. You might complete pre-writing exercises on Day One, write the practice paragraph on Day Two, do your brainstorming and sloppy copy on Day Three, and write the first revision on Day Four. Your teacher will then have to edit the first revision right away so you can write the final draft on Day Five.

	Day One	Day Two	Day Three	Day Four	Day Five
Primary Student Writing Focus	Pre-writing Activities and Practice Paragraph	Brainstorming and Sloppy Copy	First Revision		Final Draft
Teacher/Parent Editing				Edit student's first revision	Grade student's final draft
Skill Builder	Day One	Day Two	Day Three		
Copying/Dictation			Copying		Dictation

Common Proofreading Symbols and Terms

Note to Student	Margin Note	Mark the Text	After Correction
capitalize	cap	the <u>american</u> flag	the American flag
use lower case	lc	my G randma	my grandma
insert word or phrase		^{adj.} her hair ^	her long, golden hair
delete word or phrase		the old, cracked , chipped vase	the old, chipped vase
close space		Answer  the phone 	Answer the phone.
increase space	#	Mrs. Smith arrived early.	Mrs. Smith arrived early.
indent (or increase indent)		→ Soon after, the . . .	Soon after, the . . .
spelling error		^{sp.} benifit	benefit
insert period		Read your book 	Read your book.
insert comma		Tom, Elise  and Mark	Tom, Elise, and Mark
begin a new paragraph		Fido followed me home. [¶] The next day we ran an ad in . . .	Fido followed me home. The next day we ran . . .
sentence fragment (incomplete)	frag. (or inc.)	Before the movie began. ^{frag.}	Before the movie began, Dad bought popcorn.
run-on sentence	r.o.	The water felt like ice we ^{r.o.} jumped out right away.	The water felt like ice. We jumped out right away.
misplaced modifier	m.m.	Crisp and buttery, my aunt ^{m.m.} makes delicious cookies.	Crisp and buttery, my aunt's cookies taste delicious.
awkward	awk.	^{awk.} Blooming with delicate pink roses describes my garden.	My garden blooms with delicate pink roses.

Common Problems of Mechanics

The following pages illustrate some of the most common errors of grammar and punctuation. In order to watch for these in your writing, you must be sure to have a clear understanding of these common problems of mechanics. This is not intended to give complete instruction but to simply offer examples. Please refer to your English handbook for further clarification.

CONFUSION BETWEEN PLURAL AND POSSESSIVE

Many students have trouble with this. PLEASE REVIEW THIS CONCEPT!

Common examples include:

☐ **"it's" instead of "its"**

1. An apostrophe shows ownership when used with a noun, like "this necklace is Mom's," "the gentleman's book," "that dog's rawhide bone."
2. Possessive pronouns; however DO NOT use apostrophes, as in "this necklace is hers," "his book," "its bone."
3. "it's" is a contraction for "it is."
4. A **tip**: If students are tempted to write "it's," have them substitute "it is" to see if the sentence makes sense. If not, use "its."

☐ **Making plural nouns possessive.** Remember---*more than one of a noun is plural*. But if a noun shows ownership, it is possessive. Here are some examples:

Incorrect: My **shell's** have a hollow cavity containing **grain's** of sand.
(This example shows plurals incorrectly written as possessives.)

Correct: My **shells** have a hollow cavity containing **grains** of sand.
(Add "s" to the end of most nouns to make a plural---no apostrophe!)

Also correct: My **shells'** hollow cavities contain grains of sand.
(This example shows ownership---more than one shell.)
My **shell's** hollow cavity contains grains of sand.
(This example shows ownership---only one shell.)

HOMONYM CONFUSION

☐ Beware of homonym confusion. Students often misuse words like "are" and "our."

1. "Are" (pronounced "ahr") is a "be" word (is, am, **are**, was, etc.). "Our" is a possessive pronoun meaning "belonging to us." If you start to spell the word

A-R-E, you should ask yourself if you meant to use a "to be" word. If not, then you should use the O-U-R spelling.

2. There/their/they're and your/you're are also commonly confused homonyms.

Incorrect: I hope your having a wonderful vacation. ("your" = possessive/ownership)

Correct: I hope you're having a wonderful vacation. ("you're" = you + are)

INCOMPLETE SENTENCES (FRAGMENTS)

☐ **A sentence must have a subject and a verb.**

Incorrect: My birthday, the most exciting day of the year. (no verb)

Correct: My birthday, the most exciting day of the year, **falls** on July 4th.
(verb) ^

Incorrect: And next visited the amazing Mt. Rushmore. (no subject; begins with "and")

Correct: Next **we** visited the amazing Mt. Rushmore.
(subject) ^

RUN-ON SENTENCES

☐ **Comma splice** (two sentences separated by a comma)

Incorrect: I fan the pages, the musty smell of the book blows on my face.
^

Correct 1: I fan the pages. The musty smell of the book blows on my face.

Correct 2: I fan the pages; the musty smell of the book blows on my face.

Correct 3: I fan the pages, and the musty smell of the book blows on my face.

Correct 4: As I fan the pages, the musty smell of the book blows on my face.

Incorrect: The rosebush is in full bloom, it bears showy pink blossoms.
^

Correct 1: The rosebush is in full bloom. It bears showy pink blossoms.

Correct 2: The rosebush, in full bloom, bears showy pink blossoms.

Correct 3: When in full bloom, the rosebush bears showy pink blossoms.

Correct 4: When the rosebush is in full bloom, it bears showy pink blossoms.

☐ **Two complete sentences which run together**

Incorrect: This rock is angular and sharp it has a smooth, glassy surface.

^

Correct 1: This rock is angular and sharp. It has a smooth, glassy surface.

Correct 2: This rock is angular and sharp; it has a smooth, glassy surface.

Even better:

Correct 3: This rock is angular and sharp with a smooth, glassy surface.

Correct 4: This sharp, angular rock feels smooth and glassy.

Correct 5: Angular and sharp, this rock has a smooth, glassy surface.

Correct 6: Although angular and sharp, this rock has a smooth, glassy surface.

☐ **Rambling sentences** (leave the reader feeling "breathless")

Incorrect: This enormous tree is growing dark green, loose, thin, soft leaves which hang down from the branches that chatter in the wind reminding me of camping in Dogwood.
(Sentence is too long; too many adjectives.)

Correct 1: This enormous tree grows soft, thin leaves that hang loosely from the branches. Chattering in the wind, they remind me of camping in Dogwood.

Correct 2: The tree's thin, dark green leaves loosely hang from the branches. When they chatter in the wind, I think of camping in Dogwood.

Incorrect: Interesting and odd, like a dog, the Arctic wolf looks solemn and kind yet at times when it hunts it may look mean and ferocious which makes it seem not pleasant at all.
(Sentence is wordy and rambling; too much information; incorrect word choices.)

Correct 1: Although the Arctic wolf can seem as gentle as a pet dog, it becomes mean and ferocious when it hunts.

Correct 2: Deceptively friendly in appearance, the Arctic wolf becomes mean and ferocious when it hunts.

INCORRECT USE OF COMMAS

☐ Breaking up a sentence with a comma

Incorrect: Square dancing at Riley's Farm, always makes my feet tired.

^

Correct: Square dancing at Riley's Farm always makes my feet tired.

☐ Comma suggestions

1. The comma tends to be overused. When in doubt, leave it out.
2. DO use a comma at the end of a phrase, like:
 Suddenly lurching, the train jumped the tracks.
 Gazing up at the stars, I marvel at the universe.
3. DO use a comma to set off an appositive:
 Pastor Smith, the man in the blue coat, spoke at the rally.
 That shaggy dog, a pure-bred collie, needs grooming.
4. DO NOT use a comma to separate two complete sentences.
5. DO NOT use a comma where there is no natural pause. It helps to read the sentence aloud and pause dramatically at the comma. Does it fit? Does the sentence flow well? Does it sound better without the comma?
6. DO double-check usage in a grammar handbook when you are unsure.

MISPLACED MODIFIERS

☐ Subject agreement

When writing a participial phrase, paired adjective phrase, or adverb phrase the subject of that phrase must appear next to or near the participial phrase. (Note: these phrases are usually set off by commas.)

1. Participial Phrase

Incorrect: Chasing their tails, the crowd of children laughed at the silly dogs.

Correct: Chasing their tails, the silly dogs amused the crowd of children.

When writing a participial phrase, ask yourself questions, like "Did the crowd of children chase their tails, or did the silly dogs chase their tails?" This will help you decide if your sentence makes sense. Notice that in the correct sentence, the subject of the sentence (the dogs) appears right after the participial phrase, *chasing their tails*.

2. Adverbial Phrase

Incorrect: Noisily squealing, Dad took the car to the brake shop for repairs.

Correct: Noisily squealing, the car needed to have its brakes repaired.

Again, ask yourself the same questions. "Did Dad squeal noisily, or did the car squeal noisily?" In the correct sentence, the car, which is obviously the right answer, appears right after the participial phrase that modifies it.

3. Paired Adjective Phrase

Incorrect: Crisp and brown, I ate my toast with butter and jam.

Correct: Crisp and brown, my toast tasted delicious with butter and jam.

Who or what is crisp and brown? This is the subject that should closely follow the comma. In this case, toast is the correct subject.

Unit 4:

Reviewing the Basics

of WriteShop I

1. The first part of the paper discusses the importance of the study of the history of the United States. It is argued that the study of the history of the United States is essential for a full understanding of the country and its people. The paper then discusses the various methods used by historians to study the past, including the use of primary and secondary sources, and the importance of critical thinking in the study of history.

2. The second part of the paper discusses the role of the federal government in the development of the United States. It is argued that the federal government has played a central role in the development of the country, and that its actions have shaped the course of American history. The paper then discusses the various policies and programs of the federal government, and the impact of these policies on the country.

3. The third part of the paper discusses the role of the states in the development of the United States. It is argued that the states have played a central role in the development of the country, and that their actions have shaped the course of American history. The paper then discusses the various policies and programs of the states, and the impact of these policies on the country.

4. The fourth part of the paper discusses the role of the people in the development of the United States. It is argued that the people have played a central role in the development of the country, and that their actions have shaped the course of American history. The paper then discusses the various policies and programs of the people, and the impact of these policies on the country.

Lesson 17: Describing an Object

This assignment will require some detective skills, calling on you to use your keen powers of observation (your five senses). Since this is your first descriptive writing assignment since beginning *WriteShop*, let's review some basics:

- *Do* describe how the object looks, sounds, smells, and feels.
- *Do* use concrete, specific words to describe your object.
- *Do not* tell how the object is used.

Here is an example of how to describe an object.

The Wedding Gown

My daughter's wedding dress hangs from a hook in her room. Sheer and filmy, white organza covers the satin lining in a soft mist. Like fresh daisies, delicate appliques adorn the V-necked bodice and cap sleeves. Draping to the ground, the long train makes the gown seem ten feet tall. Three satin roses hide the hooks Karah will use to bustle her train. I know she will make a beautiful bride in her lovely gown.

Instructions

1. Find an object you wish to describe. Look for something that has several interesting aspects, such as a piece of jewelry or clothing, a vase of flowers, a stuffed animal, a car or bike, a plant in your yard or house, or a piece of furniture.
2. Do choose an object you can observe and handle.
3. Do not describe a food, a person, or a live animal.
4. As you study your object, use the sheet titled "Observing an Object." Instead of writing directly on this sheet, use lined paper to make your notes.
5. Remember, your topic sentence should never say, "I am going to describe a _____," or "Let me tell you about my _____."
6. Do not try to describe every detail you observed.
7. Avoid the phrases "it looks," "it feels," "it sounds," etc.
8. If you decide to tell how your object reminds you of something else, describe only one sense in this manner. Be descriptive! Rather than saying, "Its smell (or its texture) reminds me of _____," try writing, "Its musty odor reminds me of _____," or "When I touch its rough surface, I think of _____."

Use this checklist when writing your paragraph:

- ☐ Use a simile in your paragraph.
- ☐ Use paired adjectives to begin one sentence. See your word lists for suggestions.
- ☐ Use a participial phrase sentence starter.
- ☐ Use an adverbial phrase sentence starter.
- ☐ Use a prepositional phrase sentence starter.
- ☐ Include one sentence of six or fewer words.
- ☐ Use an appositive.
- ☐ Include a subject-verb sentence.
- ☐ Use your "Texture Words," "Taste and Smell Words," and/or "Sound Words" lists.
- ☐ You may want to use your "Characteristics/Expressions/Behaviors" and/or your "Emotions" word lists.
- ☐ Use your thesaurus or *Synonym Finder* at least once to find a more concrete word.
- ☐ Conclude with a strong closing sentence.
- ☐ Write a paragraph that is six to nine sentences long.

Lesson 17: Observing an Object Worksheet

Look closely at your object, being especially careful to spot unusual, intricate, or interesting details. Use these questions as a guide to help you carefully describe your object. **Take notes on lined paper** and/or **make a mind-map**.

Appearance (Use the "Visual Words" and "Color Words" lists at the back of this workbook for ideas.)

1. What color(s) is it?
2. How is it shaped or formed?
3. What are its features?
4. What is its surface like?
5. What does its appearance remind you of?
6. Other _____
7. Other _____

Texture (Use the "Texture Words" list at the back of this workbook.)

1. What does it feel like? Is it smooth or rough, soft or hard, furry or scaly, or . . . ?
2. What does its texture remind you of?
3. Other _____

Smell (Use the "Taste and Smell Words" list at the back of this workbook.)

Keep it gracious, avoiding being crude or gross. Also, not every object will have a smell.

1. What does it smell like?
2. How does the smell make you feel or react?
3. What does its smell remind you of?
4. Other _____

Sound (Use the "Sound Words" lists at the back of this workbook.)

1. Does it make a noise or a sound?
2. What do its sounds remind you of?
3. Other _____

Perhaps you can come up with your own interesting questions as you investigate your object. Add them to the blank "Other" space under each category above.

Lesson 17: Skill Builder

Sentence Variation Review, Part 1

DAY ONE *Paired Adjectives*

Writing can become tired and boring if sentence structure is not varied. **Paired Adjectives** can begin sentences in a more interesting way, using words that relate together to describe the subject of the sentence.

- A child can be "bright and expressive" or "tearful and confused."
- A wolf could be "vicious and fearsome" or "exhausted and hungry."

Opposite pairs are also effective:

- "Fearful yet determined" could describe a jittery athlete.
- "Excited but nervous" might describe Jay as he prepares to ride his first roller coaster.

Alliteration (using words that start with the same sound) also adds interest:

- "wounded and weary"
- "timid and tense"

Be sure to place a comma after the paired adjectives. The paired adjectives must describe the subject immediately following the comma.

Example: The clown was humorous and jovial as he entertained the audience.

Correct: Humorous and jovial, the clown entertained the audience.

Incorrect: Humorous and jovial, the audience watched the entertaining clown.

A. Rewrite the following sentences to begin with paired adjectives.

1. The orphans were confused and hungry as they huddled together in the dark alley.

2. Jamie was tired yet exuberant when he won the drag race.

3. The rolling ripples of the lake were gentle and peaceful as they lapped the shore.

B. Combine the following sentences, beginning each with paired adjectives. Use *yet* or *but* when appropriate.

1. I surprised myself when I hit the home run. I was shocked.

2. Dad was enthusiastic when he told me tales about his childhood. He was animated as he described his adventures.

3. My huge St. Bernard likes to play fetch. He is gentle when we play.

4. The hurricane victims were cut and bruised. They emerged wearily from their shelter.

C. Sometimes it's fun to vary your use of a now-common sentence variation like paired adjectives. One way to do this is by developing more advanced paired adjective phrases.

Example

- strong as an ox; mighty in spirit (subject: Samson)

Example using a paired adjective phrase

- Strong as an ox and mighty in spirit, Samson pushed out the temple pillars and collapsed the building.

1. kind to animals; gentle-natured (subject: Jeremy)

2. enthusiastic pilot; avid fisherman (subject: Uncle Bob)

3. sweet as honey; golden brown (subject Mom's muffins)

DAY TWO *Similes*

A **simile** is a figure of speech comparing two things that are basically unlike but have striking similarities. The words *like* and *as* help make the comparison. When writing a simile, ask yourself how the subject of your sentence behaves like or looks like something else with which you are familiar. For instance, how is a field like an ocean? How is a fierce storm like a hammer? How is a horse like a train? How is the sun like a great furnace?

Notice how the word *like* is generally used to compare a verb (action) and a noun (person, place, or thing):

- Each star twinkles like a jewel. (compares the verb "twinkled" with the noun "jewel")
- The rain thundered on the roof like a herd of wild ponies. (compares the verb "thundered" with the noun "ponies")

On the other hand, the word *as* usually compares two nouns that have similarities.

- The boy ran as swiftly as an eagle. (compares a swift boy with a swift eagle)
- Fluffy as cotton candy, the clouds drifted across the sky. (compares fluffy clouds with fluffy cotton candy)

A. Using similes, fill in the blanks. Be descriptive! Use several words in each blank: Try to avoid tired, overused similes (such as "black as coal" or "black as night").

- Acceptable: as high as a kite
- Better: as high as a soaring kite

1. as black as _____
2. as crunchy as _____
3. sparkling like _____
4. as refreshing as _____
5. twirling like _____

B. Using similes, finish these sentence starters. Compare with "like" or "as."

1. My ice cold glass of lemonade _____
2. The winter snow _____
3. The fire popped and crackled _____
4. The fog _____
5. From the rooftop, the city lights _____

DAY THREE *Present Participles*

A **present participle** is a verb ending in -ing. **Present participial phrases** begin with an -ing verb. A sentence can begin with a single participial word or with a participial phrase (two or more words). Examples:

infinitive verb form

to argue

to fish

to hug

present participle

arguing

fishing

hugging

A. Write a present participle for the following verbs, and then add a word or group of words to make a participial phrase. Hint: A participle followed by a *prepositional* phrase creates an interesting *participial* phrase. You might also follow your participle with an adverb or noun.

- Example: to sleep: sleeping on the worn sofa (participle + prepositional phrase)
- to tithe: tithing faithfully (participle + adverb)
- to eat: eating barbecued burgers (participle + noun phrase)

1. to laugh: _____
2. to stroll: _____
3. to comfort: _____
4. to throw: _____
5. to explore: _____

B. Place an appropriate participle (or participial phrase) in the following sentences:

1. _____, the youth group joined hands.
2. _____, two trapeze artists met in midair.
3. _____, a stranded surfer called for help.
4. _____, Maria counted her money.
5. _____, Jacob's team took the lead.

When a participial phrase is placed at the beginning of a sentence, it is followed by a comma and the subject (who or what the sentence is about). The remaining information comes after the subject.

- Example 1: Barking loudly, Max woke the entire family.

(participial phrase) (subject)

A sentence can also begin with the subject, followed by a comma and a participial phrase. The remainder of the sentence then follows the participial phrase.

- Example 2: Max, barking loudly, woke the entire family.

(subject) (participial phrase)

C. Combine and rewrite the following sentences. In the first space, begin with the participial phrase (see Example 1). In the second, begin with the subject followed by the participial phrase (see Example 2).

1. The dog was sniffing the floor. The dog searched for food.

a. Sniffing the floor, the dog searched for food.

b. The dog, sniffing the floor, searched for food.

2. The girl was running down the hall. The girl dropped her books.

a. _____

b. _____

3. His dad was watching a movie. His dad ate pretzels.

a. _____

b. _____

4. Mom is expecting guests. Mom is baking a chocolate cake.

a. _____

b. _____

5. The ballerina looked like an angel. She danced gracefully.

a. _____

b. _____

Lesson 17: Student Writing Skills Checklist

Checklist Reminder: After you write your "sloppy copy," go over it carefully with this checklist.

1. If you can answer "yes" to a question, place a check in the box.
2. If you answer "no," leave the box blank.
3. If the checklist asks you to do so, make marks or corrections on your "sloppy copy."
4. Use the checklist to help you edit your work before you revise it.
5. Once you have made changes and written your first revision, double-check your new draft again.

CONTENT

- ☐ Do all my sentences support my topic sentence (no "carrots in my cookie jar")?
- ☐ Are my topic and choice of words pleasing to the Lord and edifying to others?
- ☐ Does my title capture the essence of my paragraph?

STYLE

- ☐ Did I choose a strong topic sentence that introduces my composition?
- ☐ Did I use no more than one "to be" word? (**Circle** to be words in red.)
- ☐ Did I avoid the use of repeated words? (**Underline** repeated words in blue.)
- ☐ Did I use concrete words and avoid weak words? (**Underline** vague or weak words in green.)
- ☐ Did I vary my sentence structure by using *each of these* in my composition?
 - ☐ began with a participle
 - ☐ began with paired adjectives
 - ☐ began with an "-ly" adverb
 - ☐ used a simile
 - ☐ used a subject-verb sentence
 - ☐ began with a prepositional phrase
 - ☐ used an appositive
- ☐ Did I use a sentence of six words or fewer?
- ☐ Did I write concisely, avoiding wordiness? (~~Gross-out unnecessary words or phrases.~~)
- ☐ Did I write a strong closing sentence?

MECHANICS

- ☐ Did I put my name and date in the upper right-hand corner?
- ☐ Is my paragraph six to nine sentences long? How many? _____
- ☐ Did I indent the first sentence of the paragraph and leave margins around my composition?
- ☐ Did I remember to skip every other line?
- ☐ Did I double-check my spelling by circling and looking up suspected words?
- ☐ Did I double-check **and correct** capitalization and punctuation?
- ☐ Did I use complete sentences and avoid run-on sentences and misplaced modifiers?
- ☐ Did I correctly use this Checklist, including using colored pencils to underline and circle as directed?
(This includes making corrections before I write my revision.)

- ☐ **BEFORE TURNING MY WORK IN:** Did I staple my papers together in this order? (Brainstorming worksheet on the very bottom, "sloppy copy" on top of that, neatly rewritten copy next, and this Writing Checklist on the very top.)

Name _____

Subject Describing an Object

Lesson 17: Teacher Writing Skills Checklist

Edit your paragraph one more time, making any necessary changes or improvements.

CONTENT

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Followed instructions for this assignment
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All sentences support topic sentence (no "carrots in your cookie jar")
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Topic and choice of words are pleasing to the Lord and edifying to others
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Title captures the essence of the paragraph

STYLE

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strong topic sentence introduces the paragraph
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used no more than one "to be" word (<i>is, am, are, was, were, be, being, been</i>)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoided the use of repeated words
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used concrete words (specific, vivid, and sensory)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoided the use of "weak" words
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used the following sentence variations (check each one)
		<input type="checkbox"/> subject-verb sentence <input type="checkbox"/> began with an -ly adverb phrase
		<input type="checkbox"/> used an appositive <input type="checkbox"/> began with a prepositional phrase
		<input type="checkbox"/> began with paired adjectives <input type="checkbox"/> began with a participle
		<input type="checkbox"/> used a simile (one only)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Included a sentence of six words or fewer
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wrote concisely, avoiding wordiness
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strong closing sentence

MECHANICS

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Name</u> and <u>date</u> in the upper right-hand corner
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Paragraph is six to nine sentences long
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used proper form (indentation, margins, skipped lines, good spacing)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Double-checked spelling, capitalization, punctuation
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used complete sentences, avoided run-on sentences, avoided misplaced modifiers
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Correctly used checklist and used colored pencils, circling and underlining as directed
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Included brainstorming sheet, all drafts of this composition, and your checklist
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All papers are stapled together in proper order

Comments _____

Name _____

Subject of Composition _____

Title _____

COMPOSITION EVALUATION

Content 15 points

Points Possible Points Earned

- | | | |
|---|----------|-------|
| • Followed directions for assignment | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Communicated clearly | <u>4</u> | _____ |
| • Paragraph unity (sentences support main idea; use of details) | <u>5</u> | _____ |
| • Graciousness | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Title (descriptive= 2; adequate=1; poor or no title=0) | <u>2</u> | _____ |

Style 20 points

- | | | |
|---|----------|-------|
| • Sentence variation and style (including limiting "to be" words) | <u>4</u> | _____ |
| • Sentence fluency/readability (awkwardness) | <u>3</u> | _____ |
| • Concreteness (wise use of vivid, specific words) | <u>4</u> | _____ |
| • Conciseness (avoids wordiness; also not flowery or verbose) | <u>3</u> | _____ |
| • Proper use of tense | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Topic sentence (strong=2; adequate=1; poor or none=0) | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Closing sentence (strong=2; adequate=1; poor or none=0) | <u>2</u> | _____ |

Mechanics 10 points

10 _____

- Form (margins, indentation, spacing, name and date)
- Spelling, punctuation, and capitalization
- Grammar (homonyms, possessive vs. plural, contractions, etc.)
- Sentence structure (complete; no run-ons; no misplaced modifiers)

General 5 points

- | | | |
|--|----------|-------|
| • Included all drafts of composition (including brainstorming) | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Correct use of Writing Skills Checklist | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Overall neatness of final draft | <u>1</u> | _____ |

TOTAL: _____ /50 = _____ % = _____

Comments: _____

(over)

100% = A+	87-89% = B+	77-79% = C+
94-99% = A	84-86% = B	74-76% = C
90-93% = A-	80-83% = B-	70-73% = C-

Below 70%: rewrite composition

Lesson 18: Describing a Place

Descriptive writing brings ordinary objects and events to life. It is an important skill to practice and develop.

In Unit 1 you wrote about a *place*. Now you will have the opportunity to expand your descriptive abilities by writing a longer, more detailed composition. When you describe a location or a setting, you will call upon your memory and creativity to make it colorful, concrete, and interesting for your reader. Use your five senses to write a descriptive composition that makes your readers feel like they are right there!

Be careful not to focus too sharply on any one object or animal. Instead, plan to give your reader a broad picture of the entire place. Think about how to describe a scenic painting to a friend. You would not just tell him about the clouds or the pine trees. You would explain the entire setting, from sky to earth. To make it even more vivid, you could also describe the sound of the stream, the call of the bird, and the whisper of the wind in the trees. Keep these thoughts in mind as you begin to write.

Don't confuse this assignment with narrative writing, which describes the sequence of events during an activity, like a birthday party, a hike to a waterfall, or making a sandwich. (We will return to narrative writing a little later.) This is still a descriptive writing assignment. Stay on target by following directions carefully. Remember to write about what you would experience with your senses.

Here is a sample paragraph written by a WriteShop student.

A Walk in the Woods

by Matt, age 14

Passing through a dense forest, I take in a whiff of air and smell the grove of pine trees. The fresh scent of evergreens reminds me of Christmas. Softly, a cold breeze rustles their branches. Like giant sentries, gnarled and rugged trees keep watch over the thick woodland.

Within minutes, I reach a trail, a winding narrow path. Following this route, I discover a swiftly flowing stream. Clear and fizzling, the water rushes over the smooth stones. I notice a family of deer drinking nearby. Quietly, I walk closer to them, but sensing my presence, they disappear into the timber. Around the bend, a group of enormous boulders stands beside the gushing brook, providing a peaceful resting place to enjoy the forest.

Directions

1. Choose a sentence starter from the next page, adding your own ending. Use this as your topic sentence. (Notice that each one begins with a participle.)

NOTE: Choose a different setting from the paragraph you previously wrote.

2. Make a mind-map. Label each bubble with one of the five senses (sight, sound, smell, taste, texture). Fill in sensory details that describe your setting.
3. Old *National Geographic* or travel magazines are a good source for ideas. Sometimes it helps to have a magazine photo in front of you before you begin brainstorming.
4. Write your "sloppy copy," using at least three of your senses to write two paragraphs of four to seven sentences each.
5. The first paragraph should focus more on the scenery (weather, surroundings, etc.).
6. The second paragraph should focus more on the wildlife.
7. Use a transition word from your "Transition Words" list when you begin the second paragraph. (To better understand when to start a new paragraph, see below.)
8. You can write in present tense or in past tense. Just be sure to remain consistent, using the same tense throughout your composition.
9. When you make your revisions, be sure you have used all the sentence variations listed on your Student Writing Skills Checklist.
10. REMEMBER TO FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS:
 - *Do not* focus on *your* activity; the composition is not to be about what *you* are doing. (Your hike, walk, stroll, etc. is a means for you to describe what your senses experience.)
 - *Do* describe what you see, hear, smell, feel, or taste; the paragraph *is* about what is happening *all around you*.
 - **Note:** Some narration is acceptable. Just be careful not to turn this into a story.

TRANSITIONS: When to Change Paragraphs

1. When you shift to a different idea about the subject
2. When you change the scene
3. When you move ahead in time
4. When you switch speakers (using dialogue)

Lesson 18: Sensory Worksheet for Describing a Place

Your composition must be written in first person (you must be describing the account as it "happened" to you). Any of these starters may be modified to include just you, or may include you and another person. Look at the example paragraph on the next page to see how this was done. If you do add a character, remember to keep your attention on the scene. Avoid building a story or developing interaction between yourself and the other person. Choose one of the following sentence starters:

1. Walking along a rocky path, I . . .
2. Resting on a dusty (rough, park, wooden) bench, I . . .
3. Strolling along the sandy shore, Mom and I . . .
4. Passing through a dense forest, I . . .
5. Hiking down a desert trail, I . . .
6. Entering a woodland clearing, my dad and I . . .
7. Discovering a peaceful meadow, I . . .
8. Collapsing in a field of flowers, my sister and I . . .
9. Sipping lemonade in my back yard, I . . .

Examples: a) Passing through a dense forest, my brother James and I scatter fallen oak leaves with our feet. (*present tense*)

b) Entering a woodland clearing, I heard the trickle of a creek as it meandered through the tall grasses. (*past tense*)

Write your topic sentence here (begin it with one of the sentence starters above.

Make a list of sensory words. What might you see? Hear? Feel? Smell or taste?

Sights: _____

Sounds: _____

Textures: _____

Smells/Tastes: _____

Lesson 18: Practicing with Two Paragraphs

Directions: Read the paragraph below. Write a closing sentence to end the first paragraph. Then use a transition word to begin a new paragraph. Next, write your second paragraph. Notice that the first paragraph focuses on the scenery. The second one should introduce the wildlife.

Hiking down a desert trail, my brother and I kick clouds of dust behind us. Although we try to walk quietly, our feet crunch along the gravelly path. The sun, lowering in the afternoon sky, bakes us with its intensity. Heat waves rise from the ground like shimmering ribbons, distorting the scenery. Even the twisted old Joshua trees seem to quiver in the blistering air.

[illegible]

Lesson 18: Skill Builder

Sentence Variation Review, Part 2

DAY ONE *Prepositional Phrases*

A **preposition** is a relational word, usually telling "where" or "when." (You can find a list of prepositions in your notebook under Word Lists.) By itself, a preposition is useless in a sentence. To be a true preposition, and to make sense in the sentence, a preposition must be used in a **prepositional phrase**.

A prepositional phrase always begins with a preposition and always ends with a noun or a pronoun. Because a preposition is a relational word, it must relate to, or meet, an object.

For example: **DURING** is a preposition.

- ☐ Instead of coming at the beginning of the game, Mark showed up DURING. Because this sentence does not end in a noun or pronoun, "during" does not serve as a preposition in this example. It does not state "during what"; therefore, the sentence is incorrectly written.
- ☐ Mark showed up DURING THE FIFTH INNING. Better! "During the fifth inning" is a complete prepositional phrase, because the preposition (DURING) meets an object (INNING).

Look at these:	<u>Preposition</u>	<u>Object</u>
	<i>under</i>	her Grandma's <u>bed</u>
	<i>since</i>	<u>Tuesday</u>
	<i>through</i>	the steep-walled <u>canyon</u>

- A. Using your list of prepositions (see Word Lists), write three sentences beginning with prepositional phrases. Then, circle the prepositional phrase in ORANGE pencil.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

B. Look through a book you are currently reading or studying. Find three sentences that begin with prepositional phrases and write them on the lines below. Then, circle the prepositional phrases with an ORANGE colored pencil.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

DAY TWO Adverbs

Adverbs tell how, when, where, and to what extent (how much or how long). To make a verb, adjective, or another adverb even more concrete, try adding an adverb.

Examples:

- Adverb added to a verb: Marty shouted to his brother. How did Marty shout?
 Marty shouted loudly to his brother.
- Adverb added to an adjective: Friday was a clear day. To what extent was Friday clear?
 Friday was a delightfully clear day.
- Adverb added to another adverb: Mother easily removed the stain. How easily?
 Mother quite easily removed the stain.

Because adverbs can often be moved around within the sentence, you can vary the structure of a sentence by beginning with an adverb or **adverbial phrase**, which is an adverb followed by one or more words and a comma.

- Example:**
1. The dog barked viciously.
 2. The dog viciously barked.
 3. Barking viciously, the dog woke the neighbors.
 4. Viciously, the dog barked, waking the neighbors.
 5. Viciously barking, the dog woke the neighbors.

All of these ideas can be used to add appeal when writing. However, pay special attention to Number 5. Using an adverbial phrase (like "viciously barking") becomes an effective way to begin a sentence. Using a single adverb, as in Number 4, can also create a more interesting sentence.

- A. Write three sentences of your own, or find examples in a book or magazine, that begin with a *single adverb*, as in number 4 above ("Viciously, the dog . . ."). See your "Adverbs ("-ly")" word lists for ideas.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Now go back and circle each single adverb in PINK (or light red) colored pencil.

- B. Write three sentences of your own, or find examples in a book or magazine, that begin with *adverbial phrases*, as in Number 5 on the previous page ("Viciously barking, the dog . . ."). Write them on the lines below.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Now go back and circle each adverbial phrase in PINK (or light red) colored pencil.

DAY THREE *Appositives*

An **appositive** is a group of words that explains something in a sentence. It is always placed by the word it explains. You will set off your appositive with commas (unless it is a one-word name).

Appositives also serve the important function of helping eliminate "be" verbs from your writing. Note the underlined appositives in the following examples.

Shelby's aunt, the woman in the green dress, arrived from New York City.

His goal, to hit twenty home runs, seemed impossible to some.

My cousin Becky wears pigtails in hot weather. (no comma for one-word names)

Gordon, our team leader, carried a canvas pack.

Place a brown "x" on the "be" word in each of the following sentences. Then, combine the sentence pairs. Use an appositive in each. Eliminate the "be" word.

1. Margaret Smith is the museum curator. She supervises the dinosaur exhibit.

2. Mr. Elway's mailbox is a red airplane. It attracts attention in our neighborhood.

3. I delivered flowers to Mrs. Monroe. Mrs. Monroe is my Sunday school teacher.

4. My uncle is a policeman. My uncle visited Parker School to talk about neighborhood crime.

5. We camped in Yosemite. Yosemite is a majestic national park.

6. Please take this note to Pastor Bob. Pastor Bob is the man in the striped shirt.

7. Joy's desire was to visit Israel. Her desire became a reality last March.

Now, take a BROWN colored pencil and circle the appositive in each sentence above.

Name _____

Subject Describing a Place

Lesson 18: Student Writing Skills Checklist

CONTENT

- ☐ Do all my sentences support my topic sentence (no "carrots in my cookie jar")?
- ☐ Are my topic and choice of words pleasing to the Lord and edifying to others?
- ☐ Does my title capture the essence of my composition?
- ☐ Did I focus on my surroundings *without* focusing on my activity?

STYLE

- ☐ Did I choose a strong topic sentence that begins with one of the required sentence starters?
- ☐ Did I use no more than one "to be" word in each paragraph? (**Circle** to be words in red.)
- ☐ Did I avoid the use of repeated words? (**Underline** repeated words in blue.)
- ☐ Did I use concrete words and avoid weak words? (**Underline** vague or weak words in green.)
- ☐ Did I use a transition word to connect my paragraphs?
- ☐ Did I use the same tense throughout the composition?
- ☐ Did I vary my sentence structure by using *each of these* in my composition?
 - ___ began with a past or present participle
 - ___ began with paired adjectives
 - ___ began with an "-ly" adverb
 - ___ used a simile (optional)
 - ___ used a subject-verb sentence
 - ___ began with a prepositional phrase
 - ___ used an appositive
- ☐ Did I use a sentence of six words or less?
- ☐ Did I write concisely, avoiding wordiness? (~~Gross-out~~ unnecessary words or phrases.)
- ☐ Did I write a strong closing sentence?

MECHANICS

- ☐ Did I put my name and date in the upper right-hand corner?
- ☐ Did I write two paragraphs of four to seven sentences in length? How many? ____
- ☐ Did I indent the first sentence of each paragraph and leave margins around my composition?
- ☐ Did I remember to skip every other line?
- ☐ Did I double-check my spelling by circling and looking up suspected words?
- ☐ Did I double-check **and correct** capitalization and punctuation?
- ☐ Did I use complete sentences and avoid run-on sentences and misplaced modifiers?
- ☐ Did I correctly use this Checklist, including using colored pencils to underline and circle as directed?
(This includes making corrections before I write my revision.)
- ☐ **BEFORE TURNING MY WORK IN:** Did I staple my papers together in this order? (Brainstorming worksheet on the very bottom, "sloppy copy" on top of that, neatly rewritten copy next, and this Writing Checklist on the very top.)

Name _____

Subject Describing a Place

Lesson 18: Teacher Writing Skills Checklist

Edit your composition one more time, making any necessary changes or improvements.

CONTENT

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Followed instructions for this assignment
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All sentences support topic sentence (no "carrots in your cookie jar")
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Topic and choice of words are pleasing to the Lord and edifying to others
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Title captures the essence of the composition
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Focused on surroundings and senses without focusing on the hike or walk itself

STYLE

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strong topic sentence begins with one of the required sentence starters
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used no more than one "to be" word <u>per paragraph</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoided the use of repeated words
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used concrete words (specific, vivid, and sensory)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoided the use of "weak" words
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used a transition word to connect paragraphs
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used the same tense throughout the composition
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used each of the following sentence variations
		__subject-verb sentence __began with an -ly adverb phrase
		__used an appositive __began with a subordinate conjunction
		__began with a prepositional phrase __began with paired adjectives
		__began with a present or a past participle
		__used a simile (one only)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Included a sentence of six words or fewer
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wrote concisely, avoiding wordiness
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strong closing sentence

MECHANICS

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Name</u> and <u>date</u> in the upper right-hand corner
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Each paragraph is four to seven sentences long
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	First sentence of each paragraph is indented and margins left around the paper
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Remembered to skip lines
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used good spacing between words and sentences
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Double-checked spelling, capitalization, punctuation
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used complete sentences and avoided run-on sentences and misplaced modifiers
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Correctly used checklist and used colored pencils, circling and underlining as directed
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Included brainstorming sheet, all drafts of this composition, and your checklist

Comments _____

Name _____

Subject of Composition _____

Title _____

COMPOSITION EVALUATION

Content 15 points

Points Possible Points Earned

- | | | |
|---|----------|-------|
| • Followed directions for assignment | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Communicated clearly | <u>4</u> | _____ |
| • Paragraph unity (sentences support main idea; use of details) | <u>5</u> | _____ |
| • Graciousness | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Title (descriptive= 2; adequate=1; poor or no title=0) | <u>2</u> | _____ |

Style 20 points

- | | | |
|---|----------|-------|
| • Sentence variation and style (including limiting "to be" words) | <u>4</u> | _____ |
| • Sentence fluency/readability (awkwardness) | <u>3</u> | _____ |
| • Concreteness (wise use of vivid, specific words) | <u>4</u> | _____ |
| • Conciseness (avoids wordiness; also not flowery or verbose) | <u>3</u> | _____ |
| • Proper use of tense | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Topic sentence (strong=2; adequate=1; poor or none=0) | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Closing sentence (strong=2; adequate=1; poor or none=0) | <u>2</u> | _____ |

Mechanics 10 points

10 _____

- Form (margins, indentation, spacing, name and date)
- Spelling, punctuation, and capitalization
- Grammar (homonyms, possessive vs. plural, contractions, etc.)
- Sentence structure (complete; no run-ons; no misplaced modifiers)

General 5 points

- | | | |
|--|----------|-------|
| • Included all drafts of composition (including brainstorming) | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Correct use of Writing Skills Checklist | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Overall neatness of final draft | <u>1</u> | _____ |

TOTAL: _____ /50 = _____ % = _____

Comments: _____

_____ (over)

100% = A+ 87-89% = B+ 77-79% = C+

94-99% = A 84-86% = B 74-76% = C

90-93% = A- 80-83% = B- 70-73% = C-

Below 70%: rewrite composition

Lesson 19: Writing a Short Report

In Lessons 9 and 10 you wrote one-paragraph factual reports about an animal or a famous person. This lesson will teach you how to expand a paragraph into a **short animal report or biography** of three paragraphs.

As with all reports for which you gather information from outside sources, you must rewrite information in your own words, avoiding **plagiarism**.

Gathering your facts. Do you remember how to collect facts without copying from another author? Jot down simple words or phrases that give you the basic information; then later on you will form sentences that put those facts into your own words. Do not copy whole sentences. When taking notes, use the fact-gathering sheet provided.

- ☐ Here is an example of factual information about the icy Arctic waters:

"Icy water contains more oxygen and carbon dioxide than warm water, which makes it rich in marine life. Plankton is up to twenty times more abundant in the Arctic and Antarctic than it is in the warm waters of the tropics." (from Wildlife Fact File, Blue Whale)

- ☐ To take notes, write down the facts you found in the above paragraph. Use only enough main words to jog your memory. Substitute synonyms whenever possible.

ARCTIC AND ANTARCTIC WATERS

- more O₂, CO₂ in frigid water
- more marine life
- twenty times more plankton than tropical water

- ☐ Later, when it is time to write *your* sentence, combine these facts into your *own* words, like this:

Because frigid waters contain more carbon dioxide and oxygen than warmer tropical oceans, up to twenty times more plankton and other marine life flourish in the Arctic and Antarctic.

Notice how the same facts were written using different words. Use this technique to write your factual paragraph. You will find it useful when writing future reports!

For this lesson you will need two of the following resources: a short book, chapter, or encyclopedia/magazine article about one particular animal or famous person. Make sure these combined resources provide you with sufficient information.

Follow the instructions on the "Fact-Gathering Worksheet" (p. 19-7).

Making an outline. Preparing an outline may be a new skill for you. Here is some basic information to help you better understand the purpose of a outlining.

What is an outline?

1. A useful tool which will help you organize your thoughts about a subject.
2. A method of putting your composition in order by doing some preliminary thinking.
3. A way to arrange your research notes to plan the content and organization of your report.
4. A list of the topics to be discussed and the sequence in which they are to be introduced.
5. Simply, it is a summary of the main topics or ideas of your report.

What does an outline do?

1. Helps you to organize ideas and information you want to include in your research paper.
2. Gives a clear understanding of how your report will be structured.
3. Helps you decide exactly what you want to say.
4. Helps keep you from losing direction and becoming sidetracked.
5. Helps you express your thoughts freely and smoothly.
6. Ensures that you have included everything you want to include, and helps you put this information in a logical order.

How is an outline structured?

Whether it is short and simple or long and complicated, the steps to making an outline are the same:

1. List the important points about the subject.
2. Classify the supporting facts or ideas into meaningful groups.
3. Decide how to best present the material clearly and effectively.
 - Time sequence (useful when writing about a person or a historical event or time period)
 - Order of importance (useful for reports that explain "why" or "how")
 - General to specific (useful when writing about scientific topics)
 - Like the finished report, your outline needs a *beginning, middle, and end*.

Creating Your Outline

As you take notes about your animal or famous person, you will see that the information falls nicely into two or three main categories:

Animal

1. Animal's physical characteristics
2. Animal's habitat
3. Animal's living habits and behavior

Person

1. Early years
2. Adulthood

When you prepare your outline, each of these categories will become a main point, which you will support with details, examples, and illustrations. If you write about an animal, your finished outline will look something like this:

Striped Skunk

I. Physical characteristics

- A. Size: About the size of a cat
- B. Covering/coloring
 1. Fur coat
 2. Shiny black with a white stripe
- C. Special or interesting body parts
 1. Plume-like tail
 2. Short stubby legs
 3. Defensive spray called musk
 - a. Foul-smelling liquid sprayed when frightened or in danger
 - b. Comes from glands beneath tail
 - c. Can spray as far as 12 feet

II. Habitat

- A. Location: United States, Canada, and northern Mexico
- B. Habitat: Woodland forests
- C. Home: Cavity under a rock, hollow log, deserted burrow, hole in ground; den often lined with dry leaves

III. Habits and behavior

- A. Eating

1. Feeds on grubs, berries and grain, eggs of ground-building birds, insects (especially grasshoppers), mice and rats
 2. Fast in the winter, living off stored body fat
- B. Sleeping: Nocturnal (sleeps during day)
- C. Moving
1. Slow-moving
 2. Gentle, non-aggressive
- D. Other behaviors
1. Respected by other animals, few natural enemies
 2. Gives a warning before spraying by stamping feet, hissing, growling
 3. Gives birth to four or five young at one time

(You probably noticed that every main point is supported by at least two sub-points. For every "A," there must be a "B." For every "1," there must be a "2.") If it cannot be supported by two points, the information should be contained within the single main point.

Writing your report. Next, write a three-paragraph report. Again, be sure to put the facts into your own words.

- The first paragraph must begin with an interesting, eye-catching sentence to grab the reader's attention and introduce your subject. The rest of the paragraph will be devoted to **Main Point I**.
- The second paragraph will discuss **Main Point II**. Consider using a transition word to connect the two paragraphs.
- The third paragraph will cover **Main Point III**. Try to begin this paragraph with a transition word as well. End with a strong closing sentence that wraps up your report.
- You do not necessarily have to sequence your three main points in the suggested order, but you must be careful not to jump back and forth within the report. Don't describe the animal's fur, then its eating habits, followed by its habitat, followed by a description of its facial features. The same holds true for a biography—keep similar ideas together, making sure the information flows smoothly.
- Also, you *do not* have to use every fact you collect. Only use the ones that make sense in your composition.
- Refer to your Student Checklist to be sure you use required sentence variations. Use each sentence variation (except for the simile) at least once (twice if you can). Don't overuse any one type of sentence variation, and don't begin two sentences in a row with the same sentence starter.

- When you write your paragraph, be sure you maintain noun-pronoun agreement. If you refer to your animal in singular terms, your pronouns must agree by being singular as well. Likewise, if you use plural words for your animal, use plural pronouns.
- Finally, choose an appropriate ending sentence to wrap up your informative report. Do **not** end with a sentence like this:

This is why I like the skunk.

These are the reasons why skunks are interesting.

I think skunks would make neat pets.

Remember:

1. *Your closing sentence must give your composition a feeling of ending.*
2. *Do **not** give an opinion (such as "I think . . .").*
3. ***Do** use a general thought, like:*

The gentle skunk is a fascinating mammal.

Gentle and shy, skunks live peacefully among the animals of the forest.

Lesson 19: Animal Fact-Gathering Worksheet

Directions: Using your selected material, gather the following facts about your animal. The more information you collect, the more you will be able to draw from when you begin to write. Write down more information than you think you will use.

Using this worksheet, jot down notes about your animal. Do not copy sentences.

Name of your animal _____

I. Animal's Body

A. Size (*avoid uninteresting details such as exact measurements. Maybe you could make a comparison to something familiar, like "about the size of a house cat" or "weighs as much as a car."*)

B. Color and type of covering _____

C. Special or interesting body parts _____

II. Animal's Habitat

A. **Location** (states, countries, or continents) _____

B. **Type of habitat** (do not confuse with "habits") _____

C. **Type of home** (cave, den, burrow) _____

III. Other Behaviors

A. **Eating** _____

B. **Sleeping** _____

C. **Moving** _____

D. **Other** _____

Synonyms for Your Animal

Hint: In your article, look for words like predator, hunter, fish, beast, herbivore, etc.

Lesson 19: Biography Fact-Gathering Worksheet

Directions: Using your selected material, gather the following facts about your famous person. The more information you collect, the more you will be able to draw from when you begin to write. Write down more information than you think you will use.

Using this worksheet, jot down notes about your person. Do not copy sentences.

Name of your person _____

This person is a/an (check one)

☐ scientist ☐ politician ☐ humanitarian ☐ inventor ☐ religious figure
☐ composer or artist ☐ athlete ☐ other _____

I. Early Years

A. Education _____

B. People or events that influenced this person _____

II. Adulthood

A. Best known for (main accomplishment) _____

B. Other contributions or accomplishments _____

C. Obstacles this person overcame _____

D. Two interesting facts about this person _____

E. Four to six positive character qualities this person possesses

(see "Characteristics/Expressions/Behaviors" word list for ideas)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Synonyms for Your Subject

Lesson 19: Skill Builder

Sentence Variation Review, Part 3

DAY ONE Personification

- **Personification** is a figure of speech that gives a human trait to something as if it were a person.
- Personification is different from a **simile**. A simile says, "This is like this," but personification says, "This behaves like a person."

1. Simile **Like** fingers, the branches of the tree reached toward the hiker.
2. Personification The **branches' fingers reached** out toward the hiker.

- Human characteristics can be given to objects and, sometimes, to animals.

1. The wispy clouds **skated** gracefully across the sky. (*skating* is a human trait)
2. Bright pansies **lift** their bobbing **heads**. (*lifting heads* is a human trait)
3. Night **crept** silently over the countryside. (*creeping* is a human trait)
4. Twinkling stars **danced** in dark. (*dancing* is a human trait)

A. In green, circle the "thing" that is being compared to a person. In red, underline the human traits, characteristics, or actions that were given to that thing.

1. Example: The snowflakes danced and twirled through the air.
2. The front porch groaned under Betsy's feet.
3. From a high branch, a fussy squirrel bossed our dog.
4. Frank's restored Chevy proudly boasted a new coat of paint.
5. The butterfly kissed each flower as it landed.
6. Sighing loudly, the wind blew through the willow branches.
7. A gathering of crows mocked me from the telephone wires.

B. The Bible is filled with examples of personification. In the following verses, circle the "thing" that is being compared to a person. Underline the human traits, characteristics, or actions that were given to that thing. Use the same colors as above.

1. Let the distant shores rejoice. *Psalm 97:1*
2. The land mourns and wastes away; Lebanon is ashamed . . . *Isaiah 33:9*
3. The meadows are clothed with flocks . . . *Psalm 65:13*
4. The villages of Judah are glad . . . *Psalm 96:8*

5. Does not wisdom call out? Does not understanding raise her voice? *Proverbs 8:1*
6. Let the rivers clap their hands, let the mountains sing together for joy. *Psalms 98:8*
7. Awake, harp and lyre! *Psalms 57:8*

DAY TWO Using Past Participles as Adjectives

Of course you remember that a **present participle** (also known as an "-ing" verb) would be written as *running*, *speaking*, or *galloping*. A **past participle**, on the other hand, usually ends with "-ed" or "-en," as in *chosen*, *erased*, and *gathered*. (**Irregular** past participles include *taught*, *worn*, and *flown*.)

Both the present and past participle forms of a verb can be used as adjectives. Frequently, these are placed in front of the noun or pronoun they describe. For example, a child can have a pleased look. Mom can set aside a bowl of beaten eggs. Josh can put on his running shoes. A book can display a worn cover.

This exercise will give you practice developing sentences that begin with a *past participial phrase*. In the word bank below you will find subjects preceded by past participles functioning as adjectives. (You may remember that a verb functioning as another part of speech is called a **verbal**.)

baked cookies	beaten eggs	dented fender
terrified child	saddened grandfather	broken toy
washed clothes	embarrassed performer	sweetened tea
stuffed turkey	parked Cadillac	hidden treasure

1. Write five sentences that begin with a past participial phrase. It may help to choose from the word bank above.
2. Follow each phrase with a comma.
3. The subject must then closely follow the comma.
4. Add supporting details to expand and finish the sentence.
5. Do not use any "to be" words!
6. For example, if you select the phrase "**crammed backpack**," you might write a sentence like this

Crammed with books, Bob's **backpack** weighed thirty pounds.

Example phrase: chopped wood

Example A. Chopped into logs, the firewood lay in a pile by the barn.

Example B. Chopped and stacked by the barn, the pile of firewood will surely last all winter.

1. phrase: _____

2. phrase: _____

3. phrase: _____

4. phrase: _____

5. phrase: _____

DAY THREE

1. Follow the directions for the Day Two activity, writing five more sentences in the spaces below.
2. Choose your phrases from the word bank on Day Two.

1. phrase: _____

2. phrase: _____

3. phrase: _____

4. phrase: _____

5. phrase: _____

Lesson 19: Student Writing Skills Checklist

CONTENT

- ☐ Do I have any "carrots in my cookie jar"?
- ☐ Did I communicate clearly?
- ☐ Are my topic and choice of words pleasing to the Lord and edifying to others?
- ☐ Does my title capture the essence of my composition?
- ☐ Does the first paragraph cover Main Point 1?
- ☐ Does the second paragraph cover Main Point 2?
- ☐ Does the third paragraph cover Main Point 3?

STYLE

- ☐ Did I choose a strong topic sentence that introduces my subject?
- ☐ Did I use no more than one "to be" word in each paragraph? (**Circle** to be words in red.)
- ☐ Did I avoid the use of repeated words? (**Underline** repeated words in blue.)
- ☐ Did I use concrete words and avoid weak words? (**Underline** vague or weak words in green.)
- ☐ Do all my tenses agree? (I wrote in ____present tense ____past tense)
- ☐ Did I vary my sentence structure by using *each of these* at least once (twice if possible)?
 - ____began with a prepositional phrase ____began with paired adjectives
 - ____began with a present participle ____began with a past participle ____subject-verb sentence
 - ____began with an -ly adverb ____used an appositive ____used a simile (one only)
 - ____began with a subordinate conjunction (*although, as, because, if, since, though, unless, when, where, while*)
- ☐ Did I include one sentence of six words or fewer in each paragraph?
- ☐ Did I write concisely, avoiding wordiness? (~~Gross-out~~ unnecessary words or phrases.)
- ☐ Did I write a strong closing sentence that summarizes my report?

MECHANICS

- ☐ Did I put my name and date in the upper right-hand corner?
- ☐ Is each paragraph five to eight sentences long? How many? #1____ #2____ #3____
- ☐ Did I indent the first sentence of each paragraph and leave margins around my paragraph?
- ☐ Did I skip lines and use good spacing between words and sentences?
- ☐ Did I double-check my spelling? (**Circle** and **look up** suspected words)
- ☐ Did I double-check capitalization and punctuation? (**Correct** any errors.)
- ☐ Did I use complete sentences, avoid run-on sentences, and avoid misplaced modifiers?
- ☐ Did I correctly use this Checklist, including using colored pencils to underline and circle as directed? (This includes making corrections before I write my revision.)
- ☐ Did I attach a photocopy of my two resources?
- ☐ **BEFORE TURNING MY WORK IN:** Did I staple my papers together in this order? (Outline on the very bottom, "sloppy copy" on top of that, neatly rewritten copy next, and this Writing Checklist on the very top.)

Name _____

Subject Short Report

Lesson 19: Teacher Writing Skills Checklist

Edit your report one more time, making any necessary changes or improvements.

CONTENT

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Followed instructions for this assignment
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All sentences support topic sentence (no "carrots in your cookie jar")
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Topic and choice of words are pleasing to the Lord and edifying to others
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Title captures the essence of the composition
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	First paragraph covers Main Point 1
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Second paragraph covers Main Point 2
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Third paragraph covers Main Point 3

STYLE

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strong topic sentence introduces the subject of the report
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used no more than one "to be" word <u>per paragraph</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoided the use of repeated words
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used concrete words (specific, vivid, and sensory)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoided the use of "weak" words
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tenses agree (used ___present tense ___past tense)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used each of the following sentence variations at least once (twice if possible)
		___subject-verb sentence ___began with an -ly adverb phrase
		___used an appositive ___began with a subordinate conjunction
		___began with a prepositional phrase ___began with paired adjectives
		___began with a present participle ___began with a past participle
		___used a simile (one only)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Included one sentence of six words or fewer
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wrote concisely, avoiding wordiness
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strong closing sentence summarizes your report

MECHANICS

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Name</u> and <u>date</u> in the upper right-hand corner
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Each paragraph is five to eight sentences long
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used proper form (indentation, margins, skipped lines, good spacing)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Double-checked spelling, capitalization, punctuation
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used complete sentences, avoided run-on sentences, avoided misplaced modifiers
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Correctly used checklist and used colored pencils, circling and underlining as directed
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Included brainstorming sheet, all drafts of this composition, and your checklist
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Included a photocopy of each resource
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All papers are stapled together in proper order

Comments _____

Name _____

Subject of Composition _____

Title _____

COMPOSITION EVALUATION

Content 15 points

Points Possible Points Earned

- | | | |
|---|----------|-------|
| • Followed directions for assignment | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Communicated clearly | <u>4</u> | _____ |
| • Paragraph unity (sentences support main idea; use of details) | <u>5</u> | _____ |
| • Graciousness | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Title (descriptive= 2; adequate=1; poor or no title=0) | <u>2</u> | _____ |

Style 20 points

- | | | |
|---|----------|-------|
| • Sentence variation and style (including limiting "to be" words) | <u>4</u> | _____ |
| • Sentence fluency/readability (awkwardness) | <u>3</u> | _____ |
| • Concreteness (wise use of vivid, specific words) | <u>4</u> | _____ |
| • Conciseness (avoids wordiness; also not flowery or verbose) | <u>3</u> | _____ |
| • Proper use of tense | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Topic sentence (strong=2; adequate=1; poor or none=0) | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Closing sentence (strong=2; adequate=1; poor or none=0) | <u>2</u> | _____ |

Mechanics 10 points

10 _____

- Form (margins, indentation, spacing, name and date)
- Spelling, punctuation, and capitalization
- Grammar (homonyms, possessive vs. plural, contractions, etc.)
- Sentence structure (complete; no run-ons; no misplaced modifiers)

General 5 points

- | | | |
|--|----------|-------|
| • Included all drafts of composition (including brainstorming) | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Correct use of Writing Skills Checklist | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Overall neatness of final draft | <u>1</u> | _____ |

TOTAL: _____ /50 = _____ % = _____

Comments: _____

_____ (over)

100% = A+	87-89% = B+	77-79% = C+
94-99% = A	84-86% = B	74-76% = C
90-93% = A-	80-83% = B-	70-73% = C-

Below 70%: rewrite composition

Unit 5:
Expanding Your Skills
*Advanced Descriptive
Narration*

1911

1911

1911

1911

Lesson 20: Exaggeration

Television commercials, magazine advertisements, and other sales materials continue to successfully influence today's buyers. They do this through clever writing that tells about the product's excellent qualities. Below (or on a separate sheet of paper, make a list naming examples of advertisements that come into your home. Include a variety of sources.

1. (example) Realtors' flyers
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Advertisers often use vivid description to impress (and therefore influence) customers. Sometimes they exaggerate their claims about a product to make it *almost* sound too good to be true. Do these look familiar to you?

- Diet fads that assure instant weight loss.
- Exercise machines that "guarantee" bulging biceps in 30 days
- Kitchen gadgets promising that you will cook like a gourmet chef
- A yo-yo that claims you will be the champion of your neighborhood

Writing a Travel Advertisement

Have you ever traveled with your family to a place that sounded sensational in the brochure, only to arrive and wonder what the fuss was all about? Do you remember from history books how people were lured to America from England, or convinced to travel west, based on what they saw in the newspaper? Skilled writers, using descriptive, colorful words, stretched the truth to make each spot appealing. This assignment, using a similar approach, will give you a fresh understanding of the power of such words.

As you have been learning, descriptive writing brings ordinary objects and events to life. In this lesson, you will try something new with your descriptive writing. You will develop an exaggerated travel agency advertisement for a resort that has fallen upon hard times. Calling on your skills as a descriptive writer, you will paint a glowing picture of a location that hopes to draw tourists to boost its dying economy.

Consider that this location is not all it is cracked up to be. Perhaps a natural disaster, like a fire or flood, has caused damage to the area. Maybe the place has become run-down or weather-beaten and in need of repair. Maybe it is the "off" season, when the weather is less than ideal. In any case, tourism is down, and the resort owners have hired you to entice travelers to bring their families for a stay.

NOTE: *The purpose of this assignment is not to teach you to deceive! Rather, it is to make you aware of the power of words to influence and entice. This exercise helps you stretch your creativity as well as increase your awareness of advertising techniques used to persuade.*

Directions

Webster's *New Universal Unabridged Dictionary* defines **exaggerate** as "to represent (something) as greater than it is." In your first paragraph you will portray this location as it actually appears. Then, in the second paragraph, you will use **exaggeration** to describe the resort's accommodations and scenery in an idealistic way.

For example, the dried up remains of a pond might be represented as a "refreshing lake." A beach strewn with litter from a storm could instead be a "driftwood-decorated shoreline." Encouraging visitors to "enjoy a glorious afternoon on horseback" would fail to mention that the resort only has two old swayback mares.

☐ **Read for ideas.** Gather a few of the following materials from a travel agency, library, or your own bookshelves:

- travel magazines or Auto Club publications
- bridal magazines (honeymoon section)
- Sunday travel section of the *L.A. Times*
- *National Geographic*
- tour guides

To see how writers describe scenic resorts, browse through several ads or articles. Look for key words that appeal to the senses or emotions, like *paradise*, *romantic*, *hideaway*, *famous for*, etc. Below (or on a separate sheet of paper) make a list of the words you find.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

☐ **Choose a location.** Decide on a location for the resort you will advertise. Here are some ideas, but you might also think of your others on your own:

- a run-down dude ranch
- a ghost town
- a beach resort in the aftermath of a hurricane
- a desert hotel with a "pool" and/or "mineral hot springs" nearby
- a mountain resort with individual family cabins
- an ancient castle in Scotland (or England, Germany, France)
- a tropical island during monsoon or hurricane season
- a normally lush, green area in the midst of a drought
- a frigid location during the winter (think *freezing!*)
- a lakeside boating resort
- a campground that "offers conveniences" like showers or recreational facilities
- other _____

☐ **Write Your Composition**

1. Discuss the instructions for the assignment with your parent Make sure you both understand the assignment.
2. You will write two paragraphs. The first paragraph (not an advertisement, but merely factual) will accurately describe the resort---"run-down, drafty, and isolated," for instance. The second paragraph (the advertisement) will exaggerate and stretch the truth---"provincial, airy, and private."
3. Write each paragraph on a SEPARATE sheet of paper. Each must be seven to nine sentences long.
4. Hide the imperfections of the resort with colorful, flowery words. However, be sure the wording fits the locale. Your second paragraph should describe the resort idealistically, perfectly. Help the reader see it through "rose-colored glasses." Overstate, pad, stretch the truth. (If your resort has a small spa with cracked tile and algae stains, you may overstate it into a sparkling swimming pool, but it may not be exaggerated to become a lake.)
5. Overemphasize the true, positive elements. A miserably humid tropical location might still have a magnificent sunset on which you could focus. Blooming weeds can be called "flowers." "Run-down" becomes "rustic." A scorching desert sun sounds more appealing as "warm rays of the sun." Greasy burgers from a roadside diner become "juicy and finger-licking." Readers will never know that the "lake stocked with fish" has not been stocked in ten years!

6. Use rich imagery and the most descriptive, vivid words you can find. Your Word Lists and thesaurus are required tools! Take care, though, to use synonyms accurately. Know their definitions. Just the right wording can make a cheap motel sound like a luxurious hotel. Thatched, weedy grounds can sound breathtakingly beautiful. Give the impression that the place is up-to-date and well-maintained, perfect for a visiting couple or family.
7. Use vocabulary that appeals to the senses and emotions. Refer to the previous page for some of the terms you found in the magazines. Words like *exotic* and *private* have irresistible drawing power!
8. Give your resort a realistic name.
9. Begin by brainstorming for ideas. See "Brainstorm" section below.
10. Remember: When you write, you will not describe every single detail. Pick out several and go from there. Use the practice paragraph as a guide.
11. Have fun with this activity. Let's see what your creative mind can produce!

☐ **Brainstorm**

(Suggestion: Do this as an activity around the dinner table. Sometimes it's fun to involve the whole family in the brainstorming process!)

1. Using the "Exaggeration Worksheet," write thoughts in the first column about what the place actually looks like. In the second column, jot down ways those same accommodations and scenery could be exaggerated to sound appealing. Remember to brainstorm for more information than you will need in your composition. This always gives you a larger pool of information to draw from when writing your "sloppy copy."
2. Facilities. Talk about the comforts and conveniences that would appeal to the traveler (lodging, pools, restaurants and food, shopping, nearby attractions, entertainment, etc.). Then brainstorm specifically about the things that would draw people *to your resort*.
3. Scenic Environment. Talk about the kinds of scenery that attract sightseers (fall foliage, forests, beaches, mineral hot springs, tropical foliage, snow, natural wonders, bodies of water, historic buildings/monuments, etc.). Then brainstorm about the scenery that would particularly entice visitors *to your resort*.
4. Activities. Talk about the kinds of activities that might lure a tourist (biking or hiking; camping, fishing, or horseback riding; sightseeing tours; winter sports; water sports/boating; nature activities; etc.). Then brainstorm in detail about the activities that would draw visitors *to your resort*.

Lesson 20: Practicing with Exaggeration

Directions

1. Read the following paragraph. You will write a second paragraph exaggerating the claims of Paradise Palms Resort.
2. Begin by brainstorming on the "Exaggeration Worksheet (Practice Paragraph)."

Paradise Palms Resort

Looking abandoned along the deserted highway, the Paradise Palms Resort sits back from the road in a sparse grove of shaggy palm trees. Weathered and peeling, its chipped salmon-colored paint begs for a fresh coat. A sagging porch, overgrown with bougainvilleas, offers little shelter from the sweltering tropical heat. Aging canvas umbrellas and beach chairs droop wearily around a yellowed pool. Mosquitoes drone over the filmy surface. A sliver of ocean in the distance promises relief from the soaring temperatures, but a weedy trail seems to be the only path. Next to the dilapidated motel, a simple thatched hut displays local fruits and cheap trinkets for sale, and an easygoing native in a ragged straw hat pushes jeeps and bicycles for rent. His selection, however, appears as rusty and tired as the old resort itself. Paradise Palms, so it seems, is a long way from paradise.

Lesson 20: Exaggeration Worksheet (Practice Paragraph)

Brainstorming ideas for (name of resort) Paradise Palms Resort

The Resort's Actual Features	The Resort's Features (Ideal Condition)
❖ Facilities ❖	❖ Facilities ❖
chipped paint	
sagging porch	

❖ Scenic Environment ❖	❖ Scenic Environment ❖
deserted highway	
sparse grove of shaggy palm trees	

❖ Activities ❖	❖ Activities ❖
rusty old jeeps and bikes for rent	

Lesson 20: Exaggeration Worksheet

Brainstorming ideas for (name of resort) _____

The Resort's Actual Features	The Resort's Features (Ideal Condition)
❖ Facilities ❖	❖ Facilities ❖

❖ Scenic Environment ❖	❖ Scenic Environment ❖

❖ Activities ❖	❖ Activities ❖

Lesson 20: Skill Builder

Word Usage

How does an author find the balance between writing in a concrete, sensory, descriptive manner and writing in an imposing, pretentious way? In *WriteShop*, we want to encourage you to try out new words, have fun with your thesaurus, and use vivid language as you write. We also desire to teach you to use new vocabulary with care and humility.

When you use too many new or strange words, the reader may feel that you are trying to make an impression. Too many flowery, high-sounding, or unfamiliar words can make you sound pretentious or even arrogant. Work to find a good balance between overly-simplistic and "stuffy" vocabulary. Astute writers choose their words wisely. Their writing is concise yet descriptive.

- ☐ Try not to use too many long words.
- ☐ Make sure your vocabulary is appropriate for your reader.
- ☐ Instead of stringing together a long list of adjectives to describe a weak noun, often a single well-chosen noun will work. ("Tall, thirty-story glass-covered building" might be more simply written "skyscraper.")
- ☐ When using your thesaurus, be sure to look up unfamiliar synonyms. Say exactly what you mean. If you want to find a synonym for the word *party*, what kind of party are you writing about? You could choose *soiree*, *fete*, *bash*, or *coalition*, but be careful---one describes a dressy evening affair, one an outdoor party, one an occasion of joy or celebration, and one a political alliance. Choose wisely!
- ☐ Another common error using a thesaurus is picking a synonym that is a different part of speech or is informal, slang, or archaic (so old it is not in use anymore). Again, look up unfamiliar words in the dictionary. This extra step may save you embarrassment later on!

DAY ONE: *Communicating Clearly*

1. Use a good dictionary to define these terms. Think about how they might relate to your writing.
2. If there is more than one definition, choose the one that would apply to writing.

concise _____

effective _____

flowery _____

grandiose _____

pompous _____

pretentious _____

verbose _____

DAY TWO *Incorrect Word Usage*

The following sentences contain words used incorrectly. Words, as you have been learning, have fine meanings. For instance, a mansion, a cabin, and a shack may all be called a house, but not all houses are mansions. Neither are they all cabins or shacks.

You must always make certain that the synonym you choose fits the context of the sentence. **Incorrect word usage** is characterized by long, uncommon words, incorrect use of synonyms, and words not relevant to the topic.

Using your thesaurus and/or dictionary, find a more appropriate word to replace the underlined words below.

1. The ancient log chateau was nearly swallowed by the dense forest. Arboreal formations crowded in on every side.
 chateau _____
 arboreal formations _____
2. The dense foliage obfuscated the narrow path leading to the infinitesimal cabin and threatened to smother it.
 obfuscated _____
 infinitesimal _____
3. Towering trees cast their adumbrations over the nugatory shack.
 adumbrations _____
 nugatory _____

DAY THREE: *Overly Descriptive Writing*

The following sentences contain words or phrases that are overly descriptive. Sentences are typically wordy or overly long. Too many modifiers, such as adjectives and adverbs, confuse the reader. Redundancy, or repetition of synonyms, as well as too much flowery description, also cloud the writing. Self-important or pompous language and overuse of figures of speech (metaphors, similes, and personification) decrease the effectiveness of the writing.

Pompous-sounding language does have its place, particularly when describing showy, stuffy, or arrogant people or events. However, beginning writers tend to use overly wordy, overly descriptive writing for simple and ordinary objects and events. As an example, flowery writing would certainly be appropriate to describe a costume ball but would not be appropriate to describe a trip to Grandma's. To a certain extent, grandiose writing may even be appropriate in this week's writing assignment, as you seek to exaggerate and embellish (do you need to look up this word?) the claims of a run-down resort. As always, choose your words with care.

- ☐ Rewrite each sentence in a concise yet descriptive way.
- ☐ Break down long phrases and ask yourself, "What is this trying to say, and how could I write it more simply?"
- ☐ Use a dictionary or thesaurus to look up unfamiliar words. If you don't know what they mean, you will not be able to simplify them!
- ☐ Eliminate repeated words and words that contradict other thoughts in the sentence.

1. Before the noisy, creaking, overloaded wagons, filled with tools, provisions, and food, arrived at the majestic mansion, they stopped and paused to rest in front of a dilapidated, weather-beaten, shabby shanty.

2. The stacked orbs of snow, magnificently embellished with fragments of coal and carrots and wrapped in a long, fringed plaid scarf, commenced to slump and grow slushy and turn into a puddle precisely at the location where Dad parks his automobile.

3. Sam's extremely furry, shaggy canine dog, alabaster with raven streaks, poses enthusiastically on the porch in front of the family domicile, with his tail solemnly between his legs. He lingers until Sam reappears from the park where he has been recreating in the baseball game at which his team triumphed.

Lesson 20: Student Writing Skills Checklist

***After you write your "sloppy copy," go over it carefully with this checklist.

USE BOX 1 to check your first paragraph. USE BOX 2 to check your exaggerated paragraph.

CONTENT

1 2

- ☐ ☐ Do all my sentences support my topic sentence?
- ☐ ☐ Did I communicate clearly?
- ☐ ☐ Are my topic and choice of words pleasing to the Lord and edifying to others?
- ☐ ☐ Do my titles capture the essence of each composition?

STYLE

1 2

- ☐ ☐ Did I choose a strong topic sentence that introduces each paragraph?
- ☐ ☐ Did I use no more than one "to be" word in each paragraph? (**Circle** to be words in red.)
- ☐ ☐ Did I avoid the use of repeated words? (**Underline** repeated words in blue.)
- ☐ ☐ Did I use concrete words and avoid weak words? (**Underline** vague or weak words in green.)
- ☐ ☐ Did I use the same tense throughout each paragraph?
- ☐ ☐ Did I vary my sentence structure by using these sentence variations once in each paragraph?
 - ☐ used a simile (one only) ☐ began with a prepositional phrase
 - ☐ began with paired adjectives ☐ began with a present or past participle
 - ☐ used a subject-verb sentence ☐ began with an -ly adverb ☐ used an appositive
 - ☐ began with a subordinate conjunction (*although, as, because, if, since, though, unless, when, where, while*)
- ☐ ☐ Does each paragraph contain a sentence of six words or fewer?
- ☐ ☐ Did I write a strong closing sentence that wraps up each paragraph?

MECHANICS

1 2

- ☐ ☐ Did I put my name and date in the upper right-hand corner?
- ☐ ☐ Is **each paragraph** seven to nine sentences long? How many? 1st _____ 2nd _____
- ☐ ☐ Did I indent the first sentence of each paragraph and leave margins around my composition?
- ☐ ☐ Did I remember to skip every other line?
- ☐ ☐ Did I use good spacing between words and sentences?
- ☐ ☐ Did I double-check my spelling? (**Circle** and **look up** suspected words.)
- ☐ ☐ Did I double-check and **correct** capitalization and punctuation?
- ☐ ☐ Did I use complete sentences and avoid run-on sentences and misplaced modifiers?
- ☐ Did I correctly use this Checklist, including using colored pencils to underline and circle as directed? (This includes making corrections before I write my revision.)
- ☐ **BEFORE TURNING MY WORK IN:** Did I staple my papers together in this order? (Brainstorming worksheet on the very bottom, "sloppy copy" on top of that, neatly rewritten copy next, and this Writing Checklist on the very top.)

Name _____

Subject Exaggeration (Actual)

Lesson 20(1): Teacher Writing Skills Checklist

Edit your paragraph one more time, making any necessary changes or improvements.

CONTENT

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Followed instructions for this assignment
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Communicated clearly
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All sentences support topic sentence (no "carrots in your cookie jar")
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Topic and choice of words are pleasing to the Lord and edifying to others
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Title captures the essence of the composition

STYLE

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strong topic sentence introduces the composition
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used no more than one "to be" word
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoided the use of repeated words
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used concrete words (specific, vivid, and sensory)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoided the use of "weak" words
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used the same tense throughout the paragraph
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used each of the following sentence variations once in each paragraph.
		___subject-verb sentence ___began with an -ly adverb phrase
		___used an appositive ___began with a subordinate conjunction
		___began with a prepositional phrase ___began with paired adjectives
		___began with a present or past participle
		___used a simile (one only)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Included one sentence of six words or fewer
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wrote concisely, avoiding wordiness
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strong closing sentence

MECHANICS

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Name</u> and <u>date</u> in the upper right-hand corner
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Paragraph is seven to nine sentences long
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used proper form (indentation, margins, skipped lines, good spacing)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Double-checked spelling, capitalization, punctuation
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used complete sentences, avoided run-on sentences, avoided misplaced modifiers
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Correctly used checklist and used colored pencils, circling and underlining as directed
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Included brainstorming sheet, all drafts of this composition, and your checklist
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All papers are stapled together in proper order

Comments _____

Name _____

Subject Exaggeration (Ideal)

Lesson 20(2): Teacher Writing Skills Checklist

Edit your paragraph one more time, making any necessary changes or improvements.

CONTENT

- | OK | needs improvement | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Followed instructions for this assignment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Communicated clearly |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | All sentences support topic sentence (no "carrots in your cookie jar") |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Topic and choice of words are pleasing to the Lord and edifying to others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Title captures the essence of the composition |

STYLE

- | OK | needs improvement | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Strong topic sentence introduces the composition |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Used no more than one "to be" word |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Avoided the use of repeated words |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Used concrete words (specific, vivid, and sensory) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Avoided the use of "weak" words |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Used the same tense throughout the paragraph |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Used each of the following sentence variations once in each paragraph.
__subject-verb sentence __began with an -ly adverb phrase
__used an appositive __began with a subordinate conjunction
__began with a prepositional phrase __began with paired adjectives
__began with a present or past participle
__used a simile (one only) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Included one sentence of six words or fewer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Wrote concisely, avoiding wordiness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Strong closing sentence |

MECHANICS

- | OK | needs improvement | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <u>Name</u> and <u>date</u> in the upper right-hand corner |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Paragraph is seven to nine sentences long |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Used proper form (indentation, margins, skipped lines, good spacing) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Double-checked spelling, capitalization, punctuation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Used complete sentences, avoided run-on sentences, avoided misplaced modifiers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Correctly used checklist and used colored pencils, circling and underlining as directed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Included brainstorming sheet, all drafts of this composition, and your checklist |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | All papers are stapled together in proper order |

Comments _____

Name _____

Subject of Composition _____

Title _____

COMPOSITION EVALUATION

Content 15 points

Points Possible Points Earned

- | | | |
|---|----------|-------|
| • Followed directions for assignment | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Communicated clearly | <u>4</u> | _____ |
| • Paragraph unity (sentences support main idea; use of details) | <u>5</u> | _____ |
| • Graciousness | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Title (descriptive= 2; adequate=1; poor or no title=0) | <u>2</u> | _____ |

Style 20 points

- | | | |
|---|----------|-------|
| • Sentence variation and style (including limiting "to be" words) | <u>4</u> | _____ |
| • Sentence fluency/readability (awkwardness) | <u>3</u> | _____ |
| • Concreteness (wise use of vivid, specific words) | <u>4</u> | _____ |
| • Conciseness (avoids wordiness; also not flowery or verbose) | <u>3</u> | _____ |
| • Proper use of tense | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Topic sentence (strong=2; adequate=1; poor or none=0) | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Closing sentence (strong=2; adequate=1; poor or none=0) | <u>2</u> | _____ |

Mechanics 10 points

10 _____

- Form (margins, indentation, spacing, name and date)
- Spelling, punctuation, and capitalization
- Grammar (homonyms, possessive vs. plural, contractions, etc.)
- Sentence structure (complete; no run-ons; no misplaced modifiers)

General 5 points

- | | | |
|--|----------|-------|
| • Included all drafts of composition (including brainstorming) | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Correct use of Writing Skills Checklist | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Overall neatness of final draft | <u>1</u> | _____ |

TOTAL: _____ /50 = _____ % = _____

Comments: _____

_____ (over)

100% = A+ 87-89% = B+ 77-79% = C+

94-99% = A 84-86% = B 74-76% = C

90-93% = A- 80-83% = B- 70-73% = C-

Below 70%: rewrite composition

Name _____

Subject of Composition _____

Title _____

COMPOSITION EVALUATION

Content 15 points

Points Possible Points Earned

- | | | |
|---|----------|-------|
| • Followed directions for assignment | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Communicated clearly | <u>4</u> | _____ |
| • Paragraph unity (sentences support main idea; use of details) | <u>5</u> | _____ |
| • Graciousness | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Title (descriptive= 2; adequate=1; poor or no title=0) | <u>2</u> | _____ |

Style 20 points

- | | | |
|---|----------|-------|
| • Sentence variation and style (including limiting "to be" words) | <u>4</u> | _____ |
| • Sentence fluency/readability (awkwardness) | <u>3</u> | _____ |
| • Concreteness (wise use of vivid, specific words) | <u>4</u> | _____ |
| • Conciseness (avoids wordiness; also not flowery or verbose) | <u>3</u> | _____ |
| • Proper use of tense | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Topic sentence (strong=2; adequate=1; poor or none=0) | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Closing sentence (strong=2; adequate=1; poor or none=0) | <u>2</u> | _____ |

Mechanics 10 points

10 _____

- Form (margins, indentation, spacing, name and date)
- Spelling, punctuation, and capitalization
- Grammar (homonyms, possessive vs. plural, contractions, etc.)
- Sentence structure (complete; no run-ons; no misplaced modifiers)

General 5 points

- | | | |
|--|----------|-------|
| • Included all drafts of composition (including brainstorming) | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Correct use of Writing Skills Checklist | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Overall neatness of final draft | <u>1</u> | _____ |

TOTAL: _____ /50 = _____ % = _____

Comments: _____

_____ (over)

100% = A+ 87-89% = B+ 77-79% = C+

94-99% = A 84-86% = B 74-76% = C

90-93% = A- 80-83% = B- 70-73% = C-

Below 70%: rewrite composition

Lesson 21: First-Person Point of View, Part 1

As a writer, you have the ability to influence your reader's feelings. One way you can do this is through describing scenes. You have the power to guide the reader's emotions by the way you describe objects and situations. This is called **point of view**.

Everything you write or read has a point of view; it is not something you *choose* to include or not include. Point of view is the telling of a story, an experience, or a situation as seen through the eyes of one character. When this character is part of the situation, he or she usually tells a story using the **first-person** narrative voice. In other words, he/she includes himself/herself in the story and writes from an "I" perspective. *An author writing in first person cannot know what everything or everyone else in the story is thinking.* This is called **limited omniscience**.

The reader's emotions are influenced by the author's personal perspective. The writer can make the reader feel suspicious, sympathetic, or angry toward different characters. The writer also has the power to make an amusement park ride seem thrilling and exciting, or terrifying and upsetting. A good writer can make readers cry . . . or laugh out loud.

This assignment in **descriptive narration** covers two lessons in which you will describe a situation twice, from two different points of view. The first assignment, Lesson 21, asks you to write from the point of view of a parent who is spending an afternoon with his or her child at a picnic. Since you are writing as if you are a mom or dad, you will *not* be able to know what anyone else is thinking. You must describe the scene and the situation just the way you see it.

(The next assignment, Lesson 22, will teach you how to change perspective.)

As you describe this lunchtime picnic scene, you must make your reader enjoy a variety of things the parent sees, hears, and smells. Set a mood with vivid descriptions.

You must write in first person ("I") and in present tense (as if it is happening now). Your job is to influence the reader's feelings about this picnic and to create a highly sensory and descriptive scene. We will start you off with a topic sentence.

Directions:

- ☐ **Decide on a setting for your picnic.** Picnic ground at: ____a beach ____a lake
____a park ____a campground ____other _____
- ☐ **Look over the lists** on the next page to consider what the parent might see, hear, and smell. (This is not a complete list; you certainly may think of other things.)

- ☐ **Brainstorm** by making columns or by making a mind-map. Brainstorm thoroughly so you have many sensory descriptions from which to choose. Here are some ideas.

What the parent sees:

- bright colors of clothing
- playground equipment, benches, tables, umbrellas, blankets, ice chests
- lake, ocean, beach, or pool; trees, flowers, sand, rocks, or grass
- fast movement of excited kids running, splashing, swinging
- eating and discarding of picnic foods and dessert (dripping ice cream, thick sandwiches, juicy red watermelon)
- laughing and smiling faces

What the parent hears:

- loud laughter/talking/playing
- distant sounds (airplane droning, dog barking, siren wailing, horn honking)
- soda cans, ice, the rustle and pop of paper bags, the crunching of apples or chips
- banging, crashing, splashing; the squeaking of swings or other play equipment
- noise of speedboats on the lake, waves crashing, birds, sprinklers, bell on an ice cream truck
- Fourth of July fireworks or parade going by; sound of roller skates or skateboard wheels on a sidewalk; the thump of a bouncing basketball

What the parent smells:

- freshly mown grass, flowers
- sea breeze, suntan lotion, campfires or barbecues
- broiling hotdogs, steaks, chicken, or burgers
- baked beans, popcorn, pickles and mustard, other picnic foods

- ☐ **Begin with this topic sentence:**

(Adj.) colors and (adj.) sounds radiate from the picnic area where my children play.

You may individualize this sentence, but keep it similar, maybe adding an adjective:

"...the seaside picnic area . . ." *"...the sheltered picnic area . . ."*

- ☐ **Remember:** You are the parent at the picnic. Put yourself in his or her place and write as if you are that person. Include your emotions as well as your observations. If your character didn't observe the action, *he or she can't write about it in a firsthand manner*. Write only what your character knows.

- ☐ **Do not** describe *everything* the parent experiences!

- ☐ **Do not** focus on describing the *activities*; focus on the experiential and sensory.

- ☐ **Do not** use the phrases *I smell, I see, I hear*. Try:
 - *Broiling hot dogs (do what)*. . . instead of *I smell hot dogs as they broil* . . .
 - *Sailboats of white and red (do what)* instead of *I see white and red sailboats* . . .
 - *The shouts of children (doing what)*. . . or *Laughing children (doing what)* . . ." instead of *I hear children shouting (or laughing)*. . .
- ☐ **Use different kinds of sentence starters** and sentence variations. Use each of these *at least once*:
 - sentence beginning with a present participle ("-ing" verb)
 - sentence beginning with a past participle (**Note:** You can find many past participles in the "Characteristics/Expressions/ Behaviors" or "Emotions" word lists.)
 - sentence beginning with a prepositional phrase
 - sentence beginning with an adverb or adverbial phrase
 - sentence beginning with paired adjectives
 - sentence using a simile
 - sentence using an appositive
 - subordinate conjunction
 - a short sentence (six words or fewer)
- ☐ **Write two paragraphs** of five to seven sentences each.
- ☐ **Practice writing concisely.** Eliminate all unnecessary sentences, words, or phrases. Keep your descriptions crisp yet simple. Write for clarity.
- ☐ **Use concrete, specific, descriptive words** (see your various Word Lists for help). Describe activities sparingly, more as a vehicle for sensory description. Here are some suggestions for making your writing specific, vivid, and sensory. Notice the use of different sentence variations.
 - *Squabbling over stale crusts, a raucous crowd of gray gulls flaps around our blanket.*
 - *A radiant orange sunset paints the sky with a wash of lavender and rose.*
 - *Softly, a cool afternoon breeze whispers through the lofty branches of the white pines.* ("-ly" adverb)
 - *Munching on crisp fried chicken and juicy watermelon, we become aware of a visitor, a bushy-tailed squirrel, on a nearby boulder.* (participle/appositive)
 - *Like young otters, playmates romp and splash wildly in the foamy surf.* (simile)
 - *Spreading Grandma's patchwork quilt beneath an ancient oak, we marvel at the blaze of autumn golds and reds surrounding us.* (participial phrase)
 - *Box kites and paper dragons fill the azure sky, whipping their tails in the wind.*
- ☐ **Be sure your tenses agree.** You must write in present tense.

Lesson 21: Identifying Descriptive Narration

Directions: Read the following narrative and complete the activities below.

Our Park Picnic

by Ben, age 13

Vivid colors and lively sounds radiate from the picnic area where my children play. Filling the patchy sky, kites of red, navy, and orange whip their tails in the wind. Animated and delighted, my son, Jeff, yanks at his taut string, searching for his kite among the others. His face beams with pride at the victory of his first flight. Across the field, a soccer game begins with an ear-splitting whistle.

Suddenly smelling smoke, I turn to my hamburgers and give them a final flip. On the wooden table, bowls of baked beans and pasta salads lift their pungent aromas into the gentle breeze. Setting the platter of cooked meat on the red checkered cloth, I yell for Jeff. Upon reeling in his airplane kite, my hungry little boy rushes to our spot. Settled down to our feast, we talk over the exciting events of the day.

1. In *red*, underline words or phrases that describe **feelings and emotions**.
2. In *blue*, underline words or phrases that describe the *child(ren)*'s **behavior/actions**.
3. Use a *purple* pencil to circle **sound** words or phrases.
4. Use a *green* pencil to circle **color** words or phrases.
5. Circle **smell** words or phrases in orange.

Lesson 21: Skill Builder

Writing Descriptive Narration, Part 1

When young authors begin to write narratives, it is easy for them to focus on the action and forget to add important descriptive details. This exercise will help you see the difference between simple narration and descriptive narration. WriteShop encourages you to write descriptively because it is important for you to tell your readers exactly what you want them to know.

Suppose you read the sentence, "Sandy ran across the field." What picture jumps into your mind? How did Sandy run? What was the field like? What feeling should this evoke in you?

Look at these expanded sentences. Each one tells you that Sandy ran across the field, but each also gives you a different picture of the event and/or circumstances.

Example A: Panting heavily, Sandy ran desperately across the littered field toward safety.

Example B: Relaxed and free, Sandy eagerly ran across the sunny field of daisies.

Example C: With visions of victory in her head, Sandy ran deftly across the soccer field toward the goal.

1. Each of the following narrative sentences lacks important descriptive detail.
2. Rewrite each sentence to give the reader the specific picture you have in your mind.
3. You may use synonyms for the existing words; however, don't neglect adding interesting details to expand the sentence.
4. Use a DIFFERENT sentence variation in each sentence (paired adjectives, past or present participial phrase, prepositional or adverbial phrase, subordinate conjunction, appositives).
5. Avoid "to be" words!

DAY ONE

1. The airplane dove toward the water.

2. The Boy Scouts pitched their tents in the woods.

3. Snoopy dug a hole under the fence.

4. John drove his truck to town.

DAY TWO

1. The basketball player dribbled the ball.

2. Two sharks swam near the shore.

3. We waited in line for our turn.

4. Carla dropped a vase.

DAY THREE

1. The child's balloon floated away.

2. Jerry bumped into Sharon.

3. The artist painted a picture.

4. Susan listened to music.

Lesson 21: Student Writing Skills Checklist

CONTENT

- ☐ Do all my sentences support my topic sentence?
- ☐ Are my topic and choice of words pleasing to the Lord and edifying to others?
- ☐ Does my title capture the essence of my composition?

STYLE

- ☐ Did I choose a strong topic sentence that introduces my composition?
- ☐ Did I use no more than one "to be" word in each paragraph? (Circle (to be) words in red.)
- ☐ Did I avoid the use of repeated words? (**Underline** repeated words in blue.)
- ☐ Did I use concrete words and avoid weak words? (**Underline** vague or weak words in green.)
- ☐ Did I use a transition word/phrase to connect my paragraphs? Write it here: _____
- ☐ Did I write in present tense? Do all my tenses agree?
- ☐ Did I vary my sentence structure by using *each of these* in my composition?
 - ___ began with a past and/or present participle
 - ___ began with paired adjectives
 - ___ began with an "-ly" adverb
 - ___ used a simile (optional)
 - ___ began with a subordinate conjunction (*although, as, because, if, since, though, unless, when, where, while*)
 - ___ used a subject-verb sentence
 - ___ began with a prepositional phrase
 - ___ used an appositive
- ☐ Did I use a sentence of six words or fewer?
- ☐ Did I write concisely, avoiding wordiness? (~~Cross-out~~ unnecessary words or phrases.)
- ☐ Did I write a strong closing sentence?

MECHANICS

- ☐ Did I put my name and date in the upper right-hand corner?
- ☐ Did I write two paragraphs? Is each one five to seven sentences in length? How many? 1____ 2____
- ☐ Did I indent the first sentence of each paragraph and leave margins around my composition?
- ☐ Did I remember to skip every other line?
- ☐ Did I double-check my spelling by circling and looking up suspected words?
- ☐ Did I double-check **and correct** capitalization and punctuation?
- ☐ Did I use complete sentences and avoid run-on sentences and misplaced modifiers?
- ☐ Did I correctly use this Checklist, including using colored pencils to underline and circle as directed?
(This includes making corrections before I write my revision.)
- ☐ **BEFORE TURNING MY WORK IN:** Did I staple my papers together in this order? (Worksheet on the very bottom, "sloppy copy" on top of that, neatly rewritten copy next, and this Writing Checklist on the very top.)

Name _____

Subject 1st Pers. Pt. of View 1

Lesson 21: Teacher Writing Skills Checklist

Edit your composition one more time, making any necessary changes or improvements.

CONTENT

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Followed instructions for this assignment
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Communicated clearly
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All sentences support topic sentence (no "carrots in your cookie jar")
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Topic and choice of words are pleasing to the Lord and edifying to others
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Title captures the essence of the composition

STYLE

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strong topic sentence introduces the composition
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used no more than one "to be" word <u>per paragraph</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoided the use of repeated words
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used concrete words (specific, vivid, and sensory)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoided the use of "weak" words
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used a transition word/phrase to connect paragraphs
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used present tense throughout the composition
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used each of the following sentence variations at least once (twice if possible)
		___subject-verb sentence ___began with an -ly adverb phrase
		___used an appositive ___began with a subordinate conjunction
		___began with a prepositional phrase ___began with paired adjectives
		___began with a present or past participle
		___used a simile (one only)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Included one sentence of six words or fewer
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wrote concisely, avoiding wordiness
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strong closing sentence

MECHANICS

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Name</u> and <u>date</u> in the upper right-hand corner
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Each paragraph is five to seven sentences long
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used proper form (indentation, margins, skipped lines, good spacing)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Double-checked spelling, capitalization, punctuation
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used complete sentences, avoided run-on sentences, avoided misplaced modifiers
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Correctly used checklist and used colored pencils, circling and underlining as directed
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Included brainstorming sheet, all drafts of this composition, and your checklist
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All papers are stapled together in proper order

Comments _____

Name _____

Subject of Composition _____

Title _____

COMPOSITION EVALUATION

Content 15 points

Points Possible Points Earned

- | | | |
|---|----------|-------|
| • Followed directions for assignment | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Communicated clearly | <u>4</u> | _____ |
| • Paragraph unity (sentences support main idea; use of details) | <u>5</u> | _____ |
| • Graciousness | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Title (descriptive= 2; adequate=1; poor or no title=0) | <u>2</u> | _____ |

Style 20 points

- | | | |
|---|----------|-------|
| • Sentence variation and style (including limiting "to be" words) | <u>4</u> | _____ |
| • Sentence fluency/readability (awkwardness) | <u>3</u> | _____ |
| • Concreteness (wise use of vivid, specific words) | <u>4</u> | _____ |
| • Conciseness (avoids wordiness; also not flowery or verbose) | <u>3</u> | _____ |
| • Proper use of tense | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Topic sentence (strong=2; adequate=1; poor or none=0) | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Closing sentence (strong=2; adequate=1; poor or none=0) | <u>2</u> | _____ |

Mechanics 10 points

10 _____

- Form (margins, indentation, spacing, name and date)
- Spelling, punctuation, and capitalization
- Grammar (homonyms, possessive vs. plural, contractions, etc.)
- Sentence structure (complete; no run-ons; no misplaced modifiers)

General 5 points

- | | | |
|--|----------|-------|
| • Included all drafts of composition (including brainstorming) | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Correct use of Writing Skills Checklist | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Overall neatness of final draft | <u>1</u> | _____ |

TOTAL: _____ /50 = _____ % = _____

Comments: _____

_____ (over)

100% = A+ 87-89% = B+ 77-79% = C+

94-99% = A 84-86% = B 74-76% = C

90-93% = A- 80-83% = B- 70-73% = C-

Below 70%: rewrite composition

Lesson 22: First-Person Point of View, Part 2

Last time, you wrote a descriptive composition about a picnic scene from the point of view of a parent. For this lesson you will write another two-paragraph composition about *the same scene*, but from the perspective of a different character.

As you recall, point of view is the telling of a story, an experience, or a situation as seen through the eyes of one character. Remember that when you write in first person ("I"), *you cannot know what everything or everyone else in the story is thinking*. This is called **limited omniscience**.

This week you will write about the same picnic. However, you must choose a new point of view. Look at the composition you wrote last week. Now try to observe the scene as if you are one of the following people:

- an older grandparent-type taking in the scene from a nearby bench
- the custodian or grounds keeper who must clean up afterward
- an animal at the picnic (squirrel, dog, sea gull, raccoon, ant)

You will write a two-paragraph composition from the perspective of a different character at this same picnic. You must write in first person ("I") and in either present or past tense. Your job is to influence the reader's feelings about this picnic. You must make your reader feel the emotions of this second character. Was he or she entertained? Annoyed? Wistful? Remember that this character will also be observing the parent who wrote last time!

Here is an example of a composition written about the same picnic as last time, but from a new point of view.

The Janitor's Big Day

by Ben, age 13

These Saturday picnics give me a headache---just look at the commotion. Screaming kids, recklessly running, trample my newly planted marigolds in pursuit of a runaway kite. Among the brightly colored kites, I spot a green camouflage airplane. A small boy struggles to control it. Called to lunch, the beaming child reels in his plane and speeds towards his waiting dad. Smoky yet fragrant, the aroma of their barbecued hamburgers floats across the soccer field. Unfortunately, my sack contains only a crusty peanut butter sandwich and a squashed banana.

Eventually the crowds disappear, leaving behind overloaded trash cans and garbage strewn about the lawn. In the picnic area, remains of beans and salads litter the ground. What a mess! Crows, daring scavengers, help me clean up the leftovers. Pecking eagerly, the blackbirds finish off the bread crumbs. Suddenly, the park lights switch on, signaling that my workday is complete. At home a Tylenol awaits.

Directions

- ☐ **Decide what the observer might see, hear, and smell.**
- ☐ **Brainstorm** by making columns or by making a mind-map. Again, be thorough. Fill your brainstorming sheet with many possibilities. Be sure to refer back to Lesson 21's composition. It is important to maintain continuity between this lesson and the one you just completed.
- ☐ **Begin with one of the following topic sentences.**
 - If you are an older person:
Soaking up all the noise and activity, I take (or took) notice of one particular family.
 - If you are the custodian or grounds keeper:
These Saturday picnics give me a headache---just look at the commotion! OR Saturday's picnic gave me a headache---the day was filled with commotion!
 - If you are an animal:
Waiting patiently in my _____, I survey (ed) the busy scene (around me, below, in the park, etc.).
- ☐ **Remember:** You are an observer at the picnic. Put yourself in this new character's place and write as if you are that character. Include your emotions and sensory experiences. *If your character didn't observe the action, he or she can't write about it in a firsthand manner. Remember, write only what your character knows and feels.*
- ☐ **Do not** describe everything the person observes!
- ☐ **Do not** use the phrases *I smell, I see, I hear*. Try:
 - *Salty sea air (does what) . . . or A whiff of fresh sea breeze (does what) . . .* instead of *I smell the ocean . . .*
 - *Barefoot children . . .* instead of *I see children with bare feet . . .*
 - *The laughter of children (doing what). . . or Laughing loudly, barefoot children (do what). . .* instead of *I hear children laughing . . .*
- ☐ **Use concrete, specific, descriptive words** (see your Word Lists for help).
- ☐ **Write two paragraphs** of five to seven sentences each.

- ☐ **Use different kinds of sentence starters** and sentence variations. Use each one at least once in your composition, and at least five different ones in each paragraph:

- sentence beginning with a present participial phrase
- sentence beginning with a past participial phrase (**Note:** Look for past participle ideas in the "Characteristics/Expressions/ Behaviors" or "Emotions" word lists.
- sentence beginning with a prepositional phrase
- sentence beginning with an adverb or adverb phrase
- sentence beginning with paired adjectives
- sentence beginning with a subordinate conjunction
- sentence using a simile
- sentence using an appositive

- ☐ **Use different sentence lengths.** Include some shorter five- or six-word sentences along with your longer ones.

- ☐ **Practice writing concisely.** Eliminate all unnecessary sentences, words, or phrases. Keep your descriptions crisp yet simple. Write for clarity.

- ☐ **Use concrete, specific, descriptive words** (see Word Lists for help). Write about the activities in a vivid and sensory descriptive manner. Here are some suggestions for making your writing more concrete:

An adorable little girl, the one building a sandcastle, wore a floppy sun hat.

Wearily, I rest my feet and watch dozens of eager children clamber onto the swings, tubes and tunnels of the playground.

As the family munched tasty-looking fried chicken and watermelon, they suddenly noticed a fat brown squirrel scampering onto a rock.

Energetic and brave, gleeful youngsters in bright swimwear splash fearlessly in the icy lake.

Laying a worn and faded patchwork quilt in the shade of an oak tree, two parents smile watching their active toddlers toss fallen leaves into the air.

Wearing a determined look, a sandy-haired lad wrestled with his kite string.

Carelessly, the children toss chicken bones and watermelon rinds into the sand.

Creaking and clanging, the noisy old swings remind me to repair them on Monday.

A little blond boy, the one flying a battered silver kite, left trails of popcorn and wrappers all over the grass.

Thankfully, the pounding surf of high tide washed away the evidence.

Squawking at the children, I swoop toward the leftovers scattered across the sand.

- ☐ **Be sure your tenses agree.** Again, you may write in present or past tense.

Lesson 22: Skill Builder

Writing Descriptive Narration, Part 2

DAY ONE, TWO, and THREE

Apply what you learned last week about expanding weak narration by adding important details and description.

1. Read the following paragraph carefully before beginning to write.
2. Rewrite the following paragraph over the next three days.
3. Expand the vague narrative into a paragraph that clearly expresses what you want your reader to learn about the situation. Replace vague nouns and verbs with specific ones. Add colorful adverbs and adjectives.
4. Use a wide variety of sentence types.

He ran through the city, dodging people and cars. He was being followed, and it seemed hopeless. Then he saw a tunnel, and the man slipped into the darkness. As he crept into the tunnel, the sirens and other noises seemed to disappear. He found himself in front of a door. He opened the door. It creaked. Inside sat a table, a couple of chairs, and a box. Setting himself on a chair, he caught his breath. Josh Cameron had outwitted his enemy once again.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins or other markings on the paper.

Lesson 22: Student Writing Skills Checklist

CONTENT

- ☐ Do all my sentences support my topic sentence?
- ☐ Are my topic and choice of words pleasing to the Lord and edifying to others?
- ☐ Does my title capture the essence of my composition?

STYLE

- ☐ Did I choose a strong topic sentence that introduces my composition?
- ☐ Did I use no more than one "to be" word in each paragraph? (**Circle** to be words in red.)
- ☐ Did I avoid the use of repeated words? (**Underline** repeated words in blue.)
- ☐ Did I use concrete words and avoid weak words? (**Underline** vague or weak words in green.)
- ☐ Did I use a transition word/phrase to connect my paragraphs? Write it here: _____
- ☐ Did I write in present tense? Do all my tenses agree?
- ☐ Did I vary my sentence structure by using *each of these* in my composition?
 - ___began with a past and/or present participle
 - ___began with paired adjectives
 - ___began with an "-ly" adverb
 - ___used a simile (optional)
 - ___began with a subordinate conjunction (*although, as, because, if, since, though, unless, when, where, while*)
 - ___used a subject-verb sentence
 - ___began with a prepositional phrase
 - ___used an appositive
- ☐ Did I use a sentence of six words or fewer?
- ☐ Did I write concisely, avoiding wordiness? (~~Cross-out~~ unnecessary words or phrases.)
- ☐ Did I write a strong closing sentence?

MECHANICS

- ☐ Did I put my name and date in the upper right-hand corner?
- ☐ Did I write two paragraphs? Is each one five to seven sentences in length? How many? 1 _____ 2 _____
- ☐ Did I indent the first sentence of each paragraph and leave margins around my composition?
- ☐ Did I remember to skip every other line?
- ☐ Did I double-check my spelling by circling and looking up suspected words?
- ☐ Did I double-check **and correct** capitalization and punctuation?
- ☐ Did I use complete sentences and avoid run-on sentences and misplaced modifiers?
- ☐ Did I correctly use this Checklist, including using colored pencils to underline and circle as directed?
(This includes making corrections before I write my revision.)

- ☐ **BEFORE TURNING MY WORK IN:** Did I staple my papers together in this order? (Worksheet on the very bottom, "sloppy copy" on top of that, neatly rewritten copy next, and this Writing Checklist on the very top.)

Name _____

Subject 1st Pers. Pt. of View 2

Lesson 22: Teacher Writing Skills Checklist

Edit your composition one more time, making any necessary changes or improvements.

CONTENT

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Followed instructions for this assignment
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Communicated clearly
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All sentences support topic sentence (no "carrots in your cookie jar")
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Topic and choice of words are pleasing to the Lord and edifying to others
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Title captures the essence of the composition

STYLE

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strong topic sentence introduces the composition
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used no more than one "to be" word <u>per paragraph</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoided the use of repeated words
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used concrete words (specific, vivid, and sensory)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoided the use of "weak" words
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used a transition word/phrase to connect paragraphs
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used present tense throughout the paragraph
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used each of the following sentence variations at least once (twice if possible)
		<input type="checkbox"/> subject-verb sentence <input type="checkbox"/> began with an -ly adverb phrase <input type="checkbox"/> used an appositive <input type="checkbox"/> began with a subordinate conjunction <input type="checkbox"/> began with a prepositional phrase <input type="checkbox"/> began with paired adjectives <input type="checkbox"/> began with a present or past participle <input type="checkbox"/> used a simile (one only)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Included one sentence of six words or fewer
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wrote concisely, avoiding wordiness
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strong closing sentence

MECHANICS

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Name</u> and <u>date</u> in the upper right-hand corner
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Each paragraph is five to seven sentences long
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used proper form (indentation, margins, skipped lines, good spacing)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Double-checked spelling, capitalization, punctuation
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used complete sentences, avoided run-on sentences, avoided misplaced modifiers
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Correctly used checklist and used colored pencils, circling and underlining as directed
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Included brainstorming sheet, all drafts of this composition, and your checklist
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All papers are stapled together in proper order

Comments _____

Name _____

Subject of Composition _____

Title _____

COMPOSITION EVALUATION

Content 15 points

Points Possible Points Earned

- | | | |
|---|----------|-------|
| • Followed directions for assignment | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Communicated clearly | <u>4</u> | _____ |
| • Paragraph unity (sentences support main idea; use of details) | <u>5</u> | _____ |
| • Graciousness | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Title (descriptive= 2; adequate=1; poor or no title=0) | <u>2</u> | _____ |

Style 20 points

- | | | |
|---|----------|-------|
| • Sentence variation and style (including limiting "to be" words) | <u>4</u> | _____ |
| • Sentence fluency/readability (awkwardness) | <u>3</u> | _____ |
| • Concreteness (wise use of vivid, specific words) | <u>4</u> | _____ |
| • Conciseness (avoids wordiness; also not flowery or verbose) | <u>3</u> | _____ |
| • Proper use of tense | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Topic sentence (strong=2; adequate=1; poor or none=0) | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Closing sentence (strong=2; adequate=1; poor or none=0) | <u>2</u> | _____ |

Mechanics 10 points

10 _____

- Form (margins, indentation, spacing, name and date)
- Spelling, punctuation, and capitalization
- Grammar (homonyms, possessive vs. plural, contractions, etc.)
- Sentence structure (complete; no run-ons; no misplaced modifiers)

General 5 points

- | | | |
|--|----------|-------|
| • Included all drafts of composition (including brainstorming) | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Correct use of Writing Skills Checklist | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Overall neatness of final draft | <u>1</u> | _____ |

TOTAL: _____ /50 = _____ % = _____

Comments: _____

(over)

100% = A+	87-89% = B+	77-79% = C+
94-99% = A	84-86% = B	74-76% = C
90-93% = A-	80-83% = B-	70-73% = C-

Below 70%: rewrite composition

Lesson 23: Narrative Voice

When you wrote about the picnic in the park, you described the same event twice, each time through the eyes of a different person: a participant (the parent) and an observer (the elderly person, the janitor, or an animal). The **point of view** was determined by each character's opinions, frame of mind, and experiences.

This lesson will again experiment with point of view and **narrative voice**.

Remember, **point of view** is the angle from which a story is told. This depends upon who is telling the story. A **first-person point of view** means that one of the characters is telling the story and writes from an "I" perspective. An author writing in first person cannot know what everything or everyone else in the story is thinking. The person telling the story is the **narrator**. In the book *Black Beauty* by Anna Sewall; *Black Beauty* tells his own story; in this instance, the narrator is a horse.

On the other hand, the **third-person point of view** means that someone outside of the story is telling it and writes from a "he/she/they" perspective. Telling a story in third person places the narrator in a special position of knowing what one or all of the characters are thinking and feeling, as if he or she could read their minds. When the narrator knows what *one* character thinks and feels, this is called **limited omniscience**. Although a narrator with limited omniscience can only know what one character thinks and feels, he or she is still able to observe the actions of other characters in the story.

When the narrator knows what *all* the characters think and feel, this is called **unlimited omniscience**. He/she has the advantage of observing characters in different settings. For example, he/she can describe the panic of two people in a single-engine plane during a severe thunderstorm. Then he/she can switch to the local airport and describe the emotions and actions of the worried ground crew as they prepare for the plane's emergency landing.

It is easy to write a first-person account when you have personally experienced the event. As you have discovered, however, it is much more difficult to put yourself in someone else's shoes and describe an experience from his or her perspective.

To experiment with the **first-person narrative voice** in this lesson, you will need to draw on your creativity, since you will write of your experience as---an animal! You will document your activity in a diary format. To simplify the assignment, which must be five to eight sentences long, choose one activity rather than several. For example, if you are a black bear, you might tell how you caught a fish in a stream, retrieved honey from an old log, or taught your cub to climb a tree. You would not write about all three of these in one paragraph.

Your **third-person narrative** voice paragraph will again focus on the same animal. This time you will narrate, telling about the animal's activity or behavior. You are not to be a part of the story; rather, you will describe what the animal does from your perspective as an observer who is outside the story. This paragraph, also five to eight sentences long, must be about a different activity from the first paragraph.

Here are two sample paragraphs. Notice that the author writes in past tense using first-person voice. The second paragraph, a third-person narrative, uses present tense. You may use either or both. Also notice that although both paragraphs deal with the mink's eating/hunting habits, the first paragraph actually focuses on the mink as prey rather than as predator. The two paragraphs are, indeed, about two completely different events.

Mink's Narrow Escape

In the early evening, as I prepared to pounce on a tempting crayfish, a gray shadow briefly crossed my path. Looking up, I was terrified to see an enormous owl circling above me. Swiftly and silently, the great bird plunged from its height, its massive wings outstretched. As I felt the prick of a knifelike talon pierce my back, I dove into the dark stream to escape my predator. The cool water momentarily soothed the sharp pain. Warily, I emerged from the creek and hurried to the safety of my burrow, where I nursed my tender wound and dreamed of the tasty crayfish that should have been my dinner.

Icy Escapade

As winter overtakes the woodland, the small brook begins to freeze in the shallower places. Searching for a wayward rodent on this bone-chilling afternoon, a sleek mink darts gracefully onto the ice. As he approaches the opposite shore, he startles suddenly as a loud c-r-a-c-k! shatters the silence. In an instant, the slender mammal slips through the broken surface into the frigid water. The mink, an excellent swimmer, soon pops up downstream, his alert black eyes taking in his surroundings. Like a small torpedo, he glides deftly through the chilly creek, his webbed feet serving as paddles. Exiting onto the snowy bank, the watchful animal suddenly spies a mouse scurrying across a clearing. Crafty and swift, the cunning mink surprises its prey and enjoys a winter feast.

Lesson 23: "Backward Brainstorming"

Directions: Read the sample paragraphs; follow parent instructions for this exercise.

"Mink's Narrow Escape"

Mink	Owl
<input type="checkbox"/> Behavior/Experience	<input type="checkbox"/> Behavior
	<input type="checkbox"/> Description

Crayfish	Surroundings
<input type="checkbox"/> Description	<input type="checkbox"/> Season/Time
	<input type="checkbox"/> Habitat

"Icy Escapade"

Mink	Rodent	Surroundings
<input type="checkbox"/> Behavior/Experience	<input type="checkbox"/> Description	<input type="checkbox"/> Season/Time
	<input type="checkbox"/> Behavior	<input type="checkbox"/> Habitat
<input type="checkbox"/> Appearance		

Lesson 23: Writing a Narrative in First and Third Person

- ☐ Choose an animal. Woodland mammals make interesting subject matter, but you might choose a jungle animal, a farm animal, or other creature.
- ☐ Briefly read up on your animal. Perhaps you have nature magazines, such as *National Geographic* or *Ranger Rick*. A book on animals or animal behavior would be helpful. Don't forget to skim an encyclopedia article for further information. This should not require a trip to the library!
- ☐ Focus on a different activity for each paragraph. Consider the following, or come up with your own ideas:
 - foraging/hunting/finding food
 - caring for/teaching young
 - building a home
 - escaping from a dangerous/threatening situation
 - grooming
 - an interesting trait or habit
- ☐ Go back to your reading material to better understand the particular behaviors you plan to write about.
- ☐ Brainstorm by making a chart. Be thorough so you have ample material from which to choose.
 - Prepare **two** columns, one to develop the character (animal) and one to develop the setting
 - For the animal, be sure to include behavior/activity and appearance
 - For the setting, include season/time of year and habitat/surroundings. Don't forget to include sensory descriptions. In addition to describing the animal's activity, this paragraph must give the reader a detailed word picture of the habitat.
 - Note that the setting may include other creatures that interact with the main character.
- ☐ Write your first paragraph in **first person** (the animal does the narrating).
 - Write about one activity **ONLY**
 - Do not begin by writing, "I am a wolverine" or "Let me tell you about my life as a weasel."
- ☐ Write your second paragraph in **third person** (a narrator outside of the story describes the action). Write about a **DIFFERENT** activity.
- ☐ Be sure your **tenses agree** within each paragraph. Both paragraphs may be written in the same tense, or you may write one paragraph in present tense and one in past tense.

- ☐ Remember to be descriptive as well as narrative. See the examples for ideas.
- ☐ Use sentence variations. *Specific* sentence variations have not been assigned, but your final grade will reflect your wise use of different sentence types. Choose from among these:
 - subject-verb sentences
 - present and past participle sentence starters (**Note:** You can find many past participles in the "Characteristics/Expressions/ Behaviors" or "Emotions" word lists.)
 - prepositional phrase sentence starters
 - adverb or adverbial phrase sentence starters
 - paired adjective sentence starters (**Note:** You can find many excellent ideas for paired adjectives in your "Sound Words," "Texture Words," and "Visual" word lists.)
 - appositives (especially appropriate in your second paragraph)
 - similes
 - subordinate conjunctions
- ☐ Use sentences of varying lengths.
- ☐ Title each paragraph separately. Be sure to use the name of the animal in the title of the first paragraph, since it will be written in first person and may not mention what kind of animal it is.

Name _____
Subject Narrative Voice (1st Person)

Lesson 23: Student Writing Skills Checklist

CONTENT

- ☐ Do all my sentences support my topic sentence?
- ☐ Are my topic and choice of words pleasing to the Lord and edifying to others?
- ☐ Does my title capture the essence of my composition?

STYLE

- ☐ Did I choose a strong topic sentence that introduces my composition?
- ☐ Did I use no more than one "to be" word? (**Circle** to be words in red.)
- ☐ Did I avoid the use of repeated words? (**Underline** repeated words in blue.)
- ☐ Did I use concrete words and avoid weak words? (**Underline** vague or weak words in green.)
- ☐ Did I write in first person as if I were the animal?
- ☐ Did I use the same tense throughout the composition? I used _____ tense
- ☐ Did I use a transition word/phrase to connect my paragraphs? Write it here: _____
- ☐ Did I vary my sentence structure by wisely choosing a variety of the following?
 - ___ began with a past and/or present participle
 - ___ began with paired adjectives
 - ___ began with an "-ly" adverb
 - ___ used a simile (optional)
 - ___ began with a subordinate conjunction (*although, as, because, if, since, though, unless, when, where, while*)
 - ___ used a subject-verb sentence
 - ___ began with a prepositional phrase
 - ___ used an appositive
- ☐ Did I use a sentence of six words or fewer?
- ☐ Did I write concisely, avoiding wordiness? (~~Gross-out unnecessary words or phrases.~~)
- ☐ Did I write a strong closing sentence?

MECHANICS

- ☐ Did I put my name and date in the upper right-hand corner?
 - ☐ Is my paragraph five to seven sentences in length? How many? _____
 - ☐ Did I indent the first sentence of the paragraph and leave margins around my composition?
 - ☐ Did I remember to skip every other line?
 - ☐ Did I double-check my spelling by circling and looking up suspected words?
 - ☐ Did I double-check **and correct** capitalization and punctuation?
 - ☐ Did I use complete sentences and avoid run-on sentences and misplaced modifiers?
 - ☐ Did I correctly use this Checklist, including using colored pencils to underline and circle as directed?
(This includes making corrections before I write my revision.)
- ☐ **BEFORE TURNING MY WORK IN:** Did I staple my papers together in this order? (Worksheet on the very bottom, "sloppy copy" on top of that, neatly rewritten copy next, and this Writing Checklist on the very top.)

Name _____
Subject Narrative Voice (3rd Person)

Lesson 23: Student Writing Skills Checklist

CONTENT

- ☐ Do all my sentences support my topic sentence?
- ☐ Are my topic and choice of words pleasing to the Lord and edifying to others?
- ☐ Does my title capture the essence of my composition?

STYLE

- ☐ Did I choose a strong topic sentence that introduces my composition?
- ☐ Did I use no more than one "to be" word? (**Circle** to be words in red.)
- ☐ Did I avoid the use of repeated words? (**Underline** repeated words in blue.)
- ☐ Did I use concrete words and avoid weak words? (**Underline** vague or weak words in green.)
- ☐ Did I write in third person as if I were observing the animal?
- ☐ Did I use the same tense throughout the composition? I used _____ tense.
- ☐ Did I use a transition word/phrase to connect my paragraphs? Write it here: _____
- ☐ Did I vary my sentence structure by wisely choosing a variety of the following?
 - ___ began with a past and/or present participle
 - ___ began with paired adjectives
 - ___ began with an "-ly" adverb
 - ___ used a simile (optional)
 - ___ began with a subordinate conjunction (*although, as, because, if, since, though, unless, when, where, while*)
 - ___ used a subject-verb sentence
 - ___ began with a prepositional phrase
 - ___ used an appositive
- ☐ Did I use a sentence of six words or fewer?
- ☐ Did I write concisely, avoiding wordiness? (~~Cross out unnecessary words or phrases.~~)
- ☐ Did I write a strong closing sentence?

MECHANICS

- ☐ Did I put my name and date in the upper right-hand corner?
- ☐ Is my paragraph five to seven sentences in length? How many? _____
- ☐ Did I indent the first sentence of the paragraph and leave margins around my composition?
- ☐ Did I remember to skip every other line?
- ☐ Did I double-check my spelling by circling and looking up suspected words?
- ☐ Did I double-check **and correct** capitalization and punctuation?
- ☐ Did I use complete sentences and avoid run-on sentences and misplaced modifiers?
- ☐ Did I correctly use this Checklist, including using colored pencils to underline and circle as directed?
(This includes making corrections before I write my revision.)

- ☐ **BEFORE TURNING MY WORK IN:** Did I staple my papers together in this order? (Worksheet on the very bottom, "sloppy copy" on top of that, neatly rewritten copy next, and this Writing Checklist on the very top.)

Name _____

Subject Narr. Voice (1st Pers.)

Lesson 23: Teacher Writing Skills Checklist

Edit your composition one more time, making any necessary changes or improvements.

CONTENT

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Followed instructions for this assignment
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Communicated clearly
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All sentences support topic sentence (no "carrots in your cookie jar")
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Topic and choice of words are pleasing to the Lord and edifying to others
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Title captures the essence of the composition

STYLE

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strong topic sentence introduces the composition
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used no more than one "to be" word
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoided the use of repeated words
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used concrete words (specific, vivid, and sensory)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoided the use of "weak" words
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wrote in first person (as the animal)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used same tense throughout the paragraph
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wisely used a variety of the following sentence variations
		__subject-verb sentence __began with an -ly adverb phrase
		__used an appositive __began with a subordinate conjunction
		__began with a prepositional phrase __began with paired adjectives
		__began with a present or past participle
		__used a simile (one only)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Included one sentence of six words or fewer
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wrote concisely, avoiding wordiness
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strong closing sentence

MECHANICS

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Name</u> and <u>date</u> in the upper right-hand corner
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Paragraph is five to seven sentences long
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used proper form (indentation, margins, skipped lines, good spacing)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Double-checked spelling, capitalization, punctuation
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used complete sentences, avoided run-on sentences, avoided misplaced modifiers
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Correctly used checklist and used colored pencils, circling and underlining as directed
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Included brainstorming sheet, all drafts of this composition, and your checklist
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All papers are stapled together in proper order

Comments _____

Name _____

Subject Narr. Voice (3rd Pers.)

Lesson 23: Teacher Writing Skills Checklist

Edit your composition one more time, making any necessary changes or improvements.

CONTENT

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Followed instructions for this assignment
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Communicated clearly
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All sentences support topic sentence (no "carrots in your cookie jar")
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Topic and choice of words are pleasing to the Lord and edifying to others
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Title captures the essence of the composition

STYLE

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strong topic sentence introduces the composition
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used no more than one "to be" word
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoided the use of repeated words
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used concrete words (specific, vivid, and sensory)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoided the use of "weak" words
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wrote in third person (<i>observing</i> the animal)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used same tense throughout the paragraph
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wisely used a variety of the following sentence variations
		<input type="checkbox"/> subject-verb sentence <input type="checkbox"/> began with an -ly adverb phrase <input type="checkbox"/> used an appositive <input type="checkbox"/> began with a subordinate conjunction <input type="checkbox"/> began with a prepositional phrase <input type="checkbox"/> began with paired adjectives <input type="checkbox"/> began with a present or past participle <input type="checkbox"/> used a simile (one only)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Included one sentence of six words or fewer
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wrote concisely, avoiding wordiness
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strong closing sentence

MECHANICS

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Name</u> and <u>date</u> in the upper right-hand corner
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Paragraph is five to seven sentences long
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used proper form (indentation, margins, skipped lines, good spacing)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Double-checked spelling, capitalization, punctuation
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used complete sentences, avoided run-on sentences, avoided misplaced modifiers
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Correctly used checklist and used colored pencils, circling and underlining as directed
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Included brainstorming sheet, all drafts of this composition, and your checklist
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All papers are stapled together in proper order

Comments _____

Name _____

Subject of Composition _____

Title _____

COMPOSITION EVALUATION

Content 15 points

Points Possible Points Earned

- | | | |
|---|----------|-------|
| • Followed directions for assignment | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Communicated clearly | <u>4</u> | _____ |
| • Paragraph unity (sentences support main idea; use of details) | <u>5</u> | _____ |
| • Graciousness | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Title (descriptive= 2; adequate=1; poor or no title=0) | <u>2</u> | _____ |

Style 20 points

- | | | |
|---|----------|-------|
| • Sentence variation and style (including limiting "to be" words) | <u>4</u> | _____ |
| • Sentence fluency/readability (awkwardness) | <u>3</u> | _____ |
| • Concreteness (wise use of vivid, specific words) | <u>4</u> | _____ |
| • Conciseness (avoids wordiness; also not flowery or verbose) | <u>3</u> | _____ |
| • Proper use of tense | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Topic sentence (strong=2; adequate=1; poor or none=0) | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Closing sentence (strong=2; adequate=1; poor or none=0) | <u>2</u> | _____ |

Mechanics 10 points

10 _____

- Form (margins, indentation, spacing, name and date)
- Spelling, punctuation, and capitalization
- Grammar (homonyms, possessive vs. plural, contractions, etc.)
- Sentence structure (complete; no run-ons; no misplaced modifiers)

General 5 points

- | | | |
|--|----------|-------|
| • Included all drafts of composition (including brainstorming) | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Correct use of Writing Skills Checklist | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Overall neatness of final draft | <u>1</u> | _____ |

TOTAL: _____ /50 = _____ % = _____

Comments: _____

_____ (over)

100% = A+ 87-89% = B+ 77-79% = C+

94-99% = A 84-86% = B 74-76% = C

90-93% = A- 80-83% = B- 70-73% = C-

Below 70%: rewrite composition

Name _____

Subject of Composition _____

Title _____

COMPOSITION EVALUATION

Content 15 points

	Points Possible	Points Earned
• Followed directions for assignment	<u>2</u>	_____
• Communicated clearly	<u>4</u>	_____
• Paragraph unity (sentences support main idea; use of details)	<u>5</u>	_____
• Graciousness	<u>2</u>	_____
• Title (descriptive= 2; adequate=1; poor or no title=0)	<u>2</u>	_____

Style 20 points

• Sentence variation and style (including limiting "to be" words)	<u>4</u>	_____
• Sentence fluency/readability (awkwardness)	<u>3</u>	_____
• Concreteness (wise use of vivid, specific words)	<u>4</u>	_____
• Conciseness (avoids wordiness; also not flowery or verbose)	<u>3</u>	_____
• Proper use of tense	<u>2</u>	_____
• Topic sentence (strong=2; adequate=1; poor or none=0)	<u>2</u>	_____
• Closing sentence (strong=2; adequate=1; poor or none=0)	<u>2</u>	_____

Mechanics 10 points

	<u>10</u>	_____
• Form (margins, indentation, spacing, name and date)		
• Spelling, punctuation, and capitalization		
• Grammar (homonyms, possessive vs. plural, contractions, etc.)		
• Sentence structure (complete; no run-ons; no misplaced modifiers)		

General 5 points

• Included all drafts of composition (including brainstorming)	<u>2</u>	_____
• Correct use of Writing Skills Checklist	<u>2</u>	_____
• Overall neatness of final draft	<u>1</u>	_____

TOTAL: _____ /50 = _____ % = _____

Comments: _____

_____ (over)

100% = A+ 87-89% = B+ 77-79% = C+

94-99% = A 84-86% = B 74-76% = C

90-93% = A- 80-83% = B- 70-73% = C-

Below 70%: rewrite composition

Unit 6:

Persuasive Writing

and Essays

1914

1914

1914

Lesson 24: Persuasive Writing (Writing an Ad)

Thus far you have learned three basic writing forms: descriptive, informative, and narrative. Descriptive writing appeals to the senses through vivid, colorful details. Informative writing instructs, enlightens, or helps the reader in some way. Narrative writing focuses on the action taking place and generally includes characters, setting, plot, and a period of time.

Another useful writing tool is called persuasion. **Persuasive writing** is designed to convince your reader to accept a certain belief or follow a course of action. Instead of appealing largely to the senses, persuasive writing mainly depends on reasoning and clear logic.

Persuasion is a key to effective advertising. Companies spend a great deal of money each year on magazine and television ads to promote their products. They hope to convince buyers that Brand X will give them the shiniest floor, the healthiest hair, or the whitest laundry. People also use persuasion to convince others to vote for them, shop at their stores, follow their religious beliefs, or accept their points of view.

As you have learned, elements of writing may be combined to produce an effective composition. For example, when you wrote an informative biography, you also included narrative writing. When you wrote a narrative, it was important to add vivid description. Similarly, when you write to persuade, you may seek to inform or describe to help make your point.

Suppose you believe Mr. Jones is the best candidate for mayor. If you want to convince others to vote for him, you must first tell them about his qualifications, his high integrity, and his community involvement.

Perhaps you plan to sell popcorn to raise money for your organization. It will be important to describe each variety and flavor in an attempt to appeal to your potential customers.

Maybe you will go on a mission trip one day. To help raise funds, you might write a letter to a family from your church describing the conditions overseas and letting them know about your own need for financial or prayer support. Your persuasive letter could convince this family to help in some way.

Each of these situations offers a chance to persuade someone to take action. As you write this composition, you will try to convince someone to take action too!

Lesson 24: Identifying Elements of a Persuasive Ad

Companies spend millions of dollars every year hiring special writers to do one job: develop ads that will tempt consumers to buy, buy, buy this company's products! This week you will try your hand at advertising, creating an ad for a toy. It is your job to make this toy sound so appealing that no parent or child could imagine life without it! You must draw on your writing experience to plan descriptive ads. Appeal to either the logical or emotional side of your audience.

Directions

Here is an example of an enticing ad. Read it and answer the questions that follow. Be sure to pay attention to the informal writing style!

Know why kids splash through puddles, jump into leaves, and hate to come in for dinner? Because kids and nature were made for each other. And that's why NatureFriends created the colorful, durable "Young Explorer's Hiking Set." When kids buckle on our hiker's belt, they're outfitted for treks through the backyard or park. What creepy crawlies live in your yard? The powerful magnifying glass will give your young naturalist a close-up view. Battery-operated flashlight, real canteen, whistle, and 20-page field guide will entertain him for hours. There's even a working compass to outfit the budding outdoorsman. Our "Young Explorer's Hiking Set" opens the door to fascinating adventures for the curious child.

1. Who is the consumer? _____
2. What features describe this toy's safety? _____

3. What features describe this toy's educational appeal? _____

4. What tells you that the child will enjoy this toy? _____

5. What need was created? _____
6. How will this toy meet that need? _____

7. What claims does this manufacturer make about the toy? _____

8. Does this ad appeal to emotion or logic? _____

9. What are the toy's qualities? _____

10. What vivid adjectives describe the toy's components? _____

11. Find examples of informal writing. Give an example of each below, writing the phrase or sentence.:

• Use of first person _____

• Use of second person _____

• Incomplete sentence _____

• Use of a contraction _____

• Use of questions _____

• Short sentence _____

• Sentence beginning with *and*, *but*, *because*, or *so* _____

Did you notice that all these factors work together to persuade?

Lesson 24: Writing a Persuasive Advertisement

Use a magazine photo and invent features for the toy, or choose a favorite toy that you own now or one that you enjoyed when you were younger. Before beginning, glance through some magazines at home, reading ads. This will help you get an idea of how an ad should look or sound.

Describing the toy. Brainstorm answers to the following questions:

1. Name of toy _____
2. Type of toy _____
3. Appealing characteristics of the toy _____

4. Why do you (or did you) like to play with it? (emotion/feeling words) _____

5. What qualities might entice other children to play with this toy? _____

6. What would parents like about the toy? _____

7. Think of colorful, concrete words to describe your toy (unbreakable, educational, colorful, imaginative, cuddly, safe, etc.). _____

Developing the Ad

1. Will you use an emotional or a logical appeal? _____
2. With a colored pencil, underline any of the descriptive words you wrote for number 7 above that would satisfy this appeal.
3. What kind of need will you create? _____
4. Who will be the consumer? (check one)
☐ Parent (why would a parent purchase this product?) _____
☐ Child (to what age would this toy appeal?) _____
5. What claims do you want to make about your toy? _____

6. List some additional phrases and ideas that would add to the appeal of your ad.

Writing the Ad

1. Write a six- to ten-sentence advertisement for the toy of your choice.
2. Remember to create a need for this toy, and then promise to fill it.
3. Apart from a subordinate conjunction, the sample paragraph about the "Young Explorer's Hiking Set" does not use sentence variations, but you may find a way to use a few. Instead of traditional sentence variations, the ad relies on other methods (see Step 6 below).
4. If you make guaranteed claims, be sure they are truthful and realistic.
5. Ads are often written in a combination of *first* and *second* person. The ad reminds the consumer, "We have a product and you need it!"
6. Again, notice in the example that ads sometimes use other features not normally acceptable in "regular" writing, like:
 - incomplete sentences (phrases)
 - short phrases or sentences
 - contractions (there's, it's . . .)
 - sentences beginning with *and*, *but*, *because*, or *so*

Lesson 24: Student Writing Skills Checklist

CONTENT

- ☐ Do all my sentences support my topic sentence?
- ☐ Are my topic and choice of words pleasing to the Lord and edifying to others?
- ☐ Does my title capture the essence of my composition?
- ☐ Does the name of my toy have appeal to both children and parents?
- ☐ Who is my audience? ___parents ___children
- ☐ What advertising appeal did I use? ___emotion ___logic
- ☐ Did I create a need for the toy?
- ☐ Did I explain how this toy will meet that need?
- ☐ Do I believe I have written a persuasive ad?

STYLE

- ☐ Did I choose a strong opening line that grabs the consumer's attention?
- ☐ Did I use no more than two "to be" words including contractions? (**Circle** to be words in red.)
- ☐ Did I avoid the use of repeated words? (**Underline** repeated words in blue.)
- ☐ Did I use concrete words and avoid weak words? (**Underline** vague or weak words in green.)
- ☐ Did I write in second person?
- ☐ Did I vary my sentences by using these in my ad?
 - ___incomplete sentences (phrases) ___short sentences or phrases
 - ___sentence variations ___contractions
 - ___a phrase or two beginning with *and, but, because, or so*
- ☐ Did I use a sentence of six words or fewer?
- ☐ Did I write a strong closing sentence?

MECHANICS

- ☐ Did I put my name and date in the upper right-hand corner?
- ☐ Is my paragraph six to ten sentences/phrases in length? How many? ____
- ☐ Did I indent the first sentence of the paragraph and leave margins around my composition?
- ☐ Did I remember to skip every other line?
- ☐ Did I double-check my spelling by circling and looking up suspected words?
- ☐ Did I double-check **and correct** capitalization and punctuation?
- ☐ Did I use complete sentences and avoid run-on sentences and misplaced modifiers?
- ☐ Did I correctly use this Checklist, including using colored pencils to underline and circle as directed?
(This includes making corrections before I write my revision.)

- ☐ **BEFORE TURNING MY WORK IN:** Did I staple my papers together in this order? (Worksheet on the bottom, "sloppy copy" on top of that, neatly rewritten copy next, and this Writing Checklist on the top.)

Name _____

Subject Writing an Ad

Lesson 24: Teacher Writing Skills Checklist

Edit your composition one more time, making any necessary changes or improvements.

CONTENT

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Followed instructions for this assignment
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All sentences create interest in the toy (no "carrots in your cookie jar")
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Communicated clearly
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All sentences support topic sentence (no "carrots in your cookie jar")
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Topic and choice of words are pleasing to the Lord and edifying to others
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Name of toy appeals to both children and parents
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Audience is ___parents ___children
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ad appeals to ___emotions ___logic
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Created a need for this toy
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Explained how this toy would meet that need
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wrote a persuasive ad

STYLE

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strong opening line grabs the consumer's attention
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used no more than <i>two</i> "to be" words (<i>including contractions</i>)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoided the use of repeated words
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used concrete words (specific, vivid, and sensory)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoided the use of "weak" words
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wrote in second person
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used each of the following ___incomplete sentences ___short sentences or phrases ___sentence variations ___contractions ___began a phrase or two with <i>and, but, because, or so</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strong closing sentence

MECHANICS

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Name</u> and <u>date</u> in the upper right-hand corner
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Paragraph is six to ten sentences/phrases long
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used proper form (indentation, margins, skipped lines, good spacing)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Double-checked spelling, capitalization, punctuation
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used complete sentences, avoided run-on sentences, avoided misplaced modifiers
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Correctly used checklist and used colored pencils, circling and underlining as directed
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Included brainstorming sheet, all drafts of this composition, and your checklist
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All papers are stapled together in proper order

Comments _____

Name _____

Subject of Composition _____

Title _____

COMPOSITION EVALUATION

Content 15 points

Points Possible Points Earned

- | | | |
|---|----------|-------|
| • Followed directions for assignment | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Communicated clearly | <u>4</u> | _____ |
| • Paragraph unity (sentences support main idea; use of details) | <u>5</u> | _____ |
| • Graciousness | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Title (descriptive= 2; adequate=1; poor or no title=0) | <u>2</u> | _____ |

Style 20 points

- | | | |
|---|----------|-------|
| • Sentence variation and style (including limiting "to be" words) | <u>4</u> | _____ |
| • Sentence fluency/readability (awkwardness) | <u>3</u> | _____ |
| • Concreteness (wise use of vivid, specific words) | <u>4</u> | _____ |
| • Conciseness (avoids wordiness; also not flowery or verbose) | <u>3</u> | _____ |
| • Proper use of tense | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Topic sentence (strong=2; adequate=1; poor or none=0) | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Closing sentence (strong=2; adequate=1; poor or none=0) | <u>2</u> | _____ |

Mechanics 10 points

10 _____

- Form (margins, indentation, spacing, name and date)
- Spelling, punctuation, and capitalization
- Grammar (homonyms, possessive vs. plural, contractions, etc.)
- Sentence structure (complete; no run-ons; no misplaced modifiers)

General 5 points

- | | | |
|--|----------|-------|
| • Included all drafts of composition (including brainstorming) | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Correct use of Writing Skills Checklist | <u>2</u> | _____ |
| • Overall neatness of final draft | <u>1</u> | _____ |

TOTAL: _____ /50 = _____ % = _____

Comments: _____

_____ (over)

100% = A+	87-89% = B+	77-79% = C+
94-99% = A	84-86% = B	74-76% = C
90-93% = A-	80-83% = B-	70-73% = C-

Below 70%: rewrite composition

Lesson 25: Opinion Essay

Introduction to Essay Writing

Throughout your school years, you will find yourself in situations that will require you to write an essay. Webster's *New World Student Writing Handbook* defines an **essay** as "any short piece of writing that analyzes or interprets something in a personal way." Typical kinds of essays include:

- ☐ test questions
- ☐ job, college, or scholarship applications
- ☐ essay contests
- ☐ short reports for various subjects (literature, history, science, music, etc.) that develop a topic in one of the following ways:
 - analysis of something you have read
 - cause and effect
 - compare/contrast
 - definition
 - description
 - opinion
 - persuasion
- ☐ timed essays that are part of certain proficiency exams

To Write a Successful Essay

- ☐ Keep your audience in mind.
- ☐ Stay focused on the question or topic.
- ☐ Use transitions like *for instance*, *in other words*, *consequently*, or *in fact* to clarify yourself.
- ☐ Use a more formal (but not stuffy or unnatural) structure, vocabulary, and style.
- ☐ Show that you have a clear understanding of your subject.
- ☐ Use a well-organized plan (an outline).
- ☐ Give specific examples to support your topic.

Although you will meet all types of essays in your high school years, this unit will focus on helping you write effective one- or two-paragraph essays that answer a particular question. These essays will often appear on subject tests like history or English and on some proficiency exams. They may be timed or untimed.

A well-written essay will tell the reader whether or not you know your topic by how clearly you wrote and how well you explained your points.

The three steps to producing an effective essay include **planning**, **writing**, and **revising**. Each of these will be explained and illustrated in this lesson as you learn to write an opinion essay.

This essay will require you to express an opinion on a selected topic. A composition that expresses and supports an opinion often serves two purposes:

1. To share ideas and cause readers to think about them.
2. To persuade readers to accept the writer's position or to change their mind about the topic.

The opinion paper states the writer's point of view and supports it with details and reasons. Writers can give their opinion without trying to change the readers' mind. However, if they do attempt to convince the readers to accept their point of view, the opinion paper has also become persuasive.

When Writing an Opinion Essay

1. Write about a subject that is controversial or difficult to prove.
2. Express an opinion that will probably cause opposition.
3. Support your opinion with causes or effects, comparisons, definitions, descriptions, details, examples, illustrations, and statistics.
4. Do not say *I believe*, *I think*, or *in my opinion* because these phrases state the obvious. Your paper, by definition, tells the reader what you believe or think.

Lesson 25: Writing an Opinion Essay

Choosing a topic

Write on a topic about which you have an opinion. You could express your views on just about anything. What are some current events that invite people to form strong opinions? What are your personal tastes? See Lesson 30 for a list of possible essay topics. Choose one that fits the criteria for an opinion essay. This will be the basis for your **thesis statement**.

Example opinion: The driving age should be raised to eighteen.

Think about your subject. How does it affect readers' lifestyle, health, eating habits, family, job, pocketbook, recreation, or hobbies? Choose details that matter to readers. Remember your audience. Are they congressmen? Parents? Peers? Businesswomen? Clergy? A board of directors? Teachers? You get the idea.

My audience: A state senator

Brainstorming

When making a list of possible supporting details, it sometimes helps to think "because . . ." ("Abortion is wrong *because* . . .," "Schools should require uniforms *because* . . .," "Florida is the perfect vacation state *because* . . .") However, do not use the word *because* when actually listing your supporting details. Here is an example of a brainstorming session on the topic:

The driving age should be raised to eighteen (because younger teenagers . . .)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> lack skill | <input type="checkbox"/> drive poorly maintained cars |
| <input type="checkbox"/> cause injury or death from reckless driving | <input type="checkbox"/> are distracted by their loud music |
| <input type="checkbox"/> are easily distracted | <input type="checkbox"/> like to joyride |
| <input type="checkbox"/> can be cocky or can show-off | <input type="checkbox"/> tend not to use seatbelts when parents are not around |
| <input type="checkbox"/> lack respect for rules and authority | <input type="checkbox"/> are distracted by fellow passengers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> lack maturity | <input type="checkbox"/> tend to overcrowd their cars |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yield to peer pressure | <input type="checkbox"/> play dangerous games with their cars |
| <input type="checkbox"/> cause majority of accidents | <input type="checkbox"/> lack experience |
| <input type="checkbox"/> are less responsible | <input type="checkbox"/> drive too fast |
| <input type="checkbox"/> take risks | <input type="checkbox"/> (boys) drive with arm around girl |
| <input type="checkbox"/> are more likely to use drugs or alcohol | <input type="checkbox"/> are often in a hurry, impatient |

Choosing Your Main Points

Choose three main points that can be developed with details. (Warning: Be careful not to choose facts that would be better suited as details. Select more general points.)

Example of possible main points chosen from the brainstorming list:

1. Lack maturity
2. Yield to peer pressure
3. They can be easily distracted

(Note: something in this list makes it structurally incorrect. Do you know what it is? If not, look up "parallelism" in an English handbook. What would you change?)

Outlining

Organize the details in outline form. *Outlines must maintain a parallel structure.* List your **three main points** by the Roman numerals. Then, under each main point list **subpoints** next to the capital letters. Fill in at least two subpoints for each main point. Later, you will further develop these subpoints

You will notice that the order of the outline below has been changed from the order of the original three points listed above. This student wanted to attract the readers' attention right off the bat. She also wanted to end with the point that was, in her opinion, the most important. Sometimes order of main points does not matter. When it does, take advantage by arranging your points in such a way as to make the best attempt to persuade.

Example Outline:

- I. Yield to peer pressure
 - A. Show off
 - B. Take risks to impress friends
 - C. May use drugs and alcohol
- II. Easily distracted by---
 - A. Loud music
 - B. Unruly fellow passengers
- III. Lack maturity
 - A. Lack respect for rules and authority
 - B. Lack skill and experience
 - C. Lack patience

Lesson 25: Identifying Main Points and Transitions

Directions: Identify main points and transitions in the paragraphs that follow.

1. Use colored pencils to underline the three main points every time they appear.
2. Find several examples of parallelism and circle the words/phrases in another color.
3. Insert transition words where appropriate and circle them in yet another color.
4. Use the paragraph symbol (§) to mark the places where a new paragraph should begin (hint: each main point should be a new paragraph).
5. Underline the main points in your conclusion. Because they have been reworded, they may be harder to spot!

Example A Option 1: State your thesis *and* introduce your three main points in the first sentence. Then develop each point, one at a time.

Christians should read their Bibles to better understand the character of God, grow in their relationship with Jesus, and learn about His will for their lives. The Bible reveals the nature of God. As believers read the Psalms, Isaiah, or Genesis, they learn that God is compassionate, kind, faithful, and ever-present. Bible stories about people like Abraham and Paul help them recognize how God's character is consistent in both the Old and New Testaments. Those who read their Bibles grow in their relationship with Christ. As they learn more about Jesus' life and about how He interacted with people, they desire to grow closer to Him. Because the Bible shows how He cared for people who were hurting, lonely, or in need of healing, believers today can come to Him for their needs as well. Reading God's Word helps Christians discover His will for their lives. The Bible is filled with examples of how believers should pray, exercise faith, witness to others, and use their spiritual gifts. Noble and true, it serves as a moral compass, explaining why character traits like obedience, honesty, purity, and integrity produce life in a person, but rebellion, pride, lust, and hatred bring death. Daily Bible reading offers a deeper knowledge of God, draws believers to Jesus, and helps them live according to God's will; it is a habit every Christian should exercise.

Example B Option 2: State your thesis in the first sentence. Introduce your three main points in the second sentence. Then develop each point, one at a time.

(Follow the directions for *Example A*, p. 25-5.)

Christians should read their Bible daily. Spending time in the Word helps them better understand God's character, grow in their relationship with Jesus, and learn about God's will for their lives. The Bible reveals the nature of God. As believers read the Psalms, Isaiah, or Genesis, they learn that God is compassionate, kind, faithful, and ever-present. Bible stories about people like Abraham and Paul help them recognize how God's character is consistent in both the Old and New Testaments. Learning about God's unchanging nature helps develop greater faith in Him. The New Testament is filled with stories and examples of how Jesus lived and interacted with people. Gracious and compassionate, He took pity on those in need and on those cast out by society. His love for the unlovely draws believers to Christ as they seek to grow closer to Him. All through the Bible Christians can find examples of how they should live their lives in a manner that pleases God. They learn the benefits of acting wisely, encouraging others, caring for the poor, and guarding one's tongue. Certainly they discover that lying, stealing, selfishness, and laziness do not profit them. The Bible is a book that explains God's character, draws believers to Jesus, and offers wisdom for living a godly life. Just as people need nourishing food for healthy bodies, they need a daily dose of spiritual food to maintain healthy relationships with God.

Example C Option 3: State your thesis in the first or second sentence. Then introduce and develop your three main points one at a time.

(Follow the directions for Example A, p. 25-5.)

Disciplined and obedient, Christians should read the Bible every day. Spending time in the Word helps them better understand God's character. The Psalms, Isaiah, and Genesis, for example, give numerous accounts of God's compassion, love, mercy, and faithfulness. Whether reading the Old or New Testament, one can recognize that God does not change; He has the same character in Genesis as in Revelation. Reading the Gospels helps believers grow in their relationship with Jesus. As they understand the Savior's nature, they will desire to become more like Christ. When they observe the friendship Jesus shares with His disciples, it motivates them to identify Jesus as a friend. When believers see how Jesus forgives and accepts those who have failed, it encourages them to remain soft-hearted and repentant so their relationship with Christ will not be hindered. Daily Scripture reading helps Christians learn about God's will for their lives. The writings of Paul are especially helpful, because they address such issues as watching one's words, obeying parents, speaking the truth, and sharing the gospel with the unsaved. By spending time in the Bible, believers learn which behaviors are appropriate and which actions or motives displease God. Then they can strive to live according to the things they know are right, just, pure, and good. Reading God's Word regularly gives life to Christians. Believers learn more about the nature of God, become closer to Jesus, and better understand God's will for their lives. They will find that the Bible is indeed a timeless book with a timeless message.

Lesson 25: Writing the Essay

Follow your plan. Support your reasons in the body of the essay with facts and examples. **If you have written a clear outline, writing your composition will be simple.**

Support each subpoint with appropriate details. Leftover ideas from your brainstorming list may be used to clarify subpoints. You may also support your reasons with facts and examples. (A newspaper or news magazine might be a helpful resource if writing about a current event.)

Your concluding sentence must restate the thesis in different words. A thesaurus will help you avoid repeating words in the conclusion as well as in the body.

Write a 10- to 20-sentence opinion essay. Follow these additional guidelines:

- ☐ Begin with an effective introduction. State your opinion in the topic sentence.
- ☐ If your subject matter could create antagonism, begin with details least likely to offend or turn away the reader.
- ☐ Include transitions to help the reader follow your thoughts and see the relationships between ideas and paragraphs. You will find the word list "Using Transition Words to Make or Introduce Your Points" extremely helpful!
- ☐ Because you will write in first or third person, and not in second, the word *you* must not appear in your essay.
- ☐ Conclude with a summary or a restatement of your main points.

Below is a sample essay based on the outline on p. 25-4:

Raising the Driving Age

Since evidence proves teenage drivers cause the majority of accidents, the driving age should be raised to eighteen. Young drivers yield to peer pressure, are easily distracted, and lack maturity.

To begin with, they tend to take risks in order to impress their companions. Overconfident and cocky, they show off by speeding, joyriding, and playing dangerous road games. Partying with their friends, some teens also use drugs or alcohol before getting behind the wheel. They place themselves, their passengers, and other motorists in danger because of their recklessness.

In addition, these easily distracted young motorists may fail to concentrate on their driving. Loud, booming music can drown out honking horns or sirens or cause the drivers' minds to wander. Likewise, unruly or disorderly passengers can prevent teenage motorists from paying attention to the road.

Most importantly, immature drivers lack skill and experience. They may fail to heed road signs and traffic regulations. They may misjudge timing or distance. Reacting to dangerous situations requires an automatic response that comes with maturity and practice. Furthermore, impatience to arrive at their destinations frequently causes young drivers to act irresponsibly, ignoring speed limits and crosswalks.

Clearly, a higher incidence of injury or even loss of life results from having impressionable, inattentive, and immature drivers at the wheel. Therefore, the driving age must be increased.

A Note about Repeated Words

You may have noticed a number of repeated words in the essay. In some cases this cannot be helped. For example, the word "driver" does not have many synonyms (motorist is the only appropriate one). However, words like *young people*, *teenagers*, *teens*, *novices*, and *adolescents* can be used interchangeably.

Another difficult-to-replace word is *drive* (or *driving*). In this case, the thesaurus did not help! Instead, the writer had to think of creative alternatives, choosing words like "recklessness" to replace "reckless driving," "speeding" to replace "driving too fast," and "act irresponsibly" to replace "drive irresponsibly."

So then, as long as main words are repeated sparingly, you may use them in your composition.

A Note about "to be" Verbs

Up to now, *WriteShop* has been training you to eliminate "to be" words from your paragraphs. Too many "to be" words result in overly *passive* writing. It is important for you to write *actively*, using strong, wisely chosen verbs to describe action or behavior.

As you enter into this next phase of writing and begin to focus your attention on essays, you will devote more mental energy to organizing your material and thinking critically about your subject. While it still remains important to use interesting sentence variations, it is more crucial for you to focus your thoughts on developing your topic in an organized manner. With this in mind, you may include up to **five** "to be" words in this essay.

Counting "to be" words is an unrealistic exercise when you begin to write lengthy essays and reports. Why, then, has this program taught you to avoid them? It is a matter of awareness. As your writing matures, you will become more and more adept at spotting and eliminating some of these passive verbs. "To be" words are still an important part of the English language; however, they no longer have control over you. Use them as you need, but rely on your sentence variations to keep your writing interesting!

Lesson 25: Opinion Essay Practice Worksheet

As needed, refer back to the instructions under "Writing an Opinion Essay."

Who is your **audience**? _____

Write your **thesis statement**: _____
 _____ (*because . . .*)

Brainstorm below. Your list should contain 10-20 words or short phrases. Do not move on to the next step until you have brainstormed thoroughly.

- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Choose your main points. Go back to the brainstorming list. Check off the ideas that you could easily expand with supporting details. Select the three you wish to develop, and list them here.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Write your outline. Remembering *parallelism*, list the three main points from above on lines I, II, and III. On lines A, B, and C list facts or examples to support each main point. You should find many appropriate supporting details on your brainstorming sheet.

- I. _____
 - A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____

- II. _____
 - A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____

- III. _____
 - A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____

Lesson 25: Opinion Essay Worksheet

As needed, refer back to the instructions under "Writing an Opinion Essay."

Who is your **audience**? _____

Write your **thesis statement**: _____
 _____ (*because . . .*)

Brainstorm below. Your list should contain 10-20 words or short phrases. Do not move on to the next step until you have brainstormed thoroughly.

[illegible]

Choose your main points. Go back to the brainstorming list. Check off the ideas that you could easily expand with supporting details. Select the three you wish to develop, and list them here.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Write your outline. Remembering *parallelism*, list the three main points from above on lines I, II, and III. On lines A, B, and C list facts or examples to support each main point. You should find many appropriate supporting details on your brainstorming sheet.

- I. _____
 - A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____

- II. _____
 - A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____

- III. _____
 - A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____

Write your opinion essay

Refer to your Student Writing Skills Checklist to review requirements for sentence variations and other elements of style and mechanics.

Lesson 25: Reorganizing Your Essay

Directions

1. Use this section to write a more organized essay.
 2. These tips will be especially helpful if:
 - you did not use transition words (or enough of them) in your essay.
 - you did not know when to begin a new paragraph.
 - you did not establish and develop three main points.
 - you did not summarize your three main points in an effective conclusion.
 3. You may find it useful to review the pre-writing activity essays "Identifying Main Points and Transitions."
-
- ☐ First of all, did you FOLLOW the DIRECTIONS? Make sure your essay answers the question and addresses all points in the topic.
 - ☐ Don't play "guessing games" in formal essays. Tell your reader right away who or what the subject of your essay will be.
 - ☐ You may need to rewrite your thesis statement (topic sentence). If necessary, decide how you will develop it:
 - Introduce your three main points in the first or second sentence. Then develop each point, one at a time.
 - Or state your thesis and introduce and develop your three main points one at a time.
 - ☐ When you write the body of your essay, introduce your first main point.
 - Note: If your thesis statement is only one sentence long, do not begin a new paragraph yet. Otherwise, introduce your first main point in a new paragraph.
 - Begin with a transition like "First, . . ." or "To begin with, . . ."
 - Then use supporting details to develop this point. Give concrete examples. Do not keep repeating yourself with vague thoughts. Use specific illustrations to support your points.
 - ☐ Next, introduce your second main point.
 - Remember to begin a new paragraph and to indent.
 - Use a transition like "In addition, . . ." "Second, . . ." or "Next, . . ."
 - Again, use supporting details to develop this point. Give two or three specific examples.
 - ☐ Finally, introduce your third main point.

- Begin another new paragraph and indent.
- Use a transition like "Furthermore . . .," "Finally, . . ." or "Above all, . . ."
- Again, be specific. Do not ramble, repeat yourself unnecessarily, or use vague vocabulary. If your reader comes away with the thought, "What did she say?" or "He has failed to convince me," then you know you need to add concrete examples and facts.

☐ At last you can write your conclusion.

- Begin another new paragraph and indent.
- If you wish, you may use a transition phrase like "Clearly, . . ." "In conclusion, . . ." or "In summary, . . ."
- Restate your three main points. Restate means to change the wording while keeping the original meaning. Do not introduce any new points.

Keep These in Mind

☐ By now you should know to use colorful, descriptive vocabulary and avoid weak and overly-repeated words.

- Replace at least two overused or dull nouns and verbs with terrific synonyms.
- Find places to insert at least two strong, interesting adjectives or adverbs.

☐ Do not support your main point by *repeating* your main point. Think of details that add weight and additional information to help support your main idea.

- **Poor example:** "Sam Emerson influenced my education through his outstanding teaching skills. He knew how to teach his subjects well. Because of this, I learned a great deal from him." (*No new or supporting information has been offered; every sentence repeats the main point using different words. The reader wants to know, "How did he influence you? What kinds of teaching skills did he demonstrate? How did he teach well? What did you learn from him?"*)
- **Good example:** "Sam Emerson influenced my education through his outstanding teaching skills. Not only did he present material in a clear and understandable way, he also made each subject interesting and entertaining. He accomplished this through his use of drama, costumes, lively group discussions, and meaningful object lessons. Because of his inspiring example, I have decided to become a teacher as well." (*The main point is supported with facts and examples.*)

Lesson 25: Skill Builder

Using Parallelism

Example 1

Suppose you were asked to list three qualities found in a friend. You could choose:

1. loyalty
2. kind
3. speaks truthfully

Expressed in a sentence, these qualities might look like this:

John, my best friend, exhibits loyalty, is kind, and he always speaks truthfully.

Even though you think this sentence sounds awkward, you might not be able to identify the reason, which makes fixing the problem difficult. Why does this sentence seem disjointed? The writer did not follow the rules of **parallelism**, which is a pattern of repeated, similarly constructed phrases or sentences. Understanding parallelism helps you add clarity, eliminate confusion, and avoid awkwardness.

The phrases "exhibits loyalty," "is kind," and "he always speaks truthfully" are not parallel because each is constructed using different parts of speech ("loyalty" is a noun, "kind" is an adjective, and "truthfully" is an adverb). To make sense, use parallel construction.

☐ a series of nouns:

- John exhibits **loyalty, kindness, and truthfulness**.

☐ a series of adjectives:

- John is a **loyal, kind, and truthful** friend.

☐ a series containing parallel adjectives + prepositional phrases

- John is **loyal to his friends, kind to children, and truthful to his parents**.

☐ a series containing parallel verbs + adverbs

- John **behaves loyally, acts kindly, and speaks truthfully**.

Example 2

This time you must list the benefits of exercise for teenagers.

1. to gain strength
2. develop coordination
3. energy

A sentence written from this list results in shifted construction (no parallelism).

Exercising regularly helps teens gain strength, develop coordination, and energy.

The sentence can be rewritten to make it parallel and improve its flow.

☐ a series of parallel verbs

- Exercising regularly helps teens **gain** strength, **develop** coordination, and **feel** *energetic*.
(Notice the agreement: *helps* gain, *helps* develop, *helps* feel.)

☐ a series of parallel adjectives

- Exercising regularly helps teens become **strong**, **coordinated**, and **energetic**.

DAY ONE

Directions: Rewrite each sentence using parallel construction.

1. Laura danced with grace, elegance, and was charming.

2. The stunt plane dipped dangerously, spun crazily, and it landed smoothly.

3. A fierce bull charged wildly across the meadow, over the footbridge, and trampled the neighbor's pansies.

4. I admire President Lincoln for his courage, how he persevered, and being honest.

5. Reading worthwhile literature stretches the imagination, will improve your vocabulary, and it increases knowledge.

6. Drinking untreated water, unwashed hands, and to eat improperly cooked food can promote deadly diseases such as salmonella.

DAY TWO

Directions

1. Rewrite each sentence using parallel construction.
2. List the type of parallel construction you used in your sentence, choosing from the word bank below. Sometimes you will be using a combination of two. If so, write "adjective + prepositional phrase" or "verb + noun," for example.

adjectives	verbs
adverbs	prepositional phrases
nouns	

1. To camp, going fishing, and hiking make ideal vacation activities.

Parallel construction: _____

2. Microwave ovens are convenient, they are inexpensive to purchase, and easily operated.

Parallel construction: _____

3. As a child, my favorite blanket kept me warm, gave me security, and I was comforted by it.

Parallel construction: _____

4. Yosemite National Park provides sanctuary for wildlife, backpackers can use hiking trails, and visitors enjoy the breathtaking scenery.

Parallel construction: _____

5. Restricting children's television time encourages them to develop their imaginations through play, they interact with family members during the evening, and can enjoy outdoor activities on weekends.

Parallel construction: _____

6. When holding a baby, handle him gently, carefully, and with love.

Parallel construction: _____

DAY THREE

Directions: Write parallel sentences. If you use the following sets of words to form the sentence, you may end up with shifted construction. Rephrase them so that each sentence conforms to the rules of parallelism. Be observant! Some of these sets may already be parallel and will not need rewording. Try to avoid using the word "because" in your sentences.

1. Topic: Tell how your dad or mom has inspired, affected, and/or impressed you. (leads by example, supports the activities I am involved in, I get disciplined with love)

2. Topic: Tell why it is important to attend college. (exposes you to new ideas, you become a more well-rounded person, door is opened to greater career opportunities)

3. Topic: How can young people learn the importance of money management? (budgeting wisely, avoiding credit card debt, saving for college)

4. Topic: What do you look for in a good book? (the plot is exciting, fascinating characters, it has a positive moral message)

5. Topic: Explain why people should not smoke. (habit forming, causes emphysema and lung cancer, non-smokers are offended by it)

Lesson 25: Student Writing Skills Checklist

CONTENT

- ☐ Did I support my opinion with reasons?
- ☐ Did I explain my reasons with facts, illustrations, comparisons, cause/effect, and other details?
- ☐ Do all my sentences support my opinion?
- ☐ Are my topic and choice of words pleasing to the Lord and edifying to others?
- ☐ Does my title give a clue about the contents of my essay?

STYLE

- ☐ Did I introduce my subject in such a way as to attract the reader's attention?
- ☐ Did I use no more than five "to be" words? (**Circle** to be words in red.)
- ☐ Did I avoid the use of repeated words? (**Underline** repeated words in blue.)
- ☐ Did I use concrete words and avoid weak words? (**Underline** vague or weak words in green.)
- ☐ Did I organize my details effectively, using three main points?
- ☐ Did I follow the rules of parallelism in both my outline and composition?
- ☐ Did I use transitions when changing from one point to another or introducing a new point of view?
- ☐ Did I vary my sentences by using a variety of these?
 - ___ began with an "ly" adverb
 - ___ began with a past participle
 - ___ used an appositive
 - ___ subject/verb sentence
 - ___ began with a subordinate conjunction (*although, as, because, if, since, though, unless, when, where, while*)
 - ___ began with a present participle
 - ___ began with a prepositional phrase
 - ___ began with paired adjectives
- ☐ Did I use a sentence of six words or fewer?
- ☐ Did I write concisely, avoiding wordiness?
- ☐ Did I write an effective conclusion that rephrases my topic sentence or summarizes my main points?

MECHANICS

- ☐ Did I put my name and date in the upper right-hand corner?
- ☐ Is my essay four to five paragraphs long and 10-20 sentences in length? How many sentences? _____
- ☐ Did I indent the first sentence of each paragraph and leave margins around my composition?
- ☐ Did I remember to skip every other line?
- ☐ Did I double-check my spelling by circling and looking up suspected words?
- ☐ Did I double-check **and correct** capitalization and punctuation?
- ☐ Did I use complete sentences and avoid run-on sentences and misplaced modifiers?
- ☐ Did I correctly use this Checklist, including using colored pencils to underline and circle as directed?
(This includes making corrections before I write my revision.)
- ☐ **BEFORE TURNING MY WORK IN:** Did I staple my papers together in this order? (Worksheet and outline on the very bottom, "sloppy copy" on top of that, neatly rewritten copy next, and this Writing Checklist on the very top.)

Name _____

Subject Opinion Essay

Lesson 25: Teacher Writing Skills Checklist

Edit your composition one more time, making any necessary changes or improvements.

CONTENT

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Followed instructions for this assignment
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Communicated clearly
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Supported opinion with reasons
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Explained reasons with facts, illustrations, comparisons, cause/effect, and other details
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All sentences support opinion (no "carrots in your cookie jar")
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Topic and choice of words are pleasing to the Lord and edifying to others
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Title gives a clue about essay content

STYLE

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strong topic sentence introduces the composition/attracts reader's attention
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used no more than <u>five</u> "to be" words in the composition
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoided the use of repeated words
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used concrete words (specific, vivid, and sensory)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoided the use of "weak" words
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Organized details effectively using three main points
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Followed rules of parallelism (outline and composition)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used transitions to change from one point to another/introduce a new point of view
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used a variety of the following:
		<input type="checkbox"/> subject-verb sentence <input type="checkbox"/> began with an -ly adverb phrase
		<input type="checkbox"/> used an appositive <input type="checkbox"/> began with a subordinate conjunction
		<input type="checkbox"/> began with a prepositional phrase <input type="checkbox"/> began with paired adjectives
		<input type="checkbox"/> began with a present participle <input type="checkbox"/> began with a past participle
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Included one sentence of six words or fewer
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wrote concisely, avoiding wordiness
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Effective conclusion that rephrases topic sentence or summarizes main points

MECHANICS

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Name</u> and <u>date</u> in the upper right-hand corner
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Essay is four to five paragraphs long and 10-20 sentences in length
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used proper form (indentation, margins, skipped lines, good spacing)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Double-checked spelling, capitalization, punctuation
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used complete sentences, avoided run-on sentences, avoided misplaced modifiers
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Correctly used checklist and used colored pencils, circling and underlining as directed
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Included brainstorming sheet, all drafts of this composition, and your checklist
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All papers are stapled together in proper order

Comments _____

Name _____

Subject/Title of Essay _____

ESSAY EVALUATION

Content 20 points

- **Introduction** (clear thesis statement; introduces subject; grabs reader's attention)
- **Content** (answers the question(s) by stating main points and/or persuades the reader)
- **Development** (supports main points with specific details/facts/examples; uses sound reasoning; comprehensive)
- **Topicality** (sticks to the topic; avoids rabbit trails or tangents)
- **Conclusion** (restates main points, sums up essay, does not leave reader hanging)

Points possible Points earned

3

5

6

3

3

Style 25 points

- **Organization** (logical order; sequence makes sense; main points developed in order; correct use of paragraphs)
- **Fluency** (avoids awkwardness; communicates clearly; information makes sense to reader)
- **Style** (interesting to read; active vs. passive; limits "to be" words, sentence complexity; use of sentence variations)
- **Parallelism** (points are parallel; items in a series are parallel)
- **Vocabulary** (grade-appropriate; concrete; avoids repeated words)
- **Conciseness** (avoids wordiness and needless repetition of ideas)
- **Transitions** (uses effective transitions between topics, main points, and/or paragraphs)

5

5

4

2

3

3

3

Mechanics 5 points

- **Form** (margins, indentation, spacing, name and date)
- **Spelling/capitalization/punctuation/grammar**
- **Wrote in first- or third-person** (avoided use of you/your)
- **Structure** (sentences complete; no run-ons, no misplaced modifiers)

5

TOTAL: _____ /50 = _____ % = _____

Comments: _____

(over)

100% = A+

87-89% = B+

77-79% = C+

94-99% = A

84-86% = B

74-76% = C

90-93% = A-

80-83% = B-

70-73% = C-

Below 70%: rewrite essay

Lesson 26: Letter to the Editor

Introduction to Editorial Letters

As you skim through a daily newspaper, you will probably find a section in which people from your community write to express their opinions about current issues. This section may be called something like "Opinion" or "Letters to the Editor." These letters, while expressing opinions, may also seek to convince readers, inform the public, express appreciation to a good Samaritan, or pose moral or ethical questions. When people write to the editor, they choose to write about issues that are important to them.

The typical letter-to-the-editor offers an opinion about local, state, national, or international matters. Writers comment on education choices, religious principles, neighborhood eyesores, issues of morality or social injustice, or pressing needs within their own communities. Following a child's tragic death, a writer may urge his city to build fences along railroad tracks. Another might complain about the high price of gasoline or ball park tickets. During elections, letters to the editor often remark about candidates, propositions, or taxes. Occasionally, a reader will respond to someone else's letter, whether it sparks outrage or agreement.

When writing a letter to the editor, keep in mind the following:

- ☐ Discuss a subject of current interest to the public but also of interest to you.
- ☐ Be brief (less than 300 words).
- ☐ Express your opinion clearly in the first or second sentence.
- ☐ Support your opinion with details, showing that you understand the issue.
- ☐ When possible, suggest a solution to the problem.
- ☐ Write in an organized manner, avoiding "I think," "I believe," and "In my opinion," since an editorial letter is already understood to be your opinion.
- ☐ Be especially gracious and polite; do not call names, accuse unfairly, or make broad assumptions (e.g., *all* _____ behave in this way, or believe this idea, etc.).
- ☐ Write in a slightly more formal (but not stuffy) tone.
- ☐ Include your name and phone number; most newspapers will not print anonymous editorials.

Lesson 26: Writing an Editorial Letter

This assignment is similar to the opinion essay. Again, you will write an opinion on a topic you feel strongly about. For ideas, see the list below, read through the "Opinion" section of your newspaper, or choose a suitable essay topic from the list in the Teacher's Manual Appendix B.

- ☐ Comment on a letter-to-the-editor, either to take an opposing viewpoint *or* to agree with the writer.
- ☐ Comment on a current event you find in the news.
- ☐ Give your opinion on an issue of morality (abortion, mercy killing, censorship on the Internet).
- ☐ Express your thoughts on a political or educational issue.
- ☐ Comment on a public eyesore in your community (a particular vacant lot, an unkempt home or business, a rundown park or public building, etc.), offering solutions if possible.
- ☐ Express your opinion on a topic of interest to teens (abstinence, drugs, smoking, volunteering, feeding the homeless).

Follow these steps. Use the "Letter to the Editor Worksheet."

1. Jot down the subject matter you wish to discuss in the essay.
2. Write a thesis statement. This is your statement of purpose and generally includes your opinion on the subject.
3. Brainstorm by making a list of reasons that validate, clarify, or support your statement.
4. From this list, select the top three reasons. Rearrange their order if necessary.
5. Develop a three-point outline, supporting each main point with at least two facts, examples, or reasons.
6. Write your letter, offering solutions whenever possible.
7. Your letter must be two to three paragraphs and 10-15 sentences long.

A word of caution: You will probably notice when reading your newspaper's opinion section that not all letters to the editor are gracious, well-organized, or grammatically correct. This does not mean *your* editorial may be rude, difficult to follow, and full of mistakes! Your job is to learn proper writing skills so you can communicate your thoughts on even the most sensitive topics in a God-honoring way. ☺

A Sample Letter to the Editor

An important bill sits on the desk of California's governor. You read a brief article about it in your local newspaper, like the idea of the bill, and decide to comment.

- ☐ First, jot down the **subject matter** you wish to discuss:

People would be able to apologize for causing injury to another party without their apology counting against them in court.

- ☐ Next, give your opinion in the form of a **thesis statement**:

I urge the governor to sign this bill into law.

- ☐ When **brainstorming**, make a list of possible supporting reasons on your worksheet. Remember from the "Opinion Essay" that sometimes it helps to think "because . . ." ("Citizens should vote 'no' on Measure X *because* . . .," "Teenagers should volunteer in nursing homes *because* . . .," "I urge the governor to sign this bill *because* . . ."), write your **three main points**, for instance:

1. This plan works in other states.
2. This plan would reduce chances of a lawsuit.
3. This plan would not allow the apology to be used as evidence.

- ☐ Then prepare an **outline**:

- I. This plan works in other states
 - A. Massachusetts and Texas
 - B. Its success has generated support in CA
- II. This plan would reduce chances of lawsuits
 - A. People less likely to sue if they get an apology
 - B. Biblical premise "A gentle answer turns away wrath"
- III. This plan would not allow the apology to be used as evidence
 - A. A confession of wrongdoing would still be admissible
 - B. Consequences would still apply if found guilty
 - C. The freedom to apologize would speed healing in both parties

Can you point out the parallelism in this outline?

□ Finally, **write the letter**, a two- to three-paragraph essay supporting your opinion about a current topic of interest. Support your three main points in the body of the letter with facts and examples. Again, you can develop this letter in the same way you developed your Opinion Essay. The following tips will serve as reminders when writing.

- Begin with the salutation *Dear Editor*.
- Jump in with an effective introduction. State your opinion in the topic sentence, which may be the first or second sentence.
- Develop your first main idea in the first paragraph, using details and reasons.
- Support your second main idea in the second paragraph with additional details and reasons. You must use an effective transition word to introduce each new main idea.
- Support the third main idea in the third paragraph, also using details and reasons.
- If your subject matter could create antagonism, begin with details least likely to offend or turn away the reader. Write courteously and graciously.
- Do not call names or generalize unfavorably.
- Do not write in second person. The word *you* must not appear in your paragraph.
- Do not state "In my opinion . . ." or "I think . . ."
- Avoid getting carried away by your emotions.
- Include transitions to help the reader follow your thoughts and see the relationships between ideas. Pull out your "Using Transition Words To Make or Introduce Your Points" word list!
- Stick to the point and avoid wordiness.
- Your conclusion may end the third paragraph, or you may begin a fourth paragraph.
- The conclusion must wrap up your thoughts. As part of the conclusion, try to suggest a solution to the problem or a possible course of action.
- Conclude with *Yours Truly* or *Sincerely*, and sign your name.

Here is how your letter to the editor might sound:

Dear Editor,

A bill on the governor's desk has the potential to reduce the number of injury lawsuits in California. I urge him to sign it into law. Sensible and moral, this bill would make an apology "legal." It would allow people involved in lawsuits over injury accidents to say they were sorry

without affecting their legal case. This bill would work for three reasons. First, it has succeeded in other states. Massachusetts and Texas have passed similar laws, resulting in wide support for the California bill.

Second, studies show that people are less likely to sue if they receive an apology. Supporting the biblical proverb, "A gentle answer turns away wrath," words of remorse could soften the injured party's anger and maybe cause a change of heart.

Finally, although this bill would amend the California Evidence Code so apologies could not be used as evidence in a trial, confessions of responsibility or wrongdoing would remain admissible in court. By law, a person who caused injury or death to someone else would still face the consequences of his or her actions. However, the freedom to voice a heartfelt apology, a normal human reaction, can free that person from some of the heartache or guilt.

Proven, ethical, and humane, the principles of this bill challenge the governor to sign it before another apology goes unspoken.

*Sincerely,
John Doe*

Lesson 26: Letter to the Editor Practice Worksheet

Jot down the **subject matter** you wish to discuss: _____

Write your **thesis statement**: _____

(*because . . .*)

Brainstorm below, writing as many ideas as you can think of to explain your position.

<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

Choose your main points from the brainstorming list:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Expand and give reasons. With your thesis statement and supporting reasons in front of you, think about examples, situations, illustrations, descriptions, or comparisons that will help you explain your viewpoint. Below, list these possibilities:

- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Write your Outline

- I. _____
 - A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____

- II. _____
 - A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____

- III. _____
 - A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____

Lesson 26: Letter to the Editor Worksheet

Jot down the **subject matter** you wish to discuss: _____

Write your **thesis statement**: _____

_____ (*because . . .*)

Brainstorm below, writing as many ideas as you can think of to explain your position.

- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Choose your main points from the brainstorming list:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Expand and give reasons. With your thesis statement and supporting reasons in front of you, think about examples, situations, illustrations, descriptions, or comparisons that will help you explain your viewpoint. Below, list these possibilities:

- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Write Your Outline

- I. _____
 - A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____
- II. _____
 - A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____
- III. _____
 - A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____

Write Your Letter to the Editor

Refer to your lesson instructions and Student Writing Skills Checklist to review requirements for sentence variations and other elements of style and mechanics.

Name _____
Subject Letter to the Editor

Lesson 26: Student Writing Skills Checklist

CONTENT

- ☐ Did I support my opinion with sound reasons rather than emotional appeal?
- ☐ Did I explain my reasons with facts, illustrations, comparisons, situations, and other details?
- ☐ Do all my sentences support my opinion?
- ☐ Did I communicate clearly, sticking to the point?
- ☐ Did I suggest a solution or possible course of action?
- ☐ Are my topic and choice of words pleasing to the Lord and edifying to others?

STYLE

- ☐ Did I introduce my subject in such a way as to attract the reader's attention?
- ☐ Did I use no more than four "to be" words? (**Circle** to be words in red.)
- ☐ Did I avoid the use of repeated words? (**Underline** repeated words in blue.)
- ☐ Did I use concrete words and avoid weak words? (**Underline** vague or weak words in green.)
- ☐ Did I organize my details effectively, using three main points?
- ☐ Did I follow the rules of parallelism in both my outline and composition?
- ☐ Did I use transition words when changing from one point to another or introducing a new point of view?
- ☐ Did I vary my sentences by using a variety of these?
 - ___ began with an "ly" adverb
 - ___ began with a past participle
 - ___ used an appositive
 - ___ subject/verb sentence
 - ___ began with a subordinate conjunction (*although, as, because, if, since, though, unless, when, where, while*)
 - ___ began with a present participle
 - ___ began with a prepositional phrase
 - ___ began with paired adjectives
- ☐ Did I use at least one sentence of six words or fewer?
- ☐ Did I write concisely, avoiding wordiness?
- ☐ Did I write an effective conclusion?

MECHANICS

- ☐ Did I put my name and date in the upper right-hand corner?
- ☐ Did I begin with "Dear Editor" and close with "Yours truly" or "Sincerely"?
- ☐ Is my essay two to three paragraphs and a total of 10-15 sentences?
- ☐ Did I indent the first sentence of each paragraph and leave margins around my composition?
- ☐ Did I remember to skip every other line?
- ☐ Did I double-check my spelling by circling and looking up suspected words?
- ☐ Did I double-check **and correct** capitalization and punctuation?
- ☐ Did I use complete sentences and avoid run-on sentences and misplaced modifiers?
- ☐ Did I correctly use this Checklist, including using colored pencils to underline and circle as directed?
- ☐ **BEFORE TURNING MY WORK IN:** Did I staple my papers together in this order? (Worksheet on the bottom, "sloppy copy" on top of that, neatly rewritten copy next, and this Writing Checklist on the top.)

Name _____

Subject Letter to the Editor

Lesson 26: Teacher Writing Skills Checklist

Edit your composition one more time, making any necessary changes or improvements.

CONTENT

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Followed instructions for this assignment
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Supported opinion with sound reasons (not emotional appeal)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Explained reasons with facts, illustrations, comparisons, cause/effect, and other details
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All sentences support opinion (no "carrots in your cookie jar")
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Communicated clearly, sticking to the point
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Suggested a solution or possible course of action
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Topic and choice of words are pleasing to the Lord and edifying to others

STYLE

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strong topic sentence introduces the composition/attracts reader's attention
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used no more than <u>four</u> "to be" words in the composition
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoided the use of repeated words
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used concrete words (specific, vivid, and sensory)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoided the use of "weak" words
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Organized details effectively using three main points
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Followed rules of parallelism (outline and composition)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used transitions to change from one point to another/introduce a new point of view
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used a variety of the following:
		<input type="checkbox"/> subject-verb sentence <input type="checkbox"/> began with an -ly adverb phrase
		<input type="checkbox"/> used an appositive <input type="checkbox"/> began with a subordinate conjunction
		<input type="checkbox"/> began with a prepositional phrase <input type="checkbox"/> began with paired adjectives
		<input type="checkbox"/> began with a present participle <input type="checkbox"/> began with a past participle
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Included one sentence of six words or fewer
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wrote concisely, avoiding wordiness
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Effective conclusion

MECHANICS

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Name</u> and <u>date</u> in the upper right-hand corner
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Began with "Dear Editor" and closed with "Yours Truly" or "Sincerely"
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Essay is two to three paragraphs long and 10-15 sentences in length
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used proper form (indentation, margins, skipped lines, good spacing)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Double-checked spelling, capitalization, punctuation
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used complete sentences, avoided run-on sentences, avoided misplaced modifiers
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Correctly used checklist and used colored pencils, circling and underlining as directed
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Included brainstorming sheet, all drafts of this composition, and your checklist
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All papers are stapled together in proper order

Comments _____

Name _____

Subject/Title of Essay _____

ESSAY EVALUATION

Content 20 points

- **Introduction** (clear thesis statement; introduces subject; grabs reader's attention)
- **Content** (answers the question(s) by stating main points and/or persuades the reader)
- **Development** (supports main points with specific details/facts/examples; uses sound reasoning; comprehensive)
- **Topicality** (sticks to the topic; avoids rabbit trails or tangents)
- **Conclusion** (restates main points, sums up essay, does not leave reader hanging)

Points possible Points earned

3 _____

5 _____

6 _____

3 _____

3 _____

Style 25 points

- **Organization** (logical order; sequence makes sense; main points developed in order; correct use of paragraphs)
- **Fluency** (avoids awkwardness; communicates clearly; information makes sense to reader)
- **Style** (interesting to read; active vs. passive; limits "to be" words, sentence complexity; use of sentence variations)
- **Parallelism** (points are parallel; items in a series are parallel)
- **Vocabulary** (grade-appropriate; concrete; avoids repeated words)
- **Conciseness** (avoids wordiness and needless repetition of ideas)
- **Transitions** (uses effective transitions between topics, main points, and/or paragraphs)

5 _____

5 _____

4 _____

2 _____

3 _____

3 _____

3 _____

Mechanics 5 points

- **Form** (margins, indentation, spacing, name and date)
- **Spelling/capitalization/punctuation/grammar**
- **Wrote in first- or third-person** (avoided use of you/your)
- **Structure** (sentences complete; no run-ons, no misplaced modifiers)

5 _____

TOTAL: _____ /50 = _____ % = _____

Comments: _____

(over)

100% = A+

87-89% = B+

77-79% = C+

94-99% = A

84-86% = B

74-76% = C

90-93% = A-

80-83% = B-

70-73% = C-

Below 70%: rewrite essay

Lesson 27: Compare or Contrast Essay, Part 1

Another type of **informative writing** is called **compare and contrast**. To **compare** means to write about the similarities between two events, two people, or two ideas, for instance. On the other hand, to **contrast** means to discuss the differences between them. Sometimes you will be asked to write a comparison paper, looking only at the ways two things are alike. Sometimes you must write a contrast paper, discussing only their differences. At other times, you must look at both sides, comparing and contrasting in the same composition.

Compare/contrast compositions use a special vocabulary to signal the reader as to whether the author is paralleling similarities or contrasting differences.

☐ When comparing, plan to use comparison words like:

- *again, alike, also, as, besides, both, compare, furthermore, in addition, indeed, in fact, like, likewise, moreover, resemble, same, and similar*

☐ When contrasting, choose contrast words that include:

- *although, but, different, dissimilar, diverse, either, however, in contrast, neither, nevertheless, on the other hand, rather, still, though, whereas, while, and yet*

Compare/contrast compositions are usually organized by order of importance, with the most important elements given last. Choose facts and details that identify important similarities or differences, picking at least two or three important points for each paragraph.

The ability to make comparisons and contrasts is important in many areas of your schooling. In the years to come, you will be asked to write about the similarities and differences among people, places, and ideas you have read about. You may be asked to compare two generals, like Grant and Lee. You might contrast the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument. Perhaps you will be required to compare and contrast two major battles, two historical documents, or two ideals, such as conservatism and liberalism.

In this lesson you will **compare OR contrast**, writing about the similarities or differences between two ideas, events, people, or places. Think about your topics. Are they alike in many ways, or are they completely different? Sometimes it's hard to tell whether they are more similar or more dissimilar. It helps to make a **Venn diagram** to sort your ideas. A Venn diagram uses overlapping circles to show similarities and differences.

Remember that compare/contrast compositions:

1. are usually organized by order of importance, with the most important elements given last.
2. contain facts and details that identify important similarities or differences (selecting at least three important points for each paragraph---this means you will need to discuss *six details* about your chosen subject).

Choose a topic from the list of essays in Lesson 30. You will be comparing OR contrasting in a two-paragraph composition. You may use your literature, history, or science textbook, a newspaper or magazine, or another resource for information. Depending on the topic you select, your personal experiences may be helpful to you as well. We encourage you to select a topic that will make you think critically about important issues.

Here is an essay contrasting important characters from two short stories, "Neighbour Rosicky" by Willa Cather and "The Revolt of Mother" by Mary E. Wilkins Freeman. The writer of the essay chose to use a "part-by-part" organizational style.

Contrast Adoniram Penn and Anton Rosicky

by Ben, age 14

Adoniram Penn and Anton Rosicky, although diligent, hardworking farmers, are vastly different. Mr. Penn appears to be insensitive, cold and selfish. He loves his family dearly but has a hard time expressing himself. He also does not realize his family's needs and concentrates only on his own. For example, when his wife wants a new house, he ignores the situation and builds a barn instead. While Penn is away, his determined wife moves into the barn and claims it as her house. Penn finally realizes that he is wrong and acknowledges her need. On the other hand Mr. Rosicky expresses himself quite well and quickly spots the needs of his family. When his doctor tells him that he cannot farm anymore because of his poor heart, instead of lying around the house he unselfishly asks his wife if he can do some carpentry work for her.

Both men have different priorities. While Penn values himself and his livestock more than he values his family, Rosicky shows gentleness and understanding toward others and never forces himself on people. He is constantly willing to serve other people. For instance, when his daughter-in-law plans on going out, he does dishes for her so she can get ready. Last, when providing for their families, these two men have different views about what is important. Mr. Rosicky provides a warm,

loving environment for his wife and sons, and he meets their emotional needs. On the other hand, Penn only provides material needs and is limited in his emotional interaction. As the Bible teaches, one of the most important principles is "love your neighbor as yourself." Anton Rosicky successfully applies that principle in everyday life. Unfortunately, Mr. Penn has much more to learn.

Lesson 27: Writing a Compare or Contrast Essay

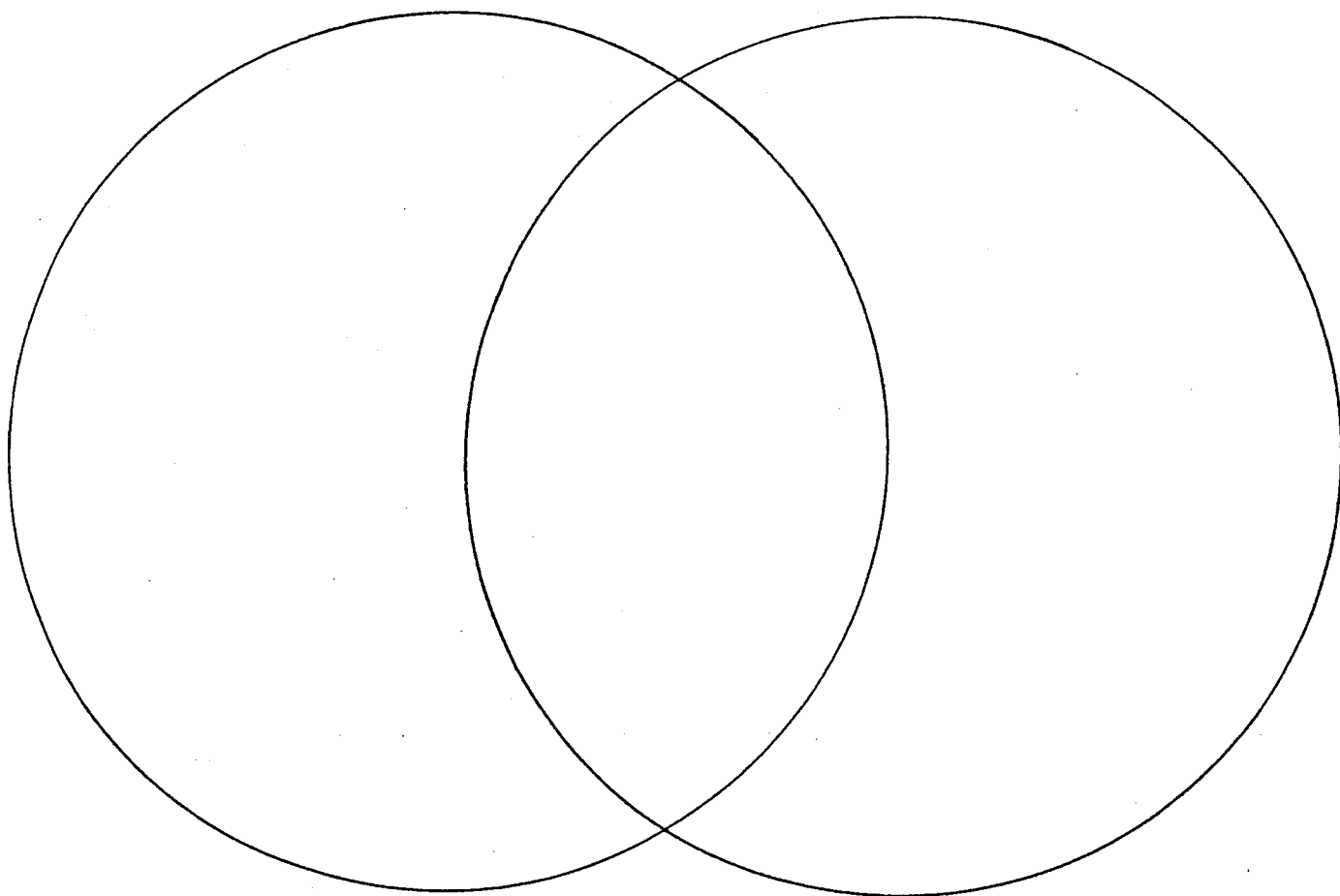
Directions

- ☐ Read a brief article about each of your issues to help you understand them better.
- ☐ Discuss difficult or controversial issues with your family to help gain perspective.
- ☐ Make a Venn diagram in the space provided. It will help you visualize differences or similarities and decide whether your topic will be easier to compare or to contrast.
- ☐ Transfer the Venn diagram information to the worksheet on the next page.
 - List details from the overlapping area under "ways they are alike "
 - Or list details from the nonoverlapping areas under "ways they are different," writing the information from Circle A in the first column and the information from Circle B in the second.
- ☐ Decide how to present the information. Webster's *New World Student Writing Handbook* suggests using a "whole-by-whole" or a "part-by-part pattern of organization."
 - **Whole-by-whole:** Present all arguments for one side or one issue before presenting arguments for the other side. For example, If contrasting the North and the South during the Civil War, first discuss Union leaders, Union soldiers, and key Union victories. Then discuss the Confederate leaders, soldiers, and victories.
 - **Part-by-part:** Present both sides of a subtopic before moving on to a new one. For instance, first contrast Union and Confederate leaders. Then, contrast Union and Confederate soldiers. Finally, contrast key Union and Confederate victories.
- ☐ Write two paragraphs in which you either compare or contrast your chosen topics.
- ☐ Cover two or three points per paragraph.
- ☐ Write seven to ten sentences per paragraph.
- ☐ Use signal words that fit the sentence, make sense, and are appropriate.
 - **To compare:** *again, alike, also, as, besides, both, compare, furthermore, in addition, indeed, in fact, like, likewise, moreover, resemble, same, and similar*
 - **To contrast:** *although, but, different, dissimilar, diverse, either, however, in contrast, neither, nevertheless, on the other hand, rather, still, though, whereas, while, and yet (moreover, indeed, and in fact may be used to contrast as well)*
- ☐ Use a transition between paragraphs (see Word List "Using Transition Words to Make or Introduce Your Points"). A transition word may be one of your signal words.
- ☐ Avoid saying "X is different from Y because" or "This is how X and Y are the same."
- ☐ Use sentence variations for interest, and use your thesaurus to find synonyms.
- ☐ Limit yourself to no more than **four** "to be" words.

Lesson 27: Making a Venn Diagram

A

B



Lesson 27: Compare/Contrast Practice Worksheet

Choose one:

I will compare__ contrast__ _____ with _____.

I will organize according to the "whole-by-whole"__ or "part-by-part"__ method.

List at least six ways they are alike (for a *compare paper*).

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

Or list at least six ways they are different (for a *contrast paper*).

Circle A _____

Circle B _____

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

Lesson 27: Compare/Contrast Worksheet

Choose one:

I will compare__ contrast__ _____ with _____.

I will organize according to the "whole-by-whole"__ or "part-by-part"__ method.

List at least six ways they are alike (for a *compare paper*).

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

Or list at least six ways they are different (for a *contrast paper*).

Circle A _____

Circle B _____

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

Lesson 27: Student Writing Skills Checklist

CONTENT

- ☐ Do all my sentences support my topic sentence?
- ☐ I compared _____ I contrasted _____
- ☐ I used the "whole-by-whole" method _____ I used the "part-by-part" method _____
- ☐ Does each paragraph compare or contrast two or three points?
- ☐ Are my topic and choice of words pleasing to the Lord and edifying to others?
- ☐ Did I choose an interesting title (not "A vs. B" or "A and B")?

STYLE

- ☐ Did I introduce my subject in such a way as to attract the reader's attention?
- ☐ Did I use no more than four "to be" words? (**Circle** to be words in red.)
- ☐ Did I avoid the use of repeated words? (**Underline** repeated words in blue.)
- ☐ Did I use concrete words and avoid weak words? (**Underline** vague or weak words in green.)
- ☐ Did I organize my details effectively?
- ☐ Did I follow the rules of parallelism?
- ☐ Did I use transitions when changing from one point to another or when changing paragraphs?
- ☐ Did I use signal words such as also, as, and on the other hand?
- ☐ Did I vary my sentences by using a variety of these?
 - ___ began with an "-ly" adverb
 - ___ began with a past participle
 - ___ used an appositive
 - ___ subject/verb sentence
 - ___ began with a subordinate conjunction (*although, as, because, if, since, though, unless, when, where, while*)
 - ___ began with a present participle
 - ___ began with a prepositional phrase
 - ___ began with paired adjectives
- ☐ Did I use at least one sentence of six words or fewer?
- ☐ Did I write concisely, avoiding wordiness?
- ☐ Did I write an effective conclusion?

MECHANICS

- ☐ Did I put my name and date in the upper right-hand corner?
- ☐ Did I write two paragraphs? Is each paragraph seven to ten sentences long? How many? 1____2____
- ☐ Did I indent, leave margins, and remember to skip every other line?
- ☐ Did I double-check my spelling by circling and looking up suspected words?
- ☐ Did I double-check **and correct** capitalization and punctuation?
- ☐ Did I use complete sentences and avoid run-on sentences and misplaced modifiers?
- ☐ Did I correctly use this Checklist, including using colored pencils to underline and circle as directed?
(This includes making corrections before I write my revision.)
- ☐ **BEFORE TURNING MY WORK IN:** Did I staple my papers together in this order? (Worksheet on the very bottom, "sloppy copy" on top of that, neatly rewritten copy next, and this Writing Checklist on the top.)

Name _____

Subject Essay (Compare or Contrast)

Lesson 27: Teacher Writing Skills Checklist

Edit your composition one more time, making any necessary changes or improvements.

CONTENT

- | OK | needs improvement | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Followed instructions for this assignment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Communicated clearly |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Compared ____ Contrasted ____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Used "whole-by-whole" method ____ Used "part-by-part" method ____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Each paragraph compares or contrasts two or three points |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | All sentences support topic sentence (no "carrots in your cookie jar") |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Topic and choice of words are pleasing to the Lord and edifying to others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Chose an interesting title (not "A vs. B" or "A and B") |

STYLE

- | OK | needs improvement | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Strong topic sentence attracts reader's attention | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Used no more than <u>four</u> "to be" words in the composition | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Avoided the use of repeated words | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Used concrete words (specific, vivid, and sensory) | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Avoided the use of "weak" words | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Organized details effectively | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Followed rules of parallelism | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Used transitions when changing from one point to another/ changing paragraphs | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Used signal words such as <i>also</i> , <i>as</i> , and <i>on the other hand</i> | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Used a variety of the following | | | | | | | | |
| | | <table border="0"> <tr> <td>__subject-verb sentence</td> <td>__began with an -ly adverb phrase</td> </tr> <tr> <td>__used an appositive</td> <td>__began with a subordinate conjunction</td> </tr> <tr> <td>__began with a prepositional phrase</td> <td>__began with paired adjectives</td> </tr> <tr> <td>__began with a present participle</td> <td>__began with a past participle</td> </tr> </table> | __subject-verb sentence | __began with an -ly adverb phrase | __used an appositive | __began with a subordinate conjunction | __began with a prepositional phrase | __began with paired adjectives | __began with a present participle | __began with a past participle |
| __subject-verb sentence | __began with an -ly adverb phrase | | | | | | | | | |
| __used an appositive | __began with a subordinate conjunction | | | | | | | | | |
| __began with a prepositional phrase | __began with paired adjectives | | | | | | | | | |
| __began with a present participle | __began with a past participle | | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Included one sentence of six words or fewer | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Wrote concisely, avoiding wordiness | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Effective conclusion | | | | | | | | |

MECHANICS

- | OK | needs improvement | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <u>Name</u> and <u>date</u> in the upper right-hand corner |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Essay is two paragraphs long; <u>each paragraph</u> is seven to ten sentences in length |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Used proper form (indentation, margins, skipped lines, good spacing) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Double-checked spelling, capitalization, punctuation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Used complete sentences, avoided run-on sentences, avoided misplaced modifiers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Correctly used checklist and used colored pencils, circling and underlining as directed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Included brainstorming sheet, all drafts of this composition, and your checklist |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | All papers are stapled together in proper order |

Comments _____

Name _____

Subject/Title of Essay _____

ESSAY EVALUATION

Content 20 points

- **Introduction** (clear thesis statement; introduces subject; grabs reader's attention)
- **Content** (answers the question(s) by stating main points and/or persuades the reader)
- **Development** (supports main points with specific details/ facts/examples; uses sound reasoning; comprehensive)
- **Topicality** (sticks to the topic; avoids rabbit trails or tangents)
- **Conclusion** (restates main points, sums up essay, does not leave reader hanging)

Points possible Points earned

3 _____

5 _____

6 _____

3 _____

3 _____

Style 25 points

- **Organization** (logical order; sequence makes sense; main points developed in order; correct use of paragraphs)
- **Fluency** (avoids awkwardness; communicates clearly; information makes sense to reader)
- **Style** (interesting to read; active vs. passive; limits "to be" words, sentence complexity; use of sentence variations)
- **Parallelism** (points are parallel; items in a series are parallel)
- **Vocabulary** (grade-appropriate; concrete; avoids repeated words)
- **Conciseness** (avoids wordiness and needless repetition of ideas)
- **Transitions** (uses effective transitions between topics, main points, and/or paragraphs)

5 _____

5 _____

4 _____

2 _____

3 _____

3 _____

3 _____

Mechanics 5 points

- **Form** (margins, indentation, spacing, name and date)
- **Spelling/capitalization/punctuation/grammar**
- **Wrote in first- or third-person** (avoided use of you/your)
- **Structure** (sentences complete; no run-ons, no misplaced modifiers)

5 _____

TOTAL: /50 = % =

Comments: _____

_____ (over)

100% = A+

87-89% = B+

77-79% = C+

94-99% = A

84-86% = B

74-76% = C

90-93% = A-

80-83% = B-

70-73% = C-

Below 70%: rewrite essay

Lesson 28: Compare or Contrast Essay, Part 2

Follow instructions for the assignment in Lesson 27 to write another compare or contrast essay. If you "compared" in your last essay, then you must "contrast" in this one. Likewise, if you "contrasted" in your previous composition, then you will "compare" this week.

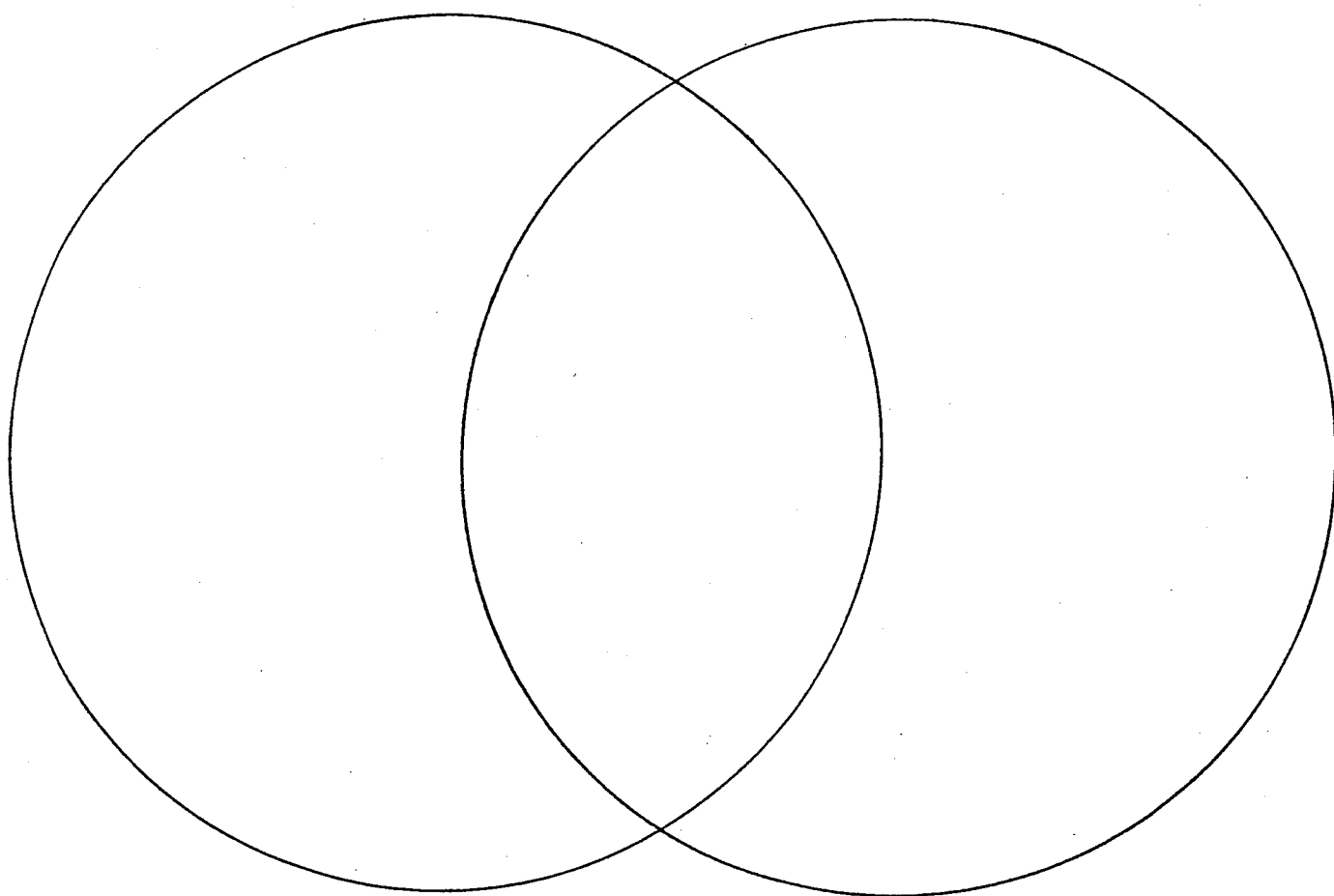
In addition, you must organize your material differently. If you organized according to the "whole-by-whole pattern" then switch to "part-by-part," or vice versa.

Another practice worksheet has been provided for your pre-writing activity. You will also find a second worksheet for your lesson assignment.

Lesson 28: Making a Venn Diagram

A

B



Lesson 28: Compare/Contrast Practice Worksheet

Choose one:

I will compare__ contrast__ _____ with _____.

I will organize according to the "whole-by-whole"__ or "part-by-part"__ method.

List at least six ways they are alike (for a *compare paper*).

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

Or list at least six ways they are different (for a *contrast paper*).

Circle A _____

Circle B _____

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

Lesson 28: Compare/Contrast Worksheet

Choose one:

I will compare__ contrast__ _____ with _____.

I will organize according to the "whole-by-whole"__ or "part-by-part"__ method.

List at least six ways they are alike (for a *compare paper*).

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

Or list at least six ways they are different (for a *contrast paper*).

Circle A _____

Circle B _____

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

Name _____
Subject Essay (Compare or Contrast)

Lesson 28: Student Writing Skills Checklist

CONTENT

- ☐ Do all my sentences support my topic sentence?
- ☐ I compared _____. I contrasted _____.
- ☐ I used the "whole-by-whole" method _____. I used the "part-by-part" method _____.
- ☐ Does each paragraph compare or contrast two or three points?
- ☐ Are my topic and choice of words pleasing to the Lord and edifying to others?
- ☐ Did I choose an interesting title (not "A vs. B" or "A and B")?

STYLE

- ☐ Did I introduce my subject in such a way as to attract the reader's attention?
- ☐ Did I use no more than four "to be" words? (**Circle** to be words in red.)
- ☐ Did I avoid the use of repeated words? (**Underline** repeated words in blue.)
- ☐ Did I use concrete words and avoid weak words? (**Underline** vague or weak words in green.)
- ☐ Did I organize my details effectively?
- ☐ Did I follow the rules of parallelism?
- ☐ Did I use transitions when changing from one point to another or when changing paragraphs?
- ☐ Did I use signal words such as also, as, and on the other hand?
- ☐ Did I vary my sentences by using a variety of these?
 - ___ began with an "-ly" adverb
 - ___ began with a past participle
 - ___ used an appositive
 - ___ subject/verb sentence
 - ___ began with a subordinate conjunction (*although, as, because, if, since, though, unless, when, where, while*)
 - ___ began with a present participle
 - ___ began with a prepositional phrase
 - ___ began with paired adjectives
- ☐ Did I use at least one sentence of six words or fewer?
- ☐ Did I write concisely, avoiding wordiness?
- ☐ Did I write an effective conclusion?

MECHANICS

- ☐ Did I put my name and date in the upper right-hand corner?
- ☐ Did I write two paragraphs? Is each paragraph seven to ten sentences long? How many? 1 _____ 2 _____
- ☐ Did I indent, leave margins, and remember to skip every other line?
- ☐ Did I double-check my spelling by circling and looking up suspected words?
- ☐ Did I double-check **and correct** capitalization and punctuation?
- ☐ Did I use complete sentences and avoid run-on sentences and misplaced modifiers?
- ☐ Did I correctly use this Checklist, including using colored pencils to underline and circle as directed?
(This includes making corrections before I write my revision.)
- ☐ **BEFORE TURNING MY WORK IN:** Did I staple my papers together in this order? (Worksheet on the very bottom, "sloppy copy" on top of that, neatly rewritten copy next, and this Writing Checklist on top.)

Name _____

Subject Essay (Compare or Contrast)

Lesson 28: Teacher Writing Skills Checklist

Edit your composition one more time, making any necessary changes or improvements.

CONTENT

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Followed instructions for this assignment
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Communicated clearly
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Compared ____ Contrasted ____
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used "whole-by-whole" method ____ Used "part-by-part" method ____
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Each paragraph compares or contrasts two or three points
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All sentences support topic sentence (no "carrots in your cookie jar")
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Topic and choice of words are pleasing to the Lord and edifying to others
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chose an interesting title (not "A vs. B" or "A and B")

STYLE

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strong topic sentence attracts reader's attention
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used no more than <u>four</u> "to be" words in the composition
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoided the use of repeated words
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used concrete words and avoided the use of "weak" words
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Organized details effectively
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Followed rules of parallelism
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used transitions when changing from one point to another/ changing paragraphs
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used signal words such as <i>also</i> , <i>as</i> , and <i>on the other hand</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used a variety of the following
		__subject-verb sentence __began with an -ly adverb phrase
		__used an appositive __began with a subordinate conjunction
		__began with a prepositional phrase __began with paired adjectives
		__began with a present participle __began with a past participle
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Included one sentence of six words or fewer
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wrote concisely, avoiding wordiness
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Effective conclusion

MECHANICS

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Name</u> and <u>date</u> in the upper right-hand corner
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Essay is two paragraphs long; <u>each paragraph</u> is seven to ten sentences in length
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used proper form (indentation, margins, skipped lines, good spacing)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Double-checked spelling, capitalization, punctuation
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used complete sentences, avoided run-on sentences, avoided misplaced modifiers
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Correctly used checklist and used colored pencils, circling and underlining as directed
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Included brainstorming sheet, all drafts of this composition, and your checklist
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All papers are stapled together in proper order

Comments _____

Name _____

Subject/Title of Essay _____

ESSAY EVALUATION

Content 20 points

Points possible Points earned

- **Introduction** (clear thesis statement; introduces subject; grabs reader's attention)
- **Content** (answers the question(s) by stating main points and/or persuades the reader)
- **Development** (supports main points with specific details/facts/examples; uses sound reasoning; comprehensive)
- **Topicality** (sticks to the topic; avoids rabbit trails or tangents)
- **Conclusion** (restates main points, sums up essay, does not leave reader hanging)

<u>3</u>	_____
<u>5</u>	_____
<u>6</u>	_____
<u>3</u>	_____
<u>3</u>	_____

Style 25 points

- **Organization** (logical order; sequence makes sense; main points developed in order; correct use of paragraphs)
- **Fluency** (avoids awkwardness; communicates clearly; information makes sense to reader)
- **Style** (interesting to read; active vs. passive; limits "to be" words, sentence complexity; use of sentence variations)
- **Parallelism** (points are parallel; items in a series are parallel)
- **Vocabulary** (grade-appropriate; concrete; avoids repeated words)
- **Conciseness** (avoids wordiness and needless repetition of ideas)
- **Transitions** (uses effective transitions between topics, main points, and/or paragraphs)

<u>5</u>	_____
<u>5</u>	_____
<u>4</u>	_____
<u>2</u>	_____
<u>3</u>	_____
<u>3</u>	_____
<u>3</u>	_____

Mechanics 5 points

- **Form** (margins, indentation, spacing, name and date)
- **Spelling/capitalization/punctuation/grammar**
- **Wrote in first- or third-person** (avoided use of you/your)
- **Structure** (sentences complete; no run-ons, no misplaced modifiers)

<u>5</u>	_____
----------	-------

TOTAL: _____ /50 = _____ % = _____

Comments: _____

(over)

100% = A+	87-89% = B+	77-79% = C+
94-99% = A	84-86% = B	74-76% = C
90-93% = A-	80-83% = B-	70-73% = C-

Below 70%: rewrite essay

Lesson 29: Essays That Describe or Define

Since Lesson 25, you have practiced writing different kinds of essays, including opinion, letter to the editor, compare, and contrast. Each of these essays was prepared in a slightly different manner, although they all required some structured form of organization. This essay, although different in content, still requires planning and preparation. You will develop your thesis statement with three main points and support those main points with details, facts, examples, and illustrations. When possible, give true-to-life examples that make your essay come alive.

You are almost to the end of *WriteShop*. In your possession are the tools you will need and use throughout your life to write with style. This lesson will not be filled with detailed how-to's. Instead, you will only find a worksheet for brainstorming and preparation. Choose a subject from "Essay Topics" in the Teacher's Appendix beginning on p. B-22 (Essays that Describe or Define).

Draw on all you have learned through *WriteShop* to write an interesting, colorful, descriptive essay. Limit yourself to no more than **five** "to be" words. Your essay should be 15-20 sentences (enough to thoroughly develop each point). Use a variety of sentence types. Refer often to your thesaurus to select the right words. Continue to practice with essay writing to prepare for college and beyond.

Here is an example of an essay that describes. Although it is adequate, it is not thoroughly developed. After you read it, compare it with the essay that follows. You will see how personal stories and examples not only expand the essay, but also add human interest to the content.

A True Friend

Some of the qualities I like in a friend include kindness, honesty, and loyalty. First of all, a kind friend can be counted on to encourage and support me in an understanding manner. Standing by me when I am discouraged or down in the dumps, this compassionate person also rejoices when life is going my way. Second, a friend who is honest will speak truthfully to me when I make poor choices and need gentle correction. Bold yet loving, he will not hesitate to speak frankly, even at the risk of losing my friendship. Finally, a loyal companion stays with me through thick and thin. He lives out the verse in Proverbs that says a friend sticks closer than a brother. Without a doubt, a true buddy demonstrates warmheartedness, truthfulness, and faithfulness in every situation.

Notice how this next essay begins with a paragraph that introduces the three main points (each point defines a different aspect of friendship).

Three separate paragraphs follow. In each of these paragraphs, one point is developed with facts. The writer then adds a personal illustration from his own experience. Without these illustrations, the essay would be a nice commentary on friendship. By telling specific stories, however, the writer makes his subject seem real to the reader. Consequently, the essay becomes more interesting too!

Finally, the concluding paragraph recaps the three main points by stating them in a new way. The writer then closes with a final thought.

Keep these steps in mind when you write. They will help you stay organized and on track, enabling your reader to follow your points and your train of thought with ease.

A True Friend

Some of the qualities I like in a friend include kindness, honesty, and loyalty. Mark and I have been best friends since fifth grade. Over the years he has demonstrated these three important attributes.

First of all, as a kind friend, Mark can be counted on to encourage and support me in an understanding manner. Standing by me when I am discouraged or down in the dumps, my compassionate buddy also rejoices when life is going my way. For example, when I took first place in the science fair last year, Mark seemed genuinely excited for me, even though he did not even receive an honorable mention.

Second, because he is honest, Mark speaks truthfully to me when I make poor choices and need gentle correction. Bold yet loving, he will not hesitate to speak frankly, even at the risk of losing my friendship. I remember a time when I acted mean-spirited and made fun of a girl who wore a brace on her leg. Mark confronted me about the way I talked about her and reminded me that I didn't need to put her down in order to feel important or popular. Not only was he honest with me, he showed me yet another example of his kindheartedness.

Finally, Mark, a loyal companion, stays with me through thick and thin. He lives out the verse in Proverbs that says a friend sticks closer than a brother. He proved this to me in January when I asked him to come to my championship hockey game. Right after he had said "yes," his cousin invited him to a rock concert. Mark remained faithful to his promise and came to my game instead.

Without a doubt, a true buddy demonstrates warmheartedness, truthfulness, and faithfulness in every situation. I feel privileged to have a friend like that in Mark.

Lesson 29: Essays That Describe and Define Worksheet

As needed, refer back to the instructions under "Writing an Opinion Essay."

Who is your **audience**? _____

Write your **thesis statement**: _____
 _____ (*because . . .*)

Brainstorm below:

[illegible]

Choose your main points. Go back to the brainstorming list. Check off the ideas you could easily expand with supporting details. Select the three you wish to develop, and list them here.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Write your outline. Remembering *parallelism*, list the three main points from above on lines I, II, and III. On lines A, B, and C list facts or explanations that support each main point. See your brainstorming sheet for ideas.

- I. _____
 - A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____Illustration: _____
- II. _____
 - A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____Illustration: _____
- III. _____
 - A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____Illustration: _____

Write Your Essay

Refer to your Student Writing Skills Checklist to review requirements for sentence variations and other elements of style and mechanics.

Name _____
Subject Essay (Describe or Define)

Lesson 29: Student Writing Skills Checklist

CONTENT

- ☐ Did I support my opinion with reasons?
- ☐ Did I explain my reasons with facts, illustrations, comparisons, cause/effect, and other details?
- ☐ Do all my sentences support my opinion?
- ☐ Are my topic and choice of words pleasing to the Lord and edifying to others?
- ☐ Does my title give a clue about the contents of my essay?

STYLE AND STRUCTURE

- ☐ Did I introduce my subject in such a way as to attract the reader's attention?
- ☐ Did I use no more than five "to be" words? (**Circle** to be words in red.)
- ☐ Did I avoid the use of repeated words? (**Underline** repeated words in blue.)
- ☐ Did I use concrete words and avoid weak words? (**Underline** vague or weak words in green.)
- ☐ Did I organize my details effectively, using three main points?
- ☐ Did I follow the rules of parallelism in both my outline and composition?
- ☐ Did I use transition words when changing from one point to another or introducing a new point of view?
- ☐ Did I use a variety of the following?
 - ___ began with an "-ly" adverb
 - ___ began with a present participle
 - ___ began with a past participle
 - ___ began with a prepositional phrase
 - ___ used an appositive
 - ___ began with paired adjectives
 - ___ subject/verb sentence
 - ___ began with a subordinate conjunction (*although, as, because, if, since, though, unless, when, where, while*)
- ☐ Did I use a sentence of six words or fewer?
- ☐ Did I write concisely, avoiding wordiness?
- ☐ Did I write an effective conclusion that rephrases my topic sentence or summarizes my main points?

MECHANICS

- ☐ Did I put my name and date in the upper right-hand corner?
- ☐ Is my essay four to five paragraphs long and 15-20 sentences in length?
- ☐ Did I indent the first sentence of the paragraph and leave margins around my composition?
- ☐ Did I remember to skip every other line?
- ☐ Did I double-check my spelling by circling and looking up suspected words?
- ☐ Did I double-check **and correct** capitalization and punctuation?
- ☐ Did I use complete sentences and avoid run-on sentences and misplaced modifiers?
- ☐ Did I correctly use this Checklist, including using colored pencils to underline and circle as directed?
(This includes making corrections before I write my revision.)
- ☐ **BEFORE TURNING MY WORK IN:** Did I staple my papers together in this order? (Worksheet on the very bottom, "sloppy copy" on top of that, neatly rewritten copy next, and this Writing Checklist on the top.)

Name _____

Subject Essay (Describe or Define)

Lesson 29: Teacher Writing Skills Checklist

Edit your composition one more time, making any necessary changes or improvements.

CONTENT

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Followed instructions for this assignment
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Communicated clearly
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Supported opinion with reasons
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Explained reasons with facts, illustrations, comparisons, cause/effect, and other details
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All sentences support opinion (no "carrots in your cookie jar")
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Topic and choice of words are pleasing to the Lord and edifying to others
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Title gives a clue about essay content

STYLE

		needs								
OK	improvement									
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strong topic sentence introduces the composition/attracts reader's attention								
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used no more than <u>five</u> "to be" words in the composition								
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoided the use of repeated words								
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used concrete words (specific, vivid, and sensory)								
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoided the use of "weak" words								
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Organized details effectively using three main points								
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Followed rules of parallelism (outline and composition)								
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used transitions to change from one point to another/introduce a new point of view								
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used a variety of the following								
		<table><tr><td><input type="checkbox"/> subject-verb sentence</td><td><input type="checkbox"/> began with an -ly adverb phrase</td></tr><tr><td><input type="checkbox"/> used an appositive</td><td><input type="checkbox"/> began with a subordinate conjunction</td></tr><tr><td><input type="checkbox"/> began with a prepositional phrase</td><td><input type="checkbox"/> began with paired adjectives</td></tr><tr><td><input type="checkbox"/> began with a present participle</td><td><input type="checkbox"/> began with a past participle</td></tr></table>	<input type="checkbox"/> subject-verb sentence	<input type="checkbox"/> began with an -ly adverb phrase	<input type="checkbox"/> used an appositive	<input type="checkbox"/> began with a subordinate conjunction	<input type="checkbox"/> began with a prepositional phrase	<input type="checkbox"/> began with paired adjectives	<input type="checkbox"/> began with a present participle	<input type="checkbox"/> began with a past participle
<input type="checkbox"/> subject-verb sentence	<input type="checkbox"/> began with an -ly adverb phrase									
<input type="checkbox"/> used an appositive	<input type="checkbox"/> began with a subordinate conjunction									
<input type="checkbox"/> began with a prepositional phrase	<input type="checkbox"/> began with paired adjectives									
<input type="checkbox"/> began with a present participle	<input type="checkbox"/> began with a past participle									
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Included one sentence of six words or fewer								
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wrote concisely, avoiding wordiness								
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Effective conclusion that rephrases topic sentence or summarizes main points								

MECHANICS

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Name</u> and <u>date</u> in the upper right-hand corner
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Essay is four to five paragraphs long and 15-20 sentences in length
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used proper form (indentation, margins, skipped lines, good spacing)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Double-checked spelling, capitalization, punctuation
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used complete sentences, avoided run-on sentences, avoided misplaced modifiers
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Correctly used checklist and used colored pencils, circling and underlining as directed
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Included brainstorming sheet, all drafts of this composition, and your checklist
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All papers are stapled together in proper order

Comments _____

Name _____

Subject/Title of Essay _____

ESSAY EVALUATION

Content 20 points

Points possible Points earned

- **Introduction** (clear thesis statement; introduces subject; grabs reader's attention)
- **Content** (answers the question(s) by stating main points and/or persuades the reader)
- **Development** (supports main points with specific details/facts/examples; uses sound reasoning; comprehensive)
- **Topicality** (sticks to the topic; avoids rabbit trails or tangents)
- **Conclusion** (restates main points, sums up essay, does not leave reader hanging)

<u>3</u>	_____
<u>5</u>	_____
<u>6</u>	_____
<u>3</u>	_____
<u>3</u>	_____

Style 25 points

- **Organization** (logical order; sequence makes sense; main points developed in order; correct use of paragraphs)
- **Fluency** (avoids awkwardness; communicates clearly; information makes sense to reader)
- **Style** (interesting to read; active vs. passive; limits "to be" words, sentence complexity; use of sentence variations)
- **Parallelism** (points are parallel; items in a series are parallel)
- **Vocabulary** (grade-appropriate; concrete; avoids repeated words)
- **Conciseness** (avoids wordiness and needless repetition of ideas)
- **Transitions** (uses effective transitions between topics, main points, and/or paragraphs)

<u>5</u>	_____
<u>5</u>	_____
<u>4</u>	_____
<u>2</u>	_____
<u>3</u>	_____
<u>3</u>	_____
<u>3</u>	_____

Mechanics 5 points

- **Form** (margins, indentation, spacing, name and date)
- **Spelling/capitalization/punctuation/grammar**
- **Wrote in first- or third-person** (avoided use of you/your)
- **Structure** (sentences complete; no run-ons, no misplaced modifiers)

<u>5</u>	_____
----------	-------

TOTAL: _____ /50 = _____ % = _____

Comments: _____
_____ (over)

100% = A+	87-89% = B+	77-79% = C+
94-99% = A	84-86% = B	74-76% = C
90-93% = A-	80-83% = B-	70-73% = C-

Below 70%: rewrite essay

Lesson 30: Timed Essays

Now that you know how to write a carefully developed essay, it is time to practice writing timed essays. You will have many occasions to write timed essays throughout high school and college. Knowing how to write a well-planned, organized essay is clearly a valuable asset. Challenging topics will not intimidate you once you have gained confidence in the skill of essay writing.

Sometimes a test will contain essay questions. These allow your teachers to find out how well you really understand a subject. They will be able to tell whether or not you know your topic by how clearly you write and how well you explain your points.

The best preparation for such essay tests is practice. You would do well to write a 20- or 30-minute timed essay once a week to keep your "mental muscles" fit. It is not any more difficult to write a timed essay than an untimed one. With practice you will learn to work within your given time limit.

As with untimed essays, timed essays require adequate time for planning, writing, and revising. If you spend sufficient time planning, the remaining processes will flow smoothly and effortlessly. In other words, if you know your material it will become apparent during the outlining stages. If you cannot think of a thing to say when you are planning, do not expect a sudden flash of inspiration when the time comes to write.

Some timed essays will not require prior knowledge of a subject; they will be based on your personal experiences. Others, like essay questions on a test, will assume you have studied and prepared. Knowledge about a particular subject will be necessary. However, be cautious. Even if you thoroughly understand the subject matter, a poorly organized essay can bring your grade down. Don't underestimate the importance of proper organization.

When it is time to edit your essay, there is no Student Writing Checklist for Lesson 30. You will not have the time to use such a checklist when you write against the clock. Furthermore, checklists are not allowed during timed essays. (Your teacher will make an exception for your first few timed essays by allowing you to use the "20-Minute (or 30-Minute) Timed Essay Checklist." Timed essay editing time should focus on proofreading. You will not be asked to limit "to be" words; however, you still want to avoid them whenever possible.

After your teacher reviews your essay with a Teacher Writing Skills Checklist, you will be asked to rewrite it. Even though you would not have the opportunity to revise timed essays in the "real world," this remains an important step in the learning process. It will help you improve 1) your organization, 2) development of your thesis statement, and 3) budgeting of your time. Errors in mechanics count against you in a timed essay. This revising step will make you aware of your repeated mistakes.

Lesson 30: Writing a Timed Essay

The four steps to producing an effective essay include timing, planning, writing, and revising. Timing may vary slightly. Your aim is to stay within the time frame your teacher specifies, say 20 or 30 minutes. **NOTE:** Do not skip lines during timed essays.

Timing

1. Depending on the length of time you have for writing, divide your writing tasks into manageable chunks of time. Of course, the majority of your time should be spent writing the actual essay. However, if you spend important minutes planning and organizing, you will not need as much time to write as you might think.
2. For a 20-minute essay of 2-3 paragraphs, here is a good guideline: Planning: 6 minutes; Writing: 11 minutes; Revising: 3 minutes.
3. For a 30-minute essay of 3-5 paragraphs, try this timeline: Planning: 9 minutes; Writing: 16 minutes; Revising: 5 minutes.

Planning

1. Read the question carefully. Look for a key word that tells what the teacher wants.
2. Write your thesis statement. Write your thesis statement or topic sentence.
3. Brainstorm. Write down the key word or phrase you found in the question. Next, make a **list** or a **mind-map** of other words and phrases that relate to the topic. *Do not skip this important step*. Once the words begin to flow, you will lose the fear that you have nothing to say about this topic!
4. Choose your viewpoint. If the question asks you to give your opinion, compare, contrast, persuade, describe, or define, you must choose your position.
5. Outline. Choose main points and list supportive details to develop your position.

Writing

1. Follow your plan carefully. Stick to the point, avoiding rambling or "rabbit trails."
 - Write your topic sentence or thesis statement. It may contain your three main points. If not, be sure to define and develop your three points as the essay progresses.
 - Present the main ideas from your outline, in order. Support each idea with details.
 - End with your conclusion, summing up your thesis statement.
2. Give specific information. Use names, dates, places, examples, and details---concrete evidence that supports your topic.

3. Watch your time. If you use up too much time in one area, you might neglect another. You will lose points for incomplete answers.

Revising

1. Do quick revisions and proofreading at the same time. Check for spelling; accuracy of names, dates, and details; omitted or repeated words; grammar and punctuation errors.
2. If possible, change a couple of sentences to include interesting variations.
3. Look over your vocabulary. Did you choose concrete words? Replace vague or boring words with colorful, interesting synonyms.
4. Combine two short, choppy sentences into one; shorten a rambling or run-on sentence into two concise ones.
5. Your teacher knows you do not have time to recopy. Still, try to make your corrections as neatly as possible.
6. Reread your essay quickly, giving yourself one last opportunity to hear your words again. Make sure that changes you made did not harm the flow of your text.

A word to the wise: Believe it or not, teachers were once students! They know the tricks young people use when they do not know the answer or when they do not know how to develop their topic. Be careful! The four most common "tricks" are:

- Large handwriting (hoping to fool the teacher into thinking you have much to say because you took up lots of space on the paper)
- Pompous, fancy, or multi-syllabic vocabulary (hoping to fool the teacher into thinking you are so smart for knowing such big words that she won't notice you didn't have anything concrete to say about the subject)
- Redundancy (repeating the same argument or stating the same point over again, using different words, hoping to fool the teacher into thinking you know more about the subject than you really do)
- Padding with unrelated details (also hoping to fool the teacher into thinking you know more than you do)

It's easy to avoid these traps. Whenever possible, know your material ahead of time. For an essay question on a history test, for example, you can prepare by reading and studying the chapter and any class notes.

Sometimes it is not possible to prepare in advance. You may not have any idea what the question will be. However, careful organization before beginning to write will be the real "trick" to preparing a fine essay!

Lesson 30: 20-Minute Timed Essay Checklist

Planning (6 minutes)

- ☐ Read question and look for KEY WORD or PHRASE. - 1 minute
- ☐ Choose your position and write your thesis statement. - 1 minute
- ☐ Brainstorm (MIND-MAP). - 2 minutes
 - Write down as many words as possible that relate to the subject.
- ☐ OUTLINE. - 3 minutes
 1. Choose three points from your brainstorming that explain your position and that can be expanded with details. Write them in outline form.
 - I. Introduction
 - II. Body
 - A. Main point 1
 - B. Main point 2
 - C. Main point 3
 - III. Conclusion
 2. As you write your paragraph, you will list supportive details to develop your position. You will not have time, as a rule, to write a fully developed outline. You will, however, know exactly where you're going!
- ☐ Revise your THESIS STATEMENT, if necessary.
 - Sometimes it helps to include the three points you plan to develop in your essay.

Writing (11 minutes)

- ☐ Use your thesis statement as a topic sentence.
- ☐ Write main points in the order they appear in your thesis statement.
- ☐ Support each point with details or examples from your list. Stick to the topic.
- ☐ Conclusion. Write a restatement of your topic sentence.
- ☐ Watch your time! Do not skip lines! Write two to three paragraphs (about 12-15 sentences).

Revising (3 minutes)

- ☐ Read your essay.
- ☐ Revise and proofread, checking spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- ☐ Add several interesting sentence variations (and don't overuse "to be" words).
- ☐ Vocabulary: find synonyms for two to three vague or repeated words; add two to three colorful, descriptive adjectives or adverbs.
- ☐ Combine short sentences or shorten wordy ones.

Lesson 30: 30-Minute Timed Essay Checklist

Planning (9 minutes)

- ☐ Read question and look for KEY WORD or PHRASE. - 1 minute
- ☐ Choose your position and write your thesis statement. - 1 minute
- ☐ Brainstorm (MIND-MAP). - 3 minutes
 - Write down as many words as possible that relate to the subject.
- ☐ OUTLINE. - 4 minutes
 1. Choose three points from your brainstorming that explain your position and that can be expanded with details. Write them in outline form.
 - I. Introduction
 - II. Body
 - A. Main point 1
 - B. Main point 2
 - C. Main point 3
 - III. Conclusion
 2. As you write your paragraph, you will list supportive details to develop your position. You will not have time, as a rule, to write a fully developed outline. You will, however, know exactly where you're going!
- ☐ Revise your THESIS STATEMENT, if necessary
 - Sometimes it helps to include the three points you plan to develop in your essay.

Writing (16 minutes)

- ☐ Use your thesis statement as a topic sentence.
- ☐ Write main points in the order they appear in your thesis statement.
- ☐ Support each point with details or examples from your list. Stick to the topic.
- ☐ Conclusion. Write a restatement of your topic sentence.
- ☐ Watch your time! *Do not* skip lines! Write three to five paragraphs (total 15-20 sentences).

Revising (5 minutes)

- ☐ Read your essay.
- ☐ Revise and proofread, checking spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- ☐ Add several interesting sentence variations (and don't overuse "to be" words).
- ☐ Vocabulary: find synonyms for two to three vague or repeated words; add two to three colorful, descriptive adjectives or adverbs.
- ☐ Combine short sentences or shorten wordy ones.

Name _____

Subject Essay (Timed)

Lesson 30: Teacher Writing Skills Checklist (Timed Essay)

Edit your essay one more time, making any necessary changes or improvements.

CONTENT

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Communicated clearly
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Supported opinion with reasons
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Explained reasons with facts, illustrations, comparisons, cause/effect, and other details
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All sentences support opinion (no "carrots in your cookie jar")
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Topic and choice of words are pleasing to the Lord and edifying to others

STYLE

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used thesis statement as a topic sentence
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoided too many "to be" words (no need to count "to be" words unless obviously overused)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoided the use of repeated words
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used concrete words and avoided the use of "weak" words
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Organized details effectively using three main points (wrote main points in order they appear in thesis statement)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Followed rules of parallelism (outline and composition)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used some interesting sentence variations (not as important in timed essays)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used concrete words (interesting vocabulary)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wrote concisely, avoiding wordiness
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Effective conclusion that rephrases topic sentence or summarizes main points

MECHANICS

OK	needs improvement	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Name</u> and <u>date</u> in the upper right-hand corner
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Essay is two to three paragraphs long and 12-15 sentences in length
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used proper form (indentation, margins, good spacing) - DO NOT SKIP LINES
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Double-checked spelling, capitalization, punctuation
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used complete sentences, avoided run-on sentences, avoided misplaced modifiers
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All papers are stapled together in proper order

Comments _____

Name _____

Subject/Title of Essay _____

ESSAY EVALUATION

Content 20 points

- **Introduction** (clear thesis statement; introduces subject; grabs reader's attention)
- **Content** (answers the question(s) by stating main points and/or persuades the reader)
- **Development** (supports main points with specific details/facts/examples; uses sound reasoning; comprehensive)
- **Topicality** (sticks to the topic; avoids rabbit trails or tangents)
- **Conclusion** (restates main points, sums up essay, does not leave reader hanging)

Points possible Points earned

3 _____

5 _____

6 _____

3 _____

3 _____

Style 25 points

- **Organization** (logical order; sequence makes sense; main points developed in order; correct use of paragraphs)
- **Fluency** (avoids awkwardness; communicates clearly; information makes sense to reader)
- **Style** (interesting to read; active vs. passive; limits "to be" words, sentence complexity; use of sentence variations)
- **Parallelism** (points are parallel; items in a series are parallel)
- **Vocabulary** (grade-appropriate; concrete; avoids repeated words)
- **Conciseness** (avoids wordiness and needless repetition of ideas)
- **Transitions** (uses effective transitions between topics, main points, and/or paragraphs)

5 _____

5 _____

4 _____

2 _____

3 _____

3 _____

3 _____

Mechanics 5 points

- **Form** (margins, indentation, spacing, name and date)
- **Spelling/capitalization/punctuation/grammar**
- **Wrote in first- or third-person** (avoided use of you/your)
- **Structure** (sentences complete; no run-ons, no misplaced modifiers)

5 _____

TOTAL: /50 = % =

Comments: _____
_____ (over)

100% = A+

87-89% = B+

77-79% = C+

94-99% = A

84-86% = B

74-76% = C

90-93% = A-

80-83% = B-

70-73% = C-

Below 70%: rewrite essay

Word Lists

Adverbs

"HOW" ADVERBS

(most -ly words tell "how;" these are only examples)

angrily
briskly
busily
carefully
courageously
courteously
dangerously
eagerly
gently
heavily
honestly
hungrily
intensely
noisily
proudly
rapidly
silently
slowly
smoothly
softly
stubbornly
suddenly
swiftly
tenderly
tiredly
uncomfortably
wearily

"WHEN" ADVERBS

afterwards
always
before
daily
early
ever
forever
hourly
late
later
monthly
never
nightly
now
soon
sooner
then
today
tonight
weekly
when
whenever
yearly
yesterday
yet

"WHERE" ADVERBS

around** (as in "Let's walk around.")
down** (as in "Set it down.")
downward
everywhere
far
here
in** (as in "He fell in.")
inside** (as in "Go inside.")
nearby
nowhere
out** (as in "Put the dog out.")
outside* (as in "She's outside.")
someplace
somewhere
there
underfoot
underground
up** (as in "Take it up with him.")
upstream
where

****These are *adverbs* when used as in the examples. However, when followed by nouns, they become *prepositions*, as in "Take it up the stairs." or "He fell in a hole."**

Adverbs ("-ly")

- "-ly" adverbs are useful as transition words when connecting thoughts between sentences or paragraphs.
- They are also helpful when concluding a paragraph or a thought.
- Many "-ly" adverbs make excellent sentence starters.
- For variety, adverbs may be moved around within a sentence when describing verbs.

absolutely	essentially	positively	strictly
accordingly	eventually	possibly	substantially
amazingly	evidently	predictably	surely
apparently	fearlessly	presumably	tentatively
assuredly	finally	previously	thankfully
boldly	fortunately	primarily	typically
carefully	frequently	probably	ultimately
cautiously	fundamentally	progressively	unbelievably
certainly	gradually	regretfully	undeniably
clearly	hopefully	regularly	undoubtedly
confidently	increasingly	relatively	unfortunately
consequently	indisputably	remarkably	unquestionably
constantly	initially	repeatedly	usually
continuously	normally	sadly	utterly
conveniently	notably	seemingly	virtually
courageously	obviously	seriously	willingly
distinctly	occasionally	significantly	_____
easily	ordinarily	simply	_____
effectively	originally	slowly	_____
encouragingly	plainly	steadily	_____

Characteristics/Expressions/Behaviors

Enthusiastic

adventuresome
amiable
animated
beaming
bright
bubbling
chatty
crazy
demonstrative
dynamic
eager
effervescent
energetic
excitable
excited, exciting
fabulous
fervent
festive
fired up
friendly
frisky
fun
fun-loving
gleeful
gregarious
hearty
lighthearted
lively
noisy

obsessed
outgoing
passionate
peppy
playful
rambunctious
rowdy
sociable
spirited
thrilled
vigorous
vivacious
wholehearted
zealous
zestful

Smart/Wise

adept
alert
bright
brilliant
clever
creative
cunning
curious
gifted
imaginative
ingenious
intelligent
inventive
keen
knowledgeable
logical
observant
prudent
questioning
sensible
sharp
sharp-witted
talented
teachable
wise

Funny/Silly/Delighted

amused, amusing
animated
beaming
bubbling
cheerful
comical
congenial
delighted, delightful
droll
foolish
frivolous
gay
giggly
glad
gleeful
happy
humorous
jolly
jovial
joyful
joyous
laughing
merry
mirthful
silly
surprised
whimsical
witty
zany

Hardworking

dedicated
devoted
diligent
disciplined
educated
exhausted
helpful
industrious
occupied
orderly
organized
powerful
responsible
strong
sturdy
successful
tenacious
tough
useful
vigorous

Honest

believable
candid
congenial
conscientious
decisive
dependable
fair
forthright
frank
genuine
honest
honorable
just
objective
open
real
realistic
reliable
sincere
straightforward
trustworthy
truthful
upright

Warm/Kind

appreciative
calm
caring
charming
comfortable
comforting
compassionate
concerned
cuddly
encouraged
encouraging
generous
gracious
grateful
hospitable
kindhearted
lovable
loving
loyal
pleasant
pleased
safe
sensitive
sympathetic
tender
thankful
understanding

Cool

aloof
casual
cautious
cheerless
cold
detached
disinterested
distant
indifferent
introverted
remote
removed
reserved
shy
unapproachable
withdrawn

Uncertain/Afraid

afraid
anxious
ashamed
bashful
bewildered
cautious
careful
confused
discreet
discouraged
distracted
embarrassed
fearful
flustered
frantic
frightened
indecisive
insecure
isolated
lonely
nervous
perplexed
puzzled
queasy
questioning
quivering
rattled
scared
self-conscious
sensitive
serious
shy
submissive
suspicious
tearful

tense
timid
touchy
troubled
uncomfortable
unpredictable
unstable
unsure
vague
vulnerable
wary
weak
weepy
wishful
wistful
yearning

Secure/Bold

adventuresome
adventurous
aggressive
assertive
bold
brave
certain
confident
courageous
daring
decisive
fearless
firm
heroic
influential
poised
popular
positive
reliable
responsible
solid
sound
stable
successful
sure
tenacious
unafraid
undaunted
unwavering
valiant
venturous
well-liked

Amazing/Amazed

astonished
astonishing
astounded
astounding
awestruck
breathtaking
dumbfounded
fabulous
glorious
incredible
legendary
magical
majestic
sensational
staggering
surprised
terrific
tremendous
unbelievable
wonderful
wondrous

Active

agile
 alert
 animated
 athletic
 brisk
 busy
 chipper
 dynamic
 energetic
 fast
 frisky
 hurried
 lively
 occupied
 quick
 ready
 snappy
 sprightly
 spry
 strenuous
 vigorous
 wiggly
 wiry

Tired/Quiet

calm
 docile
 easy
 easygoing
 exhausted
 idle
 inactive
 lazy
 passive
 peaceful
 preoccupied
 quiet
 reflective
 relaxed
 rested
 silent
 sleepy
 still
 subdued
 tame
 thoughtful
 tired
 untroubled

weak
 weary
 withdrawn

Proud

arrogant
 boastful
 conceited
 disdainful
 extravagant
 forward
 haughty
 impertinent
 impudent
 insolent
 nervy
 obnoxious
 pompous
 proud
 sassy
 saucy
 scornful
 self-centered
 slick
 snobbish
 sophisticated
 stuffy
 superior

Unique

different
 dignified
 distinct
 distinguished
 eminent
 exceptional
 extraordinary
 famous
 great
 honored
 incomparable
 lone
 matchless
 new
 obvious
 original
 particular
 peculiar
 rare
 remarkable
 special
 specific
 strange

uncommon
 unequaled
 unique
 unmistakable
 unusual

<u>Neat</u>	<u>Attractive</u>	<u>Stature (Appearance)</u>	<u>Misc. (Negative)</u>
clean	adorable	aged	condemning
dainty	alluring	ashen	cruel
delicate	beautiful	big	difficult
exact	breathtaking	brawny	disgusted
fastidious	bright	burly	disobedient
finicky	brilliant	chunky	dreadful
fussy	charming	elderly	ferocious
meticulous	chic	enormous	fickle
orderly	darling	feeble	fierce
organized	dashing	frail	forceful
particular	distinguished	great	furious
picky	elegant	healthy	horrible
prim	enchanted	heavy	hysterical
simple	fair	husky	jealous
tidy	fashionable	muscular	judgmental
trim	flattering	pale	mean
uncluttered	glamorous	pallid	mischievous
well-groomed	glorious	petite	naughty
_____	glowing	plain	negative
_____	gorgeous	portly	pathetic
_____	handsome	reedy	pessimistic
_____	irresistible	slender	pitiful
_____	lovely	slight	raging
_____	magnificent	slim	shocking
	pretty	stocky	sorry
	smart	stout	temperamental
	stunning	thickset	terrible
	stylish	thin	ugly
	_____	tiny	unruly
	_____	wan	vicious
	_____	wholesome	_____
	_____	wiry	_____
	_____	young	_____
		youthful	_____
		_____	_____

Colors

Red	Yellow	Purple	Brown	White	Black
brick	amber	burgundy	auburn	blanched	coal-black
cardinal	banana	grape	bittersweet	bleached	ebony
cherry	blond	lavender	brick	chalky	inky
crimson	butter, buttery	lilac	bronze	cottony	jet-black
maroon	buttercup	mauve	brunette	dove-white	onyx
mulberry	canary	orchid	chestnut	milky	pitch-black
rouge	dandelion	plum	chocolate	pale	pitch-dark
ruby	flax, flaxen	violet	cinnamon	pallid	raven
ruddy	gold, golden	wine	cocoa	pasty	sable
scarlet	goldenrod	_____	coffee	pearl, pearly	sooty
strawberry	honey	_____	copper	powdery	_____
tomato	lemon, lemony	_____	drab	snow-white	_____
	ochre	Green	fawn	snowy	
	straw	apple	ginger	sugary	Gray
Pink	sunflower	aqua	mahogany	whitened	ashen
blush	sunny	celadon	mocha	whitewashed	charcoal
carnation	topaz	celery	mousy	_____	cloudy
flamingo		emerald	nut-brown	_____	colorless
flesh		evergreen	nutmeg		dove-gray
flushed	Blue	forest	rust	Off-white	dusky
fuchsia	azure	kelly	sepia	beige	granite
magenta	baby blue	lime	sienna	buff	gunmetal gray
rose, rosy	cerulean	mint	spice	cream, creamy	pearl gray
salmon	Delft	moss, mossy	tan	ecru	silver, silvery
	denim	olive	terra-cotta	eggshell	slate
Orange	indigo	pea green	umber	ivory	smoke, smoky
apricot	navy	sea green	walnut	oatmeal	smudged
burnt orange	periwinkle	spring green	_____	sandy	steel
butterscotch	powder blue	teal	_____	unbleached	_____
melon	royal	verdant	_____	vanilla	_____
peach	sapphire	_____	_____	_____	_____
pumpkin	sky blue	_____	_____	_____	_____
tangerine	turquoise	_____	_____	_____	_____

Emotions

Happy

amused
beaming
bright
cheerful
content
delighted
elated
excited
exhilarated
exuberant
festive
genial
glad
gratified
joyful
jubilant
laughing
lightheaded
lighthearted
lively
merry
playful
pleasant
pleased
radiant
satisfied
spirited
sunny
thrilled
victorious

Sad

confused
dark
dejected
depressed
desolate
despondent
dismal
downhearted
dreary
droopy
embarrassed
empty
gloomy
glum
grave
grief-stricken
grim
hurt
melancholy
miserable
morbid
morose
mournful
pained
pathetic
pensive
serious
solemn
somber
sorrowful
sullen

tearful
tired
troubled
vacant
weary
wistful
woeful
wounded

Brave

audacious
bold
courageous
daring
dauntless
determined
encouraging
fearless
gallant
hardy
heroic
intrepid
persistent
plucky
resolute
spunky
stalwart
stouthearted
unafraid
valiant
valorous

Angry

affronted
agitated
annoyed
bitter
boiling
bristling
burning
cross
cruel
displeased
disturbed
enraged
fretful
fuming
furious
grouchy
hateful
huffy
incensed
indignant
inflamed
infuriated
irked
irritated
livid
mean
mean-spirited
miffed
nettled
offended
peevied
piqued
rabid
raging

riled
seething
simmering
sizzling
smoldering
sore
stormy
surly
vengeful
vexed
wrathful

Fearful

afraid
alarmed
anxious
apprehensive
ashamed
awed
bashful
cowardly
cowed
cringing
disconcerted
eerie
frightened
guilty
jumpy
nervous
palpitating
panicky
paralyzed
petrified
quaking
quivering
scared
shaking
shivering
shrinking
shy
skittish
staggered
stunned
stupefied
suspicious
terrified
timid

trembling
uncertain
uneasy
wary
winning

Personification

Possible word choices when giving human traits to an object/animal.

ache	gaze	pout	stumble
agree	giggle	preside (over)	supervise
argue	glance	prowl	think
believe	grasp	pursue	throw
blow	grin	push	tickle
boast	groan	reach	tiptoe
bow	guide	reside	toss
breathe	hear	rest	tremble
browse	hiss	run	trip
chase	hug	scowl	trust
claw	inhale	search	tumble
complain	insult	see	twirl
comprehend	jump	serve	understand
cough	kick	shake	walk
crawl	lament	shove	waltz
creep	laugh	sigh	watch
cry	leap	sing	wave
dance	listen	sleep	weep
doze	live	smile	welcome
eat	moan	sneeze	whisper
enjoy	mope	snore	whistle
escape	mumble	sob	wrestle
feel	nibble	soothe	wriggle
frolic	notice	spy	yawn
frown	observe	stare	yield
fumble	oversee	step	_____
fuss	perceive	stretch	_____
gape	play	stroke	_____

Prepositions

aboard	but (meaning <i>except</i>)	outside
about	by	over
above	concerning	past
across	despite	regarding
after	down	since
against	during	through
along	except	throughout
amid	for	till
among	from	to
around	in	toward
at	inside	under
atop	into	underneath
before	like	unlike
behind	near	until
below	of	up
beneath	off	upon
beside	on	with
between	onto	within
beyond	out	without

Said Synonyms

added	declared	moaned	shouted
advised	defended	mouthed	shrieked
announced	demanded	mumbled	sighed
answered	disclosed	murmured	snapped
argued	exclaimed	muttered	snarled
asked	explained	noticed	snickered
asserted	exploded	observed	snorted
barked	fussed	ordered	sobbed
begged	giggled	pleaded	squawked
bellowed	gripped	pointed out	squeaked
blurted out	groused	prayed	squealed
boasted	growled	predicted	stammered
bragged	guessed	proposed	stated
breathed	hinted	queried	suggested
called, called out	hissed	recited	told
cautioned	implied	remarked	uttered
challenged	implored	repeated	wailed
chimed in	indicated	replied	warned
chuckled	inquired	requested	wept
claimed	insinuated	responded	wheezed
commanded	insisted	retorted	whimpered
commented	interjected	returned	whined
complained	interrupted	revealed	whispered
confided	lamented	roared	yelled
contended	laughed	sang	_____
cried, cried out	maintained	scolded	_____
croaked	mentioned	screamed	_____

Transitions and Conjunctions

Location Words

above
across
alongside
around
behind
below
beside
beyond
in back
in front
next to
over
to the left
to the right
at the _____
from the _____
through the _____

Time/Sequence

a few minutes later
after
after a while
afterwards
at last
before
beforehand
by the time
by (by Tuesday, by March,
by the time John arrived)
during
earlier
eventually
finally
finally
first
former
furthermore
immediately
initially
later
later on
latter
meanwhile
next
not long after
not until
now
often
on (on Monday, on April 2, on
Sharon's birthday)

once
originally
previously
progressively
second
since
soon
suddenly
then
third
to begin with
today
tomorrow
ultimately
until
until this time
when
yesterday

To Connect Ideas

additionally

again

also

besides

furthermore

in brief

in fact

in addition

in short

in conclusion

in summary

indeed

likewise

moreover

similarly

To Connect Opposing Ideas

in contrast

nevertheless

on the one hand

on the other hand

on the contrary

rather

still

Coordinate Conjunctions

and

but

for

nor

or

so

yet

both...and

either...or

neither...nor

not only...but also

whether...or

accordingly

also

anyhow

besides

consequently

furthermore

hence

however

indeed

instead

likewise

meanwhile

moreover

namely

otherwise

still

then

therefore

thus

Subordinate Conjunctions

after

although

as

as if

as long as

as much as

as soon as

as though

because

before

even if

even though

if

provided

since

though

unless

until

when

whenever

where

wherever

whether

while

Using Transition Words to Make or Introduce Your Points

Introducing Your First Point

- first/first of all
- to begin with

Transitioning to Your Second Point

- additionally/in addition
- besides
- furthermore
- in contrast (when presenting an opposing point of view)
- likewise
- moreover
- next
- on the contrary (when presenting an opposing point of view)
- on the other hand (when presenting an opposing point of view)
- second
- similarly

Transitioning to Your Third Point

- above all
- additionally/in addition
- also
- finally
- furthermore
- moreover
- most importantly
- third

Beginning Your Concluding Statement or Paragraph (optional)

- considering/after considering ("Considering the evidence, one must conclude . . .")
- in brief
- in summary
- in conclusion
- in short

Connecting Similar Thoughts (useful when expanding a point with illustrations or examples)

- consequently
- consider ("Consider the number of young people who . . .")
- for instance
- for example
- however

Transitioning From Fact to Opinion (or From One Fact to Another)

- although
- even though
- nevertheless
- since
- still
- therefore
- while

Weak Words

When editing your "sloppy copy," underline in *green* any of these words you find. Sometimes you will be able to replace them with more concrete words using your thesaurus or *Synonym Finder*. Write the new word above the weak one.

Vague Words

a lot, lots
awfully
big
come/came
cute
do/does/done/did
eat
fine
fun
get/got/gotten
go/went
good
kind of
like (OK when used as a simile)
look
make/made
move
nice
pretty
put
say/said
see
sorta/sort of
stuff/stuff like that
take/took
thing

Slang Words

awesome (as in: His skateboard is awesome.)
cool (as in: What a cool car you drive!)
neat (as in: I thought his shoes were neat.)
(plus other currently used slang terms)

Overused Words/Phrases

get/got/gotten
good
great (OK sometimes)
has/have/had (OK if used as a helping verb)
It has . . . /It is . . .
just
then (OK if not overused)

Unnecessary Words

really
so
very
"The end"
"This story is about . . ."
"This is what happened when . . ."
"What I want to tell you is . . ."

Sound Words (Adjectives/Verbs)

- Many of these words are also *verbs*, depending on how you use them in a sentence.

Adjective: I heard a banging noise in the kitchen. (*Banging* tells what kind of noise.)

Verb: I hear mom banging pots in the kitchen. (*Banging* is the action word.)

Participle sentence starter: Banging pots in the kitchen, Mom hurriedly made dinner.

- To see a list of sound words used as *nouns*, see the "Sound Words (Nouns)" word list.

audible	croaking	loud	rustling	swelling
banging	crying	meowing	scraping	swooping
barking	deafening	moaning	scratching	tearing
bawling	droning	mooing	screaming	thudding
baying	drumming	muffled	screeching	thumping
bellowing	dull	murmuring	shattering	thundering
blaring	ear-splitting	musical	shocking	thunderous
blasting	echoing	muted	shouting	ticking
boisterous	explosive	muttering	shrieking	tolling
booming	fizzing, fizzy	noisy	shrill	tomblike
breaking	fuming	panting	sighing	tonal
bubbling, bubbly	fussing	peaceful	silent	twangy
bursting	gagging	pealing	sizzling	vibrating
buzzing	gasping	piercing	slamming	vocal
cheering	gossiping	pinging	sloshing	wailing
chiming	groaning	popping	snapping	wheezing
choking	grousing	pounding	sobbing	whimpering
clacking	gurgling	quiet	soft	whining, whiny
clamorous	gushing	rackety	soundless	whistling
clanging	harmonious	rasping, raspy	spoken	whooping
clangorous	hissing	raucous	squawking	wordless
clattering	hoarse	reverberating	squeaky	wrenching
cracking	howling	ringing	stifled	
crackling	humming	ripping	still	
crashing	hushed	roaring	strident	
creaking, creaky	knelling	rumbling	sucking	

Sound Words (Nouns)

- To see a list of sound words used as *adjectives*, see the Sound Words (Adjectives/Verbs).
- The adjective page will also give you hints on how to use sound words as *participles*.
- Try combining sound words: 1. the **deafening roar** of a waterfall

adj. *noun*

2. her new kitten's **squeaky meow**

adj. *noun*

bang	clunk	howl	rumble	tinkle
bark	crack	hubbub	rustle	tintinnabulation
bawl	crackle	hum	scrape	tone
bay	crash	hush	scratch	tumult
bellow	creak	jangle	scream	twang
blast	croak	jingle	screech	uproar
bleat	cry	meow	shout	vibration
boom	detonation	moan	shriek	voice
bubble	din	moo	sigh	wail
burst	echo	murmur	silence	wheeze
buzz	explosion	music	snap	whimper
call	fizz	neigh	sob	whine
cheer	fuss	noise	sound	whinny
chime	gasp	pandemonium	squawk	whisper
chink	gossip	pant	squeak	whistle
choke	groan	peace	strain	whoop
clack	growl	peal	thud	word
clamor	gurgle	ping	thump	yell
clang	gush	pop	thunder	_____
clatter	hiss	racket	thundercrack	_____
clink	holler	roar	tick	_____

Taste and Smell Words

Taste Words

acidic	iced, icy
appetizing	juicy
baked	luscious
biting	mild
bitter	moldy
bland	nasty
boiled	palatable
bubbly	peppery
candied	pleasant
coagulated	rich
cold	roasted
congealed	rotten
creamy	salty
curried	savory
delectable	scrumptious
delicious	seasoned
dried	sharp
effervescent	sizzling
flat	smoked
flavorful	sour
foul	spicy
fresh	spoiled
fried	stale
frosty	stewed
gamy	succulent
honeyed	sugary
horrid	sweet
hot	sweet and sour

Smell Words

syrupe	acrid
tainted	aromatic
tangy	balmy
tart	caustic
tasty	fermented
tender	fetid
tough	foul
unpleasant	fragrant
unsweetened	fresh
vinegary	fruity
watery	malodorous
yummy	mildewed
zesty	musty
_____	odorous
_____	peppery
_____	perfumed
_____	piquant
_____	pungent
_____	rancid
_____	rank
_____	redolent
_____	scented
_____	smoky
_____	spoiled
	stinking, stinky
	strong
	sweet-smelling

Texture Words

abrasive	fibrous	limber	saturated	stubbly
angular	firm	lumpy	scaly	supple
blunt	flabby	malleable	scratchy	textured
bony	fleecy	matted	shaggy	thorny
braided	flexible	metallic	sharp	tough
bristly	flimsy	moldable	silken	unbendable
bumpy	fluffy	mushy	silky	uniform
calloused	fragile	nappy	sleek	unyielding
coarse	furry	nubby	slippery	upholstered
cold	fuzzy	peaked	smooth	velvety
concrete	glossy	pebbly	soaked	warm
cool	gnarled	pliant	sodden	waxy
cottony	grainy	plush	soft	wet
creamy	gravelly	pointed	solid	whiskered
crinkly	greasy	porous	spiny	wiry
crusty	gritty	prickly	spongy	woolly
delicate	hairy	raised	springy	woven
dense	hard	resilient	squishy	wrinkled
doughy	humped	rigid	starched	wrinkly
downy	jagged	rocky	stark	yielding
dry	knobby	rough	sticky	_____
dull	knotty	rugged	stiff	_____
elastic	leathery	rusty	stony	_____
embossed	level	sandy	stretchy	_____
feathery	light	satiny	stringy	_____

Visual Words

Bright	Pale	Dull	Big	Attractive
blinking	ashen	bare	beefy	appealing
bright	bland	barren	burly	beautiful
brilliant	colorless	blank	colossal	charming
cheerful	dim	bleak	enormous	delightful
clear	flat	cheerless	gigantic	elegant
colorful	insipid	cloudy	grand	engaging
dazzling	lifeless	dark	great	exquisite
flashing	pallid	desolate	hefty	fabulous
gleaming	sallow	dim	huge	fantastic
glimmering	wan	dismal	husky	glorious
glinting	washed out	drab	immense	gorgeous
glistening	watery	dreary	imposing	grand
glossy	waxy	dusky	jumbo	lovely
glowing		dusty	large	luxurious
luminous	Small	empty	major	magnificent
lustrous	dainty	foggy	mammoth	marvelous
polished	itsy-bitsy	gloomy	mighty	picturesque
radiant	itty-bitty	hazy	monstrous	pleasing
shimmering	little	heavy	monumental	pretty
shining	microscopic	misty	overgrown	splendid
shiny	miniature	murky	tall	stately
sleek	minute	pasty	towering	stunning
sparkling	petite	solemn	tremendous	superb
translucent	pint-sized	somber	vast	wonderful
transparent	pocket-sized	smoky	_____	_____
twinkling	teensy, teeny	vacant	_____	_____
winking	teeny-weeny	vaporous	_____	_____
_____	tiny	_____	_____	_____
_____	wee	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____