

Bernardsville Middle
School

Literacy
Handbook

Compiled
by
the Middle School
English
Department



The Bernardsville Middle School Literacy Handbook

Prepared by English Department
Bernardsville Middle School
2001

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Revised 2006 to include portions of the BMS
Research Manual by Kathy George

Revised 2007 to add Speaking Rubric

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Somerset Hills School District
Bernardsville, New Jersey 07924

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NOTES

The Writing Process

Writing is a skill that follows five specific steps. The five main steps in the writing process are pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing.

I. PRE-WRITING

This is the planning stage for a piece of writing and the first step in the writing experience. During this step, writers explore and select topics, unless the topic is teacher selected. Even during this initial step, writers must identify the **task**, the **audience** for whom they will be writing, and the **purpose** for writing. These terms may be defined as follows:

1. **task**—What am I being asked to write?
2. **audience**—Who will read/hear my piece?
3. **purpose**—What do I hope to accomplish by writing?

Pre-writing involves gathering and organizing ideas about a topic and may include the following:

- A. Listing/clustering
- B. Brainstorming
- C. Discussing
- D. Reading of models
- E. Information gathering (library, research, interviews)
- F. Outlining
- G. Webbing/mapping/charting
- H. Presenting with audio visuals
- I. Other

MODEL: Brainstorming

Brainstorming is defined as generating a group of thoughts or ideas on a particular subject that may be used in a piece of writing.

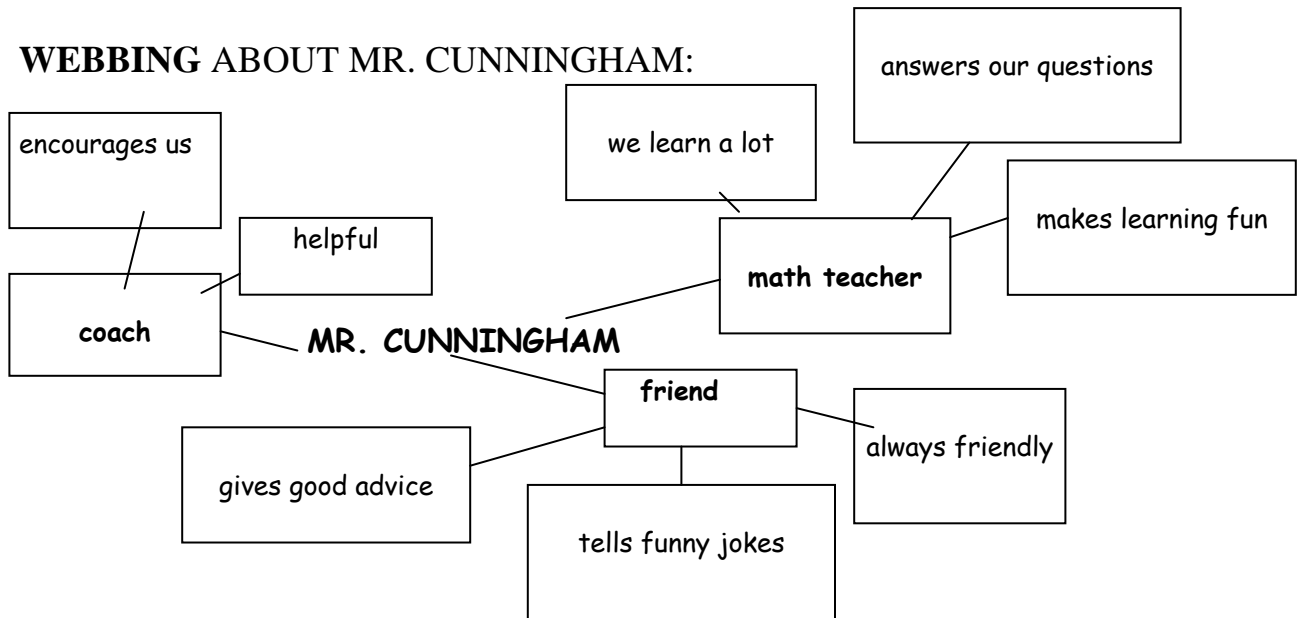
BRAINSTORMING ABOUT MR. CUNNINGHAM:

coach friend math teacher we learn a lot
encourages us answers our questions gives good advice
always friendly tells funny jokes makes learning fun

MODEL: Webbing

After **brainstorming** a list, writers arrange thoughts and ideas in an attempt to organize the information generated.

WEBBING ABOUT MR. CUNNINGHAM:



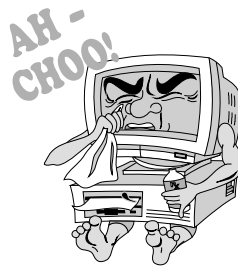
II. DRAFTING

Drafting is the second step in the writing process. In the drafting step, writers put their ideas into sentences. Then they build their sentences into paragraphs. The primary focus in drafting is merely to get ideas down on paper. Writers should not worry about mistakes in this step. Mistakes can be fixed later during revision. Depending upon the age and experience of the writer and the difficulty/complexity of the writing assignment, one or more drafts may be necessary. During drafting, writers should **skip lines** when producing either a word-processed copy or a hand written copy of their pieces, as this will make the revision step much easier.

MODEL: DRAFTING

A Great Teacher

Funny, helpful, and friendly—who am I describing? Is it one of your classmates or your best friend? Believe it or not, I'm describing a teacher! His name is Mr. Cunningham, and we call him Mr. C. for short. One thing I really like about him is the way he always makes learning fun. We have some boring topics to get through in our math book, but Mr. Cunningham makes even boring topics fun by saying something that is so funny that we all want to learn. Once I sneezed really loud right in the middle of class. Just then Mr. Cunningham said "googolplex." It sounded a lot like a *gesundheit* or bless you, so everyone had a good laugh, including Mr. Cunningham.



III. REVISING AND SHARING

Revising is the third step in the writing process. During this step, writers **see (vision)** the piece **again (re-)** in their mind's eye and begin to make necessary improvements. It is important to understand that **thorough** and **effective** revision can make the difference between a mediocre piece of writing and a truly excellent piece of writing.

During revision, writers look for words and phrases that need to be changed. They may decide to add more information or remove some information. They may choose to arrange their ideas in a different way.

Changes in a draft should address the five items on the Middle School Writing Rubric (Content, Organization, Sentence Fluency, Voice/Impact, and Conventions). Please refer to the section of this handbook labeled **Traits of a Well Written Paper** (page 17) for more information.

So that errors may be corrected and improvements made, writers should ask themselves, or a partner, these questions during the revision process:

1. Does my piece have a distinct focus?
2. Does my piece use strong, interesting, relevant details?
3. Is my writing easy to follow with an effective beginning, middle, and ending?
4. Have I written an especially effective beginning? Because it sets the tone for the piece, the opening paragraph, sentence, line, phrase, word, or title is the most important part of the work.
5. Does my piece move smoothly along from one section to the next (use of transitions)?
6. Have I used the correct format?
7. Have I used a variety and complexity of words, sentence lengths, and sentence beginnings/endings? **Nouns** and **verbs** should be especially well chosen. Avoid excessive use of adjectives and adverbs.
8. Has my piece eliminated run-ons and fragments?
9. Is my piece interesting? Readers are not interested in abstract philosophies. They want to be entertained and instructed.

ADVICE about revision: *Revise, revise, revise. It is almost impossible to get it right on the first try.*

MODEL: REVISION/EDITING

A Great Teacher

Who is

Funny, helpful, and friendly [?] ~~who am I describing?~~ Is it one of ~~your~~ ^{my} classmates or ~~your~~ ^{my} best friend? Believe it or ~~not~~ ^{not} ~~I~~ ^I am ~~my favorite~~

describing ^a teacher! His name is Mr. Cunningham, and we call him

Mr. C. for short. One ~~thing I really like about him~~ ^{of his best qualities} is the way he

always makes learning fun. We have some boring topics to get

through in our math book, but Mr. Cunningham makes even ~~boring~~ ^{uninteresting}

topics fun by ~~saying~~ ^{saying or doing} something that is so funny that we all want to learn.

Once I sneezed really loud ^{ly} right in the middle of class. Just then

Mr. Cunningham said, "googolplex." It sounded a lot like gesundheit

or bless you, so everyone had a good laugh, ~~including~~ ^{especially}

Mr. Cunningham



IV. EDITING

Editing is the fourth step in the writing process. During this step, writers proofread their drafts in preparation for producing a final copy by:

1. Checking to make sure they have fulfilled the requirements of the assignment. Remember to once again ask yourself questions about TAP - **task**, **audience**, **purpose** of your piece
2. Correcting mechanical errors such as **grammar**, **spelling**, **punctuation**, **capitalization**, **usage**
3. Correcting typographical errors
4. Checking format and design

MODEL: FINAL COPY

A Great Teacher

Who is funny, helpful, and friendly? Is it one of my classmates or my best friend? Believe it or not, I am describing my favorite teacher! His name is Mr. Cunningham, and we call him Mr. C. for short. One of his best qualities is the way he always makes learning fun. We have some boring topics to get through in our math book, but Mr. Cunningham makes even uninteresting topics fun by saying or doing something so funny that we want to learn. Once I sneezed really loudly right in the middle of geometry class. Just then Mr. Cunningham said "googolplex." It sounded a lot like "gesundheit" or "bless you," so everyone had a good laugh, especially Mr. Cunningham.

PUBLISHING

This is the fifth step in the writing process. In this step, writers share their final copies with an audience. This may be accomplished in a number of different ways.

1. Having the final copy read silently by an individual and/or group
2. Having the final copy read orally to the teacher, classmate, other selected person or group
3. Displaying the work on classroom bulletin boards, hall bulletin boards, or in the office of administrators
4. Having the work published in school or town publications
5. Sending the work to other interested parties, companies, contests, newspapers, or literary magazines
6. Publishing pieces of writing in bound book form to be shared by other students in the school and community
7. Organizing a classroom or school read-a-thon day so that writers can share their pieces/books in person with peers or students in younger grades within the school system
8. Publishing on a website



Models for brainstorming, webbing, drafting, revision/editing and final copy were adapted from Writers Express, Great Source Education Group, a Houghton Mifflin Company, 2000, page 76.

THE PARAGRAPH

A paragraph may be defined as a group of three or more related sentences that explain or develop a single idea. The four main reasons for writing paragraphs are **to describe**, **to tell a story**, **to explain**, or **to persuade**. In a well written paragraph, the main idea is expressed clearly in a **topic sentence**. Then each sentence in the body of the paragraph works together logically to support the idea/s expressed in the topic sentence. Sentences that give more information about the topic sentence are called **supporting details**. Some paragraphs also use **transitional words**, which are words that connect one idea or sentence to another. The **concluding sentence**, sometimes called the **clincher**, is a sentence that ties the paragraph together by restating the main idea of the paragraph.

MODES OF WRITING

Description - describes someone or something or some place

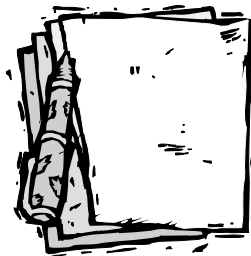
Narration - tells a story with characters and plot

Exposition - provides information and explains

Persuasion - influences the reader

Self-expression - focuses on the writer's feelings

PARAGRAPH WORKSHEET—The following model of a paragraph worksheet is taken from Middle School Writing Handbook, Livingston School District, 1994 edition.



PARAGRAPH WORKSHEET

Proposed Topic or Assignment

1.

What specific idea will you focus on in your paragraph?

2. Write a topic sentence which states this idea clearly.

3. What are some subtopics or details you will want to include to support or explain this idea?

A.
B.
C.
D.

4. Put each of these into sentence form. You may need to explain some subtopics in more than one sentence.

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

D. _____

5. Write a clincher sentence.

PARAGRAPH WORKSHEET

Proposed Topic or Assignment

1.

Trees

What specific idea will you focus on in your paragraph?

the specific functions trees play in our environment

2. Write a topic sentence which states this idea clearly.

Trees may be the most important form of plant life on Earth.

3. What are some subtopics or details you will want to include to support or explain this idea?

A. trees - add beauty/provide shelter

B. trees - prevent soil erosion/store water

C. trees - useful products

D. trees - helping the air

4. Put each of these into sentence form. You may need to explain some subtopics in more than one sentence.

A. Trees add beauty to the landscape and give shelter to wildlife.

B. Tree roots prevent soil erosion and help store water.

C. Different types of trees provide wood, paper, food, medicines, and other useful products.

D. Though it is something you cannot see, one of the most important things trees do is help clean the air.

5. Write a clincher sentence. Trees absorb carbon dioxide and produce oxygen. It's oxygen that people need to breathe.

People can thank trees for a lot more than shade.

MODEL: FINAL PARAGRAPH

Trees may be the most important form of plant life on earth. Trees add beauty to the landscape and give shelter to wildlife. In addition, tree roots prevent soil erosion and help store water. Different types of trees provide wood, paper, food, medicines, and other useful products. Though it is something invisible, one of the most important things trees do is help clean the air. Trees absorb carbon dioxide and produce oxygen. It is oxygen that people need to breathe. People can thank trees for a lot more than shade.

(from Writers Express)

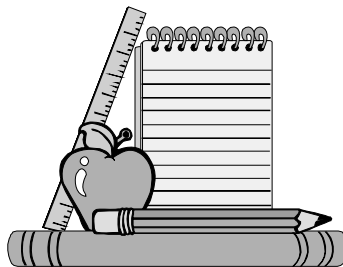
REVIEW OF PARAGRAPH VOCABULARY

1. **Paragraph**—a group of sentences that are placed together and relate to the same topic or idea. This topic is called the main idea. It tells what the paragraph is about. All of the sentences in a paragraph must relate to the main idea. The first line of a paragraph is often indented. It is moved over from the left margin five spaces to the right. Some paragraphs are not indented. They are separated by blank white spaces.
2. **Topic sentence**—lets the reader know what the paragraph will be about. It is usually the first sentence of the paragraph. The main idea of a paragraph is usually stated in the topic sentence. All other sentences in the paragraph should support the topic sentence.
3. **Supporting details**—in addition to a topic sentence, all paragraphs must have a **body**. The body is the main part of the paragraph. It includes sentences that relate to the main idea. The sentences in the body are called **supporting details**. They give more information about the topic sentence.
4. **Concluding sentence (clincher)**—many paragraphs end with a concluding sentence. It tells the reader that the paragraph is ending. The concluding sentence usually does not add new information. It restates the main idea of the paragraph.
5. **Transitional words**—these words connect one idea or sentence to another. They also help the sentences to flow more smoothly and assist in organizing the information presented. For more information about transitional words, refer to the separate section of this handbook labeled *Transitional Expressions*, pages 25-26.

Paragraph Checklist

1. *Is your paragraph composed of three or more sentences which relate to the same idea?*
2. *Have you written an effective **topic sentence** which clearly states the main idea of the paragraph?*
3. *Have you remembered to include enough **supporting details** which give more information about your topic sentence?*
4. *Have you written an effective **concluding sentence or clincher** which restates the main idea of your paragraph?*
5. *Have you used **transitional words** when necessary to connect one idea or sentence to another?*
6. *When you or a classmate reads your paragraph, will you/he have an easy time stating the main idea for what you have written?*
7. *When you or a classmate reads your paragraph, will you/he have an easy time stating supporting details for what you have written?*
8. *Have you remembered to indent your paragraph?*

NOTE: If the answer to any of these questions is NO, your paragraph needs further revision and editing.



SOURCES

- World of Language, Silver Burdett Ginn, 1996.
Language Arts Today, McGraw Hill School Division, 1998.
Basic English Third Edition, Globe Fearon Educational Publisher, 2000.
Language Handbook Level E, Steck-Vaughn Company, 1999.
Writers Express, Great Source Education Group a Houghton Mifflin Company, 2000.
Middle School Writing Handbook, Livingston School District, revised 1994.
Writing From The Inside Out: Revising For Quality, by Vicki Spandel and Ruth Culham, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 1995.

THE ESSAY

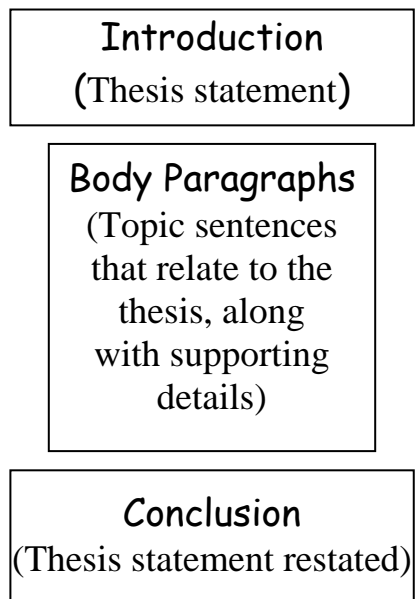
An essay or composition is a piece of writing comprised of several paragraphs. It has three parts: an **introduction**, a **body**, and a **conclusion**.

The **introduction** is the beginning of the essay; it presents the topic. The introduction states the essay's main idea in a focused thesis statement, and it captures the reader's interest.

The **body** comes after the introduction and usually consists of at least three paragraphs. Each paragraph contains a clear topic sentence along with specific supporting details and examples.

The **conclusion** is the last part of the composition and brings it to a close by restating the main idea that was given in the thesis statement or by summing up the body paragraphs.

Structural Overview



To have **unity**, the paragraphs in the body should all support the thesis statement with details, facts, and related information. For **coherence**, ideas should be organized logically and should be connected by transitions. *See list of transitions on pages 25-26.*

Outline for Five Paragraph Essay

Title (Do not underline or put in quotation marks.)

Introduction

Thesis statement: _____

First body paragraph

Topic sentence: _____

Supporting detail 1: _____

Supporting detail 2: _____

Supporting detail 3: _____

Second body paragraph

Topic sentence: _____

Supporting detail 1: _____

Supporting detail 2: _____

Supporting detail 3: _____

Third body paragraph

Topic sentence: _____

Supporting detail 1: _____

Supporting detail 2: _____

Supporting detail 3: _____

Conclusion - restatement of thesis:

Essay Checklist

This checklist may be used for self-evaluation and peer evaluation.

Writer

Reader

- | | | |
|-------|---|-------|
| _____ | 1. Is the essay distinctly focused on the topic? | _____ |
| _____ | 2. Is an effective introduction evident? | _____ |
| _____ | 3. Is an effective closing evident? | _____ |
| _____ | 4. Is the essay divided into well-constructed paragraphs? | _____ |
| _____ | 5. Are key ideas stated in explicit, unified topic sentences? | _____ |
| _____ | 6. Are key ideas supported by appropriate and varied details? | _____ |
| _____ | 7. Is there a logical progression of ideas? | _____ |
| _____ | 8. Do effective transitions provide a sense of unity? | _____ |
| _____ | 9. Is sentence construction complete and correct? | _____ |
| _____ | 10. Are sentences varied in length and structure? | _____ |
| _____ | 11. Is there effective word choice? | _____ |
| _____ | 12. Is there correct verb tense formation? | _____ |
| _____ | 13. Is subject-verb agreement evident? | _____ |
| _____ | 14. Is there correct pronoun usage and agreement? | _____ |
| _____ | 15. Is writing free from spelling errors? | _____ |
| _____ | 16. Is writing free from capitalization errors? | _____ |
| _____ | 17. Is writing free from punctuation errors? | _____ |
| _____ | 18. Does the essay sustain the reader's interest? | _____ |
| _____ | 19. Is there evidence of writer's personality, if appropriate? | _____ |
| _____ | 20. Does the essay follow <i>Standards of Formal English</i> , pages 27-28? | _____ |

Traits of a Well Written Paper

Good writing is characterized by strengths in several areas. Specifically, a well-written paper has well developed ideas, is organized, uses words and sentences in effective and pleasing ways, has personality, and is error free. Skilled writers keep these characteristics in mind when crafting their work. **The Middle School Writing Rubric** (p. 19) organizes the traits of good writing into a five-point scale. This tool is used by students in preparing and revising their work as well by teachers in evaluating student writing.

The Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory offers the following descriptions of the traits of strong writing:

IDEAS (Content)

The Ideas are the heart of the message, the **content** of the piece, the main theme, together with all the details that enrich and develop that theme. The ideas are strong when the message is clear, not garbled. The writer chooses details that are interesting, important, and informative—often the kinds of details the reader would not normally anticipate or predict. Successful writers do not tell readers things they already know; e.g., "It was a sunny day, and the sky was blue, the clouds were fluffy white ..." They notice what others overlook, seek out the extraordinary, the unusual, the bits and pieces of life that others might not see.

ORGANIZATION

Organization is the internal structure of a piece of writing, the thread of central meaning, the pattern, so long as it fits the central idea. Organizational structure can be based on comparison-contrast, deductive logic, point-by-point analysis, development of a central theme, chronological history of an event, or any of a dozen other identifiable patterns. When the organization is strong, the piece begins meaningfully and creates in the writer a sense of anticipation that is, ultimately, systematically fulfilled. Events proceed logically; information is given to the reader in the right doses at the right times so that the reader never loses interest. Connections are strong, which is another way of saying that bridges from one idea to the next hold up. The piece closes with a sense of resolution, tying up loose

ends, bringing things to closure, answering important questions while still leaving the reader something to think about.

WORD CHOICE

Word Choice is the use of rich, colorful, precise language that communicates not just in a functional way, but also in a way that moves and enlightens the reader. In good descriptive writing, strong word choice clarifies and expands ideas. In persuasive writing, careful word choice moves the reader to a new vision of things. Strong word choice is characterized not so much by an exceptional vocabulary that impresses the reader, but more by the skill to use everyday words well.

SENTENCE FLUENCY

Sentence Fluency is the rhythm and flow of the language, the sound of word patterns, and the way in which the writing plays to the ear, not just to the eye. How does it sound when read aloud? That's the test. Fluent writing has cadence, power, rhythm, and movement. It is free of awkward word patterns that slow the reader's progress. Sentences vary in length and style, and are so well crafted that the writer moves through the piece with ease.

VOICE

The Voice is the writer coming through the words, the sense that a real person is speaking to us and cares about the message. It is the heart and soul of the writing, the magic, the wit, the feeling, the life and breath. When the writer is engaged personally with the topic, he/she imparts a personal tone and flavor to the piece that is unmistakably his/hers alone. It is that individual something—different from the mark of all other writers—that we call voice.

CONVENTIONS

Conventions are the mechanical correctness of the piece—spelling, grammar and usage, paragraphing (indenting at the appropriate spots), use of capitals, and punctuation. Writing that is strong in conventions has been proofread and edited with care. Handwriting and neatness are not part of this trait. Since this trait has so many pieces to it, it is almost a holistic trait within an analytic system. As you assess a piece for convention, ask yourself: "How much work would a copy editor need to do to prepare the piece for publication?" This will keep all of the elements in conventions equally in play.

**THE SOMERSET HILLS SCHOOL DISTRICT
WRITING RUBRIC**

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Objectives	Superior		Strong		Adequate		Partial		Limited	
	5	4	3	2	1					
CONTENT: Student writes with an appropriate focus or purpose. Student includes relevant ideas and details.	- Distinct focus - Explicit topic sentences - Vivid elaborate details	- Single focus - Pertinent topic sentences - Descriptive, effective details	- Shifting focus - Somewhat flat topic sentences - Sparse, unelaborated details	- Little focus - Insufficient topic sentences - Ineffective details	- No focus - Missing topic sentences - No details					
ORGANIZATION: Student writes with a clear, logical progression of ideas.	- Easy to follow Very effective introduction, conclusion, and use of transitions - Correct format	- Easy to follow with minor lapses Effective introduction, conclusion, and use of transitions - Generally correct format	- Sometimes difficult to follow Ineffective introduction, conclusion, and/or use of transitions - Some errors in format	- Difficult to follow Lacking introduction, conclusion, and/or use of transitions - Gaps in format	- Confusing - Lacks format					
Student uses the appropriate format.	- Variety and complexity in word choice, length, and structures - No run-ons or fragments	- Generally has variety in word choice, sentence length, and structure - Few run-ons or fragments	- Some variety - Some fragments and/or run-ons	- Lacks variety - Fragments, run-ons evident	- Lacks variety - May be unintelligible					
SENTENCE FLUENCY: Student uses a variety of words, sentence lengths, and sentence beginnings	- Innovative personality - Sustains high interest	- Evidence of personality - Generally keeps interest	- Beginning sense of personality - Interest drifts	- Little personality - Of little interest	- No personality - Uninteresting					
VOICE /IMPACT: Tone of writing reflects personal expression Writing interests the reader.	- Very few, if any, errors	- Few errors	- Some errors	- Numerous errors	- Errors interfere with meaning					
CONVENTIONS: Student uses correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.										

“MESSin” Around
***** BMS Revision Techniques *****

The end result of any writing process is clear, effective communication. To support the New Jersey state emphasis on revising and editing, the Bernardsville Middle School employs four strategies that are helpful when re-thinking or revising drafts. “MESS”* is a way to remember them.

M - moving

Sometimes, writers have to move around **words, phrases, clauses, or sentences** to make their writing more interesting.

Example: I organized my papers and walked slowly to the front of the room because I had to make a speech.

With “Moving” technique:

Because I had to make a speech, I organized my papers and walked slowly to the front of the room.

E - expanding

Adding in details such as **what kind of, where, when, how, or why** adds interest and/or clarity.

Example: The house stood at the end of the road.

With “Expanding” technique:

The *charred ruins of the* house stood *silently* at the end of the *smoldering* road.

S - slotting

Substituting **clever or unusual words** for tired and over-used ones is an effective way to add sparkle and interest to writing.

Example: The sound came through the woods.

With “Slotting”: The sound *threaded a path* through the woods.

S - sentence combining

Tightening up ideas by combining sentences helps avoid useless repetition in writing.

Example: I am very concerned with the way people in my town treat their dogs. It is disturbing to watch the way people treat their dogs and I think that dogs are important and should not be treated poorly.

With “Sentence combining”: It is disturbing to watch *some people in my town treat their dogs in a cruel manner*.

** adapted from Ronnie Spilton - Fulton County Public Schools*

_ Don't be afraid to make a M.E.S.S.!

Moving





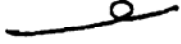





Expanding

Slotting

Sentence combining

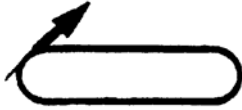


REVISING AND EDITING MARKS USED AT BMS

Editing Mark	Meaning	Example
 (three lines)	Change to a capital letter.	Have you ever traveled to Phoenix, ^A arizona?
 (slanted line slash)	Change to lower case letter.	My ^m M om is picking us up after school today.
 (circle spelling error)	Correct spelling error.	<u>recieve</u>
 (paragraph symbol)	Begin new paragraph. Indent.	“How did you do that?” she screamed. ¶ “I’m not really sure,” he confessed.
 (delete line)	Remove words or sentences.	I played basketball all throughout high school.
 (caret)	Insert word(s)	I forgot to bring ^{my} raincoat.
 (transpose)	Reverse the order of the letters or words.	do ⁿ ’t Give the book <u>me fo</u> .
 (period, comma, quotation marks)	Add a period, comma or quotation marks.	Well, ^{it} was a very exciting day,” he laughed.
	Fix your sentence fragment.	As soon as everyone ^{frag,} realized the mistake
	Fix your run on sentence.	I cannot answer ^{RO} I forgot to read the material.

GEPA Revising and Editing Marks

These particular editing marks are used specifically on the Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment.



shows where to move text.


~~erase-out~~
shows what to get rid of or change.



shows what to insert.



shows what text to add and where to add it.

you may want to use editing marks  when you revise and edit.

insert change
to move text, ^ text, or eliminate

text. Sometimes you may want to add a sentence or paragraph. (A)

Whatever changes you make, be sure to make your revisions and editing marks clear to your readers.



If you want to add new text, label the new text with a letter or number. Then write the label to show where you are adding it.

REVISING/EDITING SCORING GUIDE

Score Point Scale	0	1	2	3	4
Content/Organization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● central focus ● relevant supporting details ● use of transitions and other devices to ensure cohesiveness 	no attention to opening or closing; no focus; no organization of ideas	minimal attention to opening or closing; some details but no elaboration; no transitions; unable to focus	limited attention to opening and/or closing; progression of ideas but flawed or uneven; may attempt to use transitions	general attention to opening and closing; sense of focus; some use of transitions, but uneven development may be overlooked	consistent attention to opening and closing; single, distinct focus; organization and elaboration of ideas; logical and cohesive use of transitions
Sentence Construction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● subordination/coordination ● sentence fragments and run-on sentences ● sentence combining ● additional words to complete meaning 	incomplete/incorrect sentences	some sentence construction but marked by monotony and/or awkward syntax; no sense of rhetorical modes	some control of syntax; simple sentence structure, but little or no variety	control of syntax; eliminates excessive monotony; varied sentence structure	syntactic and rhetorical sophistication; subordination and coordination; avoids wordiness
Usage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● verbs (tense/agreement) ● pronouns ● (number/agreement) ● parallel structure ● correct modifiers 	numerous and/or serious errors ignored; inability to apply rules	some errors corrected but generally inconsistent application of rules	inconsistent in correcting errors; knowledge of rules but inability to utilize them effectively or consistently	errors corrected, but some may be overlooked; general knowledge and application of rules	knowledge and application of rules, leaving few, if any, errors
Mechanics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● spelling ● punctuation ● capitalization 	numerous and serious errors are ignored; inability to apply rules	inability to apply rules; errors, but inconsistently corrected; may create some errors where none existed	knowledge of rules, but some inconsistency in application; patterns of errors remain	errors, though some may be overlooked; knowledge and application of rules	errors, leaving few, if any; knowledge and application of rules
Word choice	no attention to word choice	limited word choice	relies on familiar vocabulary	varied vocabulary with some use of rich words	consistent use of rich words and images to develop topic

TRANSITIONAL EXPRESSIONS

Effective writers help their readers move smoothly from one point to another. These writers use **transitional words and phrases** skillfully. The chart below will help you become an organized and effective writer.

To Compare Things/To Show Similarities

accordingly	for example	in the same way
also	for instance	likewise
another	furthermore	moreover
as	in addition	of course
besides	in a like manner	similarly
		too

To Contrast Things/To Show Differences

although	however	otherwise
but	in spite of	still
conversely	instead	yet
even if	on the contrary	
even though	on the other hand	

To Add Information

additionally	as well	next
again	besides	moreover
also	for instance	other
along with	for example	to be specific
another	finally	to illustrate

To Show Location

above	behind	by	near	over
across	below	down	off	through
against	beneath	in back of	onto	throughout
along	beside	in front of	on top of	to the right
among	between	inside	out	under
around	beyond	into	outside	

To Show Time Sequence/To Show Chronological Order

after	finally	now
afterward	first, second, etc.	previously
at last	formerly	soon
before	last	then
during	later	tomorrow
earlier	meanwhile	until
eventually	next	yesterday

To Conclude or Summarize

as a result	in conclusion	therefore
finally	in summary	thus
hence	lastly	to sum up

To Show Emphasis

assuredly	in truth	to be sure
first and foremost	most importantly	undoubtedly
in fact	primarily	without fail
in the first place	surely	

***Comma* Reminder!**

Use a comma(s) when a transitional word or expression is used as an introductory element or an interrupter.

(See PUNCTUATION, comma rules #3 and 4, Pages 41-42.)

Transitional
words
and phrases
link
ideas together.

STANDARDS OF FORMAL ENGLISH

Formal English is the language that writers use for dignified occasions such as serious papers, reports, letters, and speeches. It follows the rules of grammar and usage and does not include contractions and conversational expressions such as slang and colloquialisms. Use the following standards when writing in formal style.

1. Write in **third person**.

Examples

When a *student* thinks carefully, *he* or *she* realizes...

When *one* thinks carefully, *he* or *she* realizes...

Do **not** use second person pronouns *you*, *your*, or *yours* except in direct quotations, in directions, and in letters which address the reader.

Do **not** use first person pronouns *I*, *me*, *my*, *mine*, *we*, *us*, *our*, or *ours* except in direct quotations or unless the piece is personal writing.

2. Do not use contractions.

Example

Writers *do not* use “*don’t*” in formal writing.

3. Do not use abbreviations.

Exceptions

Mr., *Mrs.*, *Ms.*, *Dr.*, *Rev.*, *A.M.*, *P.M.*

4. Do not use slang or non-standard English.

Standard English

The boys did not have enough money, so the owner asked them to leave.

Non-standard

The boys didn't have enough *dough*, so the owner *booted them out*.

5. Spell out numbers from one to ninety-nine. Use numerals for numbers 100 and higher. Do not begin a sentence with a numeral.

Examples

In the last *forty-two* minutes, the speaker made *five* points.

The audience consisted of 255 people.

Two hundred and fifty-five people were there.

6. Avoid "etc."



STYLE SHEET

Pay attention to the following areas in your writing!

Point of View

- Based on your purpose for writing, decide on your point of view and don't switch it!
- Be consistent!

Note how pronouns are used in various writing modes:

First person (*I, me, we, us*)- informal writing: self-expression, narration, and letters

Example: Once *I* had all the information, *I* knew it would be a difficult decision for *me*.

Third person (*he, she, it, one, him, her, they, them*)- formal writing: literary analysis, exposition, persuasion, and narration

Example: *He* is definitely a character who develops maturity by the end of the novel.

Used rarely in formal written work:

Second person (*you, your*)- **ONLY** in direct quotations, directions, and letters

Example: *You* must turn left at the corner.

Pronoun Case

- Use **subject pronouns** (*I, you, he, she, we, they, it, who*) for subjects and predicate nouns.
- Use **object pronouns** (*me, you, him, her, us, them, it, whom*) for direct and indirect objects, objects of prepositions.

- Know the difference between a **possessive pronoun** and a contraction.

Possessive Pronoun

shows ownership

its wing
(NOT “it is” wing!)

their house

your shoe

Contraction

abbreviation between pronoun and verb

It’s cold outside.
(YES “It is” cold outside!)

They’re going...

You’re the winner!

Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement

Singular pronouns: *another, each, either, neither, one, everyone, everybody, everything, no one, nobody, anyone, anybody, anything, someone, somebody, something*

Plural pronouns: *several, few, both, many*

Singular when they refer to a singular word and plural when they refer to a plural word: *all, any, most, much, more, none, some* **Example:** *All of the songs were enjoyed. All of the song was enjoyed.*

- Make your pronoun **agree in number** with the noun/pronoun (*antecedent*) it renames.

Incorrect: The events in the novel keep the *reader* on their toes.

Correct: The events in the novel keep the *reader* on her toes.

Incorrect: *One* cannot use their imagination when viewing the movie.

Correct: *One* cannot use his imagination when viewing the movie.

Incorrect: *Each* of the students claimed their answer was correct.

Correct: *Each* of the students claimed her answer was correct.

- Do not overuse pronouns or make unclear references. This causes the reader to become bored and confused!

Example of confusion and overuse: The reader admires *Timothy* for the way *he* trains *Phillip* so that he can get along when he dies.

When WHO dies? Phillip or Timothy?

Subject-Verb Agreement

Nouns, pronouns, and verbs have singular and plural forms. Nouns ending in “s” are usually plural, BUT verbs ending in “s” are generally singular...Go figure!

- Make sure your verb agrees with its subject in number!
 - Don't be confused if a prepositional phrase follows a subject:
The sharp metal (of our swords) collides. (*NOT* “swords collide”)
 - Don't be confused if the subject follows the verb:
(Just beyond the woods) lies our house. (*NOT* “woods lie”)
 - Compound subjects joined by “and” take a plural verb.
 - In compound subjects joined by “or ” or “nor,” the verb agrees with the subject closest to the verb:
Neither my mother nor my **sisters are coming**.
Neither my sisters nor my **mother is coming**.

Review the singular and plural pronouns for correct subject-verb agreement. Maintain consistent verb tense.

Sentence Structure

- Avoid fragments!
 - Incorrect:** Because the weapon his squire had given him was powerful
 - Correct:** Because the weapon his squire had given him was so powerful, I knew I could still win the fight!
- Avoid run-ons!
 - Incorrect:** One day he heard a big woof from a dark figure in front of him, he thought it was a bear at first.
 - Correct:** When Gary first heard the woof from the dark figure in front of him, he thought it was a bear.
- Proofread!
Use commas correctly, eliminate unnecessary or confusing words, and add proper end marks when appropriate.

Parallel Construction

- When you write a sentence that joins related ideas, be consistent in the form/structure you use.

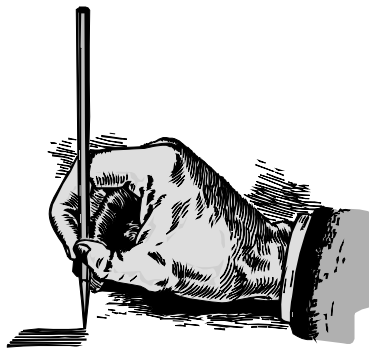
Similar parts of a sentence are written with the same part of speech. This particularly applies to verbs, nouns, adverbs, and adjectives.

Not parallel: At the shore I enjoyed surfing the waves, shopping on the boardwalk, and chocolate frozen custard.

Parallel: At the shore I enjoyed *surfing* the waves, *shopping* on the boardwalk, and *eating* chocolate frozen custard.

Not parallel: If I could have anything that I wanted, I would spend a day in New York City, become an actress, and a cure for cancer.

Parallel: If I could have anything that I wanted, I would *spend* a day in New York City, *become* an actress, and *discover* a cure for cancer.



FINAL COPY FORMATS

Handwritten Work

1. Write in blue or black ink on white composition paper.
2. Write on only one side of the paper.
3. Write neatly.
4. Avoid excessive cross-outs.
5. Include a heading in the upper left-hand corner of the first page.

Your name

Teacher's name

Class, Period(s)

Date

Title

6. Center the title. Capitalize the first word, last word, and every important word in the title, but do *not* underline the title.
7. Skip a line between the title and the written work, and skip lines throughout the paper.
8. Indent paragraph beginnings one-half inch.
9. Staple the pages in the upper left-hand corner.
10. Proofread carefully. A final copy should be your very best work.

Word Processed Work

1. Use good quality, white paper and black ink only.
2. Leave margins of about one inch on all sides
3. Double-space throughout the entire paper with no extra spaces *between* paragraphs.
4. Choose Times New Roman or Arial type font. For most types of writing, use 12-point type size.
5. Use the same font and size for the title.
6. Include a heading in the upper left-hand corner of the first page. See model on page 33.
7. Center the title. Capitalize the first word, last word, and all important words in the title, but do *not* underline the title.
8. Use the tab key to indent five spaces the first line of each paragraph.
9. Use two spaces after end marks.
10. Staple the pages in the upper left-hand corner.
11. Do not forget to proofread carefully. Use programs that check for spelling and grammar errors, but remember that no spelling or grammar checker is foolproof.
12. Avoid handwritten corrections. Instead, correct errors on the computer and reprint.
13. Avoid contractions.
14. Avoid using the pronouns *I* and *you*.

THE EIGHT PARTS OF SPEECH

Nouns

Nouns are words that name a person, place, thing, idea, or feeling.

Examples:	person	boy, John Wilson
	place	theater, Madison Square Garden
	thing	flower, poem
	idea	justice, revolution
	feeling	happiness, anger

*A noun can function as a subject, direct object, indirect object, predicate noun, or object of a preposition.

Verbs

Action verbs are words that tell what action a person or thing is performing.

Examples:	walk, open, wonder, decide
-----------	----------------------------

Linking verbs are words that connect the predicate adjective or predicate noun with the subject.

The forms of the verb *be* are the most commonly used linking verbs:

am	is being	must be	could have been
are	was being	shall be	may have been
is	were being	should be	might have been
was	can be	will be	must have been
were	could be	would be	shall have been
am being	may be	have been	should have been
are being	might be	has been	will have been
		had been	would have been

In addition to the verb *be*, a number of other verbs can often be linking verbs:

appear	feel	look	seem
taste	become	grow	remain
sound	smell	stay	turn

Helping verbs must precede main verbs. (Helping verb + Main verb = Verb phrase)

Examples: *is leaving, must have thought, will soon be watching*

Interjections

Interjections are words that express emotion. They have no grammatical relation to other words in the sentence. An interjection is set off from the rest of the sentence by an exclamation point or a comma.

Examples: **Wow!** That sounds great!
Oh, I don't think so.

Pronouns

Pronouns are words that take the place of nouns. The word that a pronoun replaces is called the pronoun's *antecedent*.

In a sentence, a pronoun can function as a subject, direct object, indirect object, predicate noun, or an object of a preposition.

A **subject pronoun** is used as the subject or predicate noun in a sentence, and an **object pronoun** is used as a direct object, indirect object, or object of the preposition.

A **possessive pronoun** is used to show ownership.

Singular Pronouns

	Subject Pronouns	Object Pronouns	Possessive Pronouns
First Person	I	me	my, mine
Second Person	you	you	your, yours
Third Person	he	him	his
	she	her	her, hers
	it	it	its

Plural Pronouns

	Subject Pronouns	Object Pronouns	Possessive Pronouns
First Person	we	us	our, ours
Second Person	you	you	your, yours
Third Person	they	them	their, theirs

Adjectives

Adjectives are words that describe nouns or pronouns.

Adjectives tell what kind, which one, how many, or how much about the nouns or pronouns that they describe.

Examples:	what kind?	<i>brick</i> house
	which one?	<i>that</i> man
	how many?	<i>several</i> roses
	how much?	<i>enough</i> raisins

*The articles *a*, *an*, and *the* are adjectives. Pronouns that describe nouns are adjectives, i.e. *her* book.

Adverbs

Adverbs are words that describe verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs.

Adverbs tell where, when, how, or to what extent.

Examples:	where?	jump <i>away</i>
	when?	leave <i>soon</i>
	how?	walk <i>quietly</i>
	to what extent?	<i>almost</i> won

Prepositions

Prepositions are words that relate the noun or pronoun following them to another word in the sentence.

Most Commonly Used Prepositions

about	behind	during	off	to
above	below	except	on	toward
across	beneath	for	onto	under
after	beside	from	opposite	underneath
against	besides	in	out	until
along	between	inside	outside	up
among	beyond	into	over	upon
around	but	like	past	with
at	by	near	since	within
before	down	of	through(out)	without

Compound Prepositions

according	by means of	instead of
ahead of	in addition to	in view of
apart from	in back of	next to
aside from	in front of	on account of
as of	in place of	on top of
because of	in spite of	out of

*Some words may be used as either prepositions or adverbs. To tell an adverb from a preposition, remember that a preposition is always followed by a noun or pronoun that is its object.

Examples:	Preposition	Spread the chips throughout the cake batter.
	Adverb	Spread the chips throughout.

Conjunctions

Conjunctions connect words or groups of words.

Coordinating Conjunctions

and but for or nor so yet

Correlative Conjunctions

both...and either...or neither...nor whether...or not only...but also

Subordinating Conjunctions

after	as soon as	if	though	whenever
although	as though	in order that	till	where
as	because	since	unless	wherever
as if	before	so that	until	while
as long as	even though	than	when	

THE PARTS OF A SENTENCE

Subject

The subject of a sentence tells *whom* or *what* the sentence is about.

Example: Our new car is in the garage.

Verb

The verb in a sentence tells what the subject does, what is done to the subject, or what the condition of the subject is.

Examples: Bob gave an unforgettable speech.
She has been ill all week.

Complements

◆ Direct Object

1. Follows an **action** verb
2. Is a noun or pronoun
3. Answers the questions *whom* or *what* after the subject and verb

Example: He threw the **ball** to the pitcher. (He threw what? ball)

◆ Indirect Object

1. Comes between the **action** verb and the direct object
2. Is a noun or a pronoun
3. Answers the questions *to whom*, *for whom*, *to what*, or *for what* the action is being done.

Example: He threw the **pitcher** the ball. (He threw the ball to whom? pitcher)

◆ Predicate Noun/Pronoun

1. Follows a **linking** verb (see page 35 for a list of linking verbs)
2. Is a noun or a pronoun
3. Gives another name for the subject

Example: The catcher is **Christine**. That is **she**.

◆ Predicate Adjective

1. Follows a **linking** verb (see page 35 for a list of linking verbs)
2. Is an adjective
3. Describes the subject

Example: The catcher is **outstanding**.

***These parts of a sentence are *never* in a prepositional phrase.**

CAPITALIZATION

Proper Nouns and Common Nouns

1. Capitalize proper nouns.

proper nouns - **Bernardsville Middle School, Dallas, Catholicism, Fifth Avenue, Empire State Building, World War II**

2. Do *not* capitalize common nouns.

common nouns - school, city, religion, street

Proper Adjectives

3. Capitalize adjectives formed from proper nouns.

I love **Irish** bread. (proper adjective “Irish” formed from proper noun “Ireland.”)

Sections of the Country

4. Capitalize sections of the country.

He grew up in the **Northeast** but now lives on the **West Coast**.

5. Do *not* capitalize words that simply indicate direction.

Many people in **n**ortheast New Jersey drive **e**ast on Route I-78 to get to Newark.

Days, Months, Holidays

7. Capitalize the names of days of the week, months of the year, and special holidays.

day of the week - **M**onday month - **J**une holiday - **M**emorial **D**ay

8. Do *not* capitalize the names of seasons.

My favorite season is **s**ummer.

Names of School Subjects

9. Capitalize the name of a specific course if a number or letter follows it. Do *not* capitalize the name of a general subject.

I like **m**ath; therefore, when I am a freshman in high school, I will take **A**lgebra II.

10. The names of languages are always capitalized: **E**nglish, **L**atin, etc.

My world **l**anguage choice will be either **S**panish or **L**atin.

Titles

11. Capitalize the first and last words and every important word in titles. Unimportant words include articles (*a, an, the*), coordinating conjunctions (*and, but, for, nor, or, so, yet*), and prepositions of fewer than five letters (i.e. *of, for, with, from*, etc.)

We read **T**he **A**dventures of **T**om **S**awyer and **T**he **P**rin**c**e and the **P**au**p**er.

Family Relationships

12. Capitalize a word showing a family relationship when the word is used before or in place of a person's name. Do *not* capitalize a word showing a family relationship when a possessive comes before the word.

I saw **D**ad and **U**ncle **J**ohn, but my sister was not with them.

First Words

13. Capitalize the first word of a sentence and the first word in a direct quotation.

Wise Ben Franklin said, "**W**hen the well's dry, we know the worth of water."

14. When the words identifying the speaker of the direct quotation interrupt a quoted sentence, the second part of the quotation begins with a small letter.

"**W**hen the well's dry," said Benjamin Franklin, "**w**e know the worth of water."

Friendly Letters and Business Letters

15. Capitalize the first word and all nouns in the salutation (greeting), but in the closing, only the first word should be capitalized. (See page 68 for business letter format.)

Salutations:
Closings:

De**a**r **C**hairman of the **B**oard:
Sincerely **y**ours,

De**a**r **M**om,
Very truly **y**ours,

PUNCTUATION

End Marks

An **end mark** is a mark of punctuation placed at the end of a sentence. The three kinds of end marks are the **period**, the **question mark**, and the **exclamation point**.

1. A declarative sentence makes a statement and is followed by a period.
The Bernardsville Middle School is on Seney Drive.
2. An interrogative sentence asks a question and is followed by a question mark.
Is Bernardsville Middle School on Seney Drive?
3. An exclamatory sentence shows excitement or strong feeling and is followed by an exclamation point.
What a wonderful day that was!
4. An imperative sentence gives a command or makes a request. A strong command is followed by an exclamation point. A request is followed by a period.
Get away from the fire! (*Strong command*) Please stand back. (*Request*)

Commas

1. **Items in a series:** Use commas to separate items in a series.
Students, parents, and teachers visited the museum.
The crowd was **large, loud, and untiring**.
I left my books **in my locker, on the bus, or at the store**.
2. **Compound sentence:** Use a comma before *and, but, or, nor, for, so, and yet* when they join two complete thoughts (independent clauses).
Caution - Make certain there are two complete thoughts and not simply one subject with two verbs.
Commas are used frequently, but there aren't too many rules.
Commas are important but are not difficult to learn. (Not a compound sentence)
3. **Introductory element:** Use a comma after introductory words, phrases, and clauses.
Later, the team watched a tape of the game.
During the next practice session, they changed their plan.
When they played that team again, they won.
On the corner by the high school, they have a pay phone.

4. **Interrupters:** Separate interrupting words, phrases, and clauses from the main sentence. *Interrupters can be removed from the sentence without damaging the meaning of the sentence.*

He, **of course**, has read the book.
Mrs. Johnson, **the president**, spoke to the group.

5. **Nouns of direct address:** Separate nouns or pronouns that directly speak to people.

Bob, are you leaving now?
I noticed, **class**, that you were listening carefully.

6. **Divided quotations:** When a speaker tag interrupts a direct quotation, it should be off by commas. For additional comma /quotation mark examples, see page 44.

“ I see your point,” snapped her sister, “ but I disagree completely!”

7. **Conventional situations:**

Use commas to separate items in dates and addresses.

I moved to 325 East 7th Street, Edmond, Oklahoma 73034, on June 4, 1999, if I remember correctly.

Use a comma after the salutation of a friendly letter and after the closing of a friendly letter and a business letter.

Dear Aunt Mary,
Sincerely yours,

Semicolons

1. Use a semicolon instead of a comma between two complete thoughts (independent clauses) that are not joined by *and*, *but*, *or*, *nor*, *for*, *so*, or *yet*.

I want to go to the movies; my friend wants to start her homework.
I want to go to the movies, **but** my friend wants to start her homework.

2. Use semicolons between items in a series if the items contain commas.

The awards were earned by Janie Browne, eighth-grade; Linda Martin, seventh-grade; Joe Carlucci, sixth-grade; and Bill Howell, fifth-grade.

Colons

1. Use a colon before a list of items to mean, “note what follows.” Do not use a colon immediately after a verb or a preposition.

Bring these items to class: textbook, homework, notebook, and pen.
The items to bring to class **are** textbook, homework, notebook, and pen.

2. Use a colon between the hour and the minute.

8:00 A.M.

3. Use a colon after the salutation of a business letter.

Dear Board of Education:

Apostrophes

To omit letters or numbers

1. Use an apostrophe to show that one or more letters have been left out of a word to form a contraction.

Don't (*o* is left out of *do not*)

2. Use an apostrophe to show that one or more digits have been left out of a number.

Class of '99 (*19* is left out of *1999*)

To form plurals

3. Use an apostrophe to form the plural of a letter, a sign, a number, or a word referring to the word.

I earned three *A*'s.
I used too many *also*'s in my essay.

To form possessives of nouns

4. Follow this procedure:
 - First, make the noun singular or plural.
 - Then, if the noun ends in *s*, just add an apostrophe after the *s*.
 - However, if the noun does not end in *s*, add both an apostrophe and *s*.

To form possessives of indefinite pronouns

5. Add an apostrophe and *s* to form the plural of an indefinite pronoun.

Is this someone's book? May I use it if it is nobody else's?

Quotation Marks

1. Place quotation marks before and after the exact words of a speaker or writer.

Daniel J. Boorstin said, "Education is learning what you didn't even know you didn't know."

2. Place single quotation marks before and after a quotation within a quotation.

Mrs. Smith reminded us, "George Bernard Shaw said, 'Better never than late.'"

Sample Dialogue

Please note the formatting of the dialogue in the excerpt from James and the Giant Peach by Roald Dahl. (pg. 83)

"Hooray!" shouted the Old-Green-Grasshopper, peering out of the tunnel. "Well done, James!"
Up flew the seagull with James paying out the silk string as it went. He gave it about fifty yards and then tied the string to the stem of the peach.

"Next one!" he shouted, jumping back into the tunnel. "Up you get again, Earthworm! Bring up some more silk, Centipede!"

"Oh, I don't like this at all," wailed the Earthworm. "It only just missed me! I even felt the wind on my back as it went swishing past!"

"Sssh!" whispered James. "Keep still! Here comes another one!"
So they did it again.

NOTE:

- Periods and commas are always placed **inside** quotation marks.
- Semicolons and colons are placed **outside** quotation marks.
- Question marks and exclamation marks are placed **inside** when they punctuate the quotation and **outside** when they punctuate the main sentence.

Punctuating Titles

1. Underline (or *italicize*) the titles of books, plays, book-length poems, magazines, newspapers, radio and television programs, movies, videos, cassettes, CD's, aircraft, and ships.
2. Place in quotation marks titles of songs, poems, short stories, episodes of radio or television programs, chapters of books, and articles.

NOTE: Do not underline or put in quotation marks your own title at the top of your written work. (see capitalization rules on pages 39 and 40)

SPELLING DEMONS AND TROUBLESOME WORDS

Students and teachers at the middle school value spelling as an important part of writing literacy. We have a practice of checking any spelling questions with a classmate or an adult who is a good speller, and of consulting a dictionary or a spell check. However, teachers often find basic words that are commonly misspelled in middle school students' papers.

- ✓ LEARN the correct spelling and use of the following words.
- ✓ Eradicate careless mistakes from all your written work!
- ✓ Proofread carefully!

all right	That is <i>all right</i> with me.	<i>Always</i> two words
a lot	I don't have <i>a lot</i> of questions.	<i>Always</i> two words
accept - <i>verb</i>	John graciously <i>accepted</i> their praise.	Means "to receive"
except - <i>preposition</i>	Everyone was invited <i>except</i> me.	Means "other than"
affect - <i>verb</i>	How does her mood <i>affect</i> you?	Means "to influence"
effect - <i>noun, (verb)</i>	What is the <i>effect</i> of her mood?	Means "the result"
beginning	The <i>beginning</i> of the novel has impact.	Double the final consonant
believe	That is hard for me to <i>believe</i> !	<i>i</i> before <i>e</i> except after <i>c</i> *
calendar	Check your <i>calendar</i> for conflicts.	NOT...-er!
character	Who is your favorite <i>character</i> ?	(...just learn it!)
could have/could've may have/might've shall have/should've would have/would've	We <i>could've</i> been more organized.	NOT ...could of! might of should of or would of
definitely	Melissa <i>definitely</i> won the contest!	NOT...-ley

different	Your uniform is <i>different</i> from mine.	(...just learn it!)
does/doesn't	Your answer <i>doesn't</i> matter.	NOT... <i>dosen't</i>
especially	I <i>especially</i> love the music from the play.	(just learn it!)
independent	Can you name the thirteen <i>independent</i> colonies?	NOT...-dant!
it's	<i>It's</i> raining outside.	Contraction for "it is"
its	The house had <i>its</i> window broken.	Shows ownership
lose - verb	Did you <i>lose</i> the game?	Means "fail to win" or "misplace"
loose - adjective	Her hair fell <i>loose</i> on her shoulders.	Means "free or untied"
probably	You are <i>probably</i> going to the party.	(...just learn it!)
quiet	Our neighborhood is <i>quiet</i> during the day.	Opposite of "noisy"
quit	Don't <i>quit</i> practicing until you get it right.	Means "to stop"
quite	I've had <i>quite</i> enough to eat, thank you.	Means "completely"
realize	I now <i>realize</i> that I must study my reading notes.	Means "to understand fully"
receive	You should <i>receive</i> the package today.	<i>i</i> before <i>e</i> EXCEPT after <i>c</i>
separate	Keep the ice cream separate from the rest of the food.	Means "apart from"
similar	We have <i>similar</i> accents.	Means "alike"
than	My brother is bigger <i>than</i> yours.	Used in comparison
then	First I laughed, <i>then</i> I cried.	Tells when

their	<i>Their</i> new car is purple!	Shows ownership
there	Put it over <i>there</i> .	Points out location
they're	They're all coming to the ceremony.	Contraction for "they are"
threw - verb	Nolan Ryan <i>threw</i> many strike outs.	Past tense of "throw"
through- preposition	The ball zoomed <i>through</i> the strike zone.	Means "passing from one side to another" or "a period of time"
to - too - two	He was <i>too</i> restless <i>to</i> stay put for more than <i>two</i> minutes.	(...just learn them!)
usually	She <i>usually</i> comes to practice on time.	(...this one too!)
weather	Last summer we had beautiful <i>weather</i> .	Refers to conditions of the atmosphere
whether	I don't know whether I'll go sailing.	Refers to a possibility
where	<i>Where</i> is your coat?	Asks "in what place?"
wear	Are you going to <i>wear</i> a coat?	Concerns clothes
were	You <i>were</i> at the store when I called.	(...now really!)
we're	<i>We're</i> not saving any money.	Contraction for "we are"
who's	<i>Who's</i> the author of <u>Harry Potter</u> ...?	Contraction for "who is"
whose	<i>Whose</i> novels have had unprecedented popularity?	Shows ownership
your	Don't forget <i>your</i> towel.	Shows ownership
you're	<i>You're</i> supposed to be doing homework.	Contraction for "you are"

Spelling Rules to remember and apply...

**** I before E**

Write *i* before *e* EXCEPT after *c*, OR when sounds like “ay” as in *neighbor* and *weigh*.

Exceptions to the rule: counterfeit, either, financier, foreign, height, heir, leisure, neither, seize, sheik, species, *their*, weird.

Silent e

If a word ends in a silent *e*, drop the *e* before adding a suffix beginning with a vowel but do not drop the *e* when the suffix begins with a consonant:
(like... liking... likeness/ use...using...useful)

Exceptions to the rule: truly, argument, ninth

Personal Spelling Demons

_____	_____	_____
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Grammar and Usage Scope and Sequence

i,s,m symbols: i = introduce, s = stress, m = maintain

Objectives:	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
I. Parts of speech				
A. Nouns				
1. Kinds				
a. Common	s	m	m	m
b. Proper	s	m	m	m
2. Uses				
a. Subject	i	s	s	m
b. Direct object			i	s
c. Indirect object			i	s
d. Pred. noun			i (honors)	i/s (honors)
e. Obj. of prep.			i	s
f. Appositive				i
g. Direct address			i	s
B. Pronouns				
1. Uses				
a. Subject	i	s	m	m
b. Direct object			i	s
c. Indirect object			i	s
d. Pred. noun			i (honors)	i/s (honors)
e. Obj. of prep.		i	s	m
f. Appositive				i
2. Agreement			i (honors)	i/s (honors)
3. Proper case				i (honors)
C. Verbs				
1. Verb phrase	i	s	m	m
2. Tense	i	s	m	m
3. Kinds				
a. Action	i	s	m	m
b. Linking	i	s	m	m
4. Subj. agreement			i	s
D. Adjectives				
1. Comparison	i	s	m	m
2. Use				
a. Modifier	i	s	m	m
b. Pred. adj.			i (honors)	i/s (honors)
E. Adverbs		i	s	m
F. Prepositional phrases	i	s	m	m
G. Conjunctions		i	s	m
H. Interjections		i	s	m
II. Sentence structure				
A. Simple sentence				
1. Subject-verb	i	s	m	m
2. Subj.-verb-d.o.			i	m
3. Subj.-verb-i.o.-d.o.			i	s

Objectives:	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
4. Subj.-verb-p.a./p.n.			i (honors)	i/s (honors)
5. Compound parts		i	s	m
B. Compound sentence		i	s	m
C. Complex sentence			i (honors)	i/s (honors)
D. Compound-complex				i (honors)
E. Verbal phrases				i (honors)
F. Fragments and run-ons	i	s	s	s
III. Capitalization				
A. Proper nouns	i	s	m	m
B. Sections of the country			i	s
C. Days, months, holidays	s	m	m	m
D. School subjects			i	s
E. Official/brand names			i	s
F. Titles	i	s	m	m
G. Abbreviations of title		i	s	s
H. Titles of relatives			i	s
I. First word of				
1. Every sentence	m	m	m	m
2. Direct quotations	i	s	m	m
3. Interrupted quotes	i	s	m	m
J. Friendly/business letters	i	s	m	m
IV. Punctuation				
A. End marks	s	m	m	m
B. Commas				
1. Items in a series	i	s	m	m
2. Compound sentence	i	s	m	m
3. Introductory items		i	s	m
4. Interrupters		i	s	m
5. Direct address	i	s	m	m
6. Dates	i	s	m	m
7. Addresses	i	s	m	m
8. Letters	i	s	m	m
C. Semicolons				
1. Independent clauses				i (honors)
2. Series with commas				i
D. Colons				
1. List of items		i	s	m
2. Hour and minute	m	m	m	m
3. Business letter		i	s	m
E. Apostrophes				
1. Contractions	m	m	m	m
2. Number omissions		i	s	m
3. Plurals		i	s	m
4. Possessives	i	s	s	s
F. Quotation Marks				
1. Exact words	i	s	m	m
2. Titles		i	s	m

Reading Skills Scope and Sequence

Objectives:	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Main Idea	S	S	M	M
<i>Relevant details</i>	S	S	S	S
Context Clues	I	S	S	M
Sequencing	M	M	M	M
Inferring	I	S	S	S/M
Comparing and Contrasting	S/M	M	M	M
Drawing Conclusions	S	S	M	M
Making Generalizations	S	S	M	M
Cause and Effect	I	M	M	M
Fact and Opinion	M	M	M	M
Dictionary and Thesaurus Skills	M/I	M	M	M
Synonyms, Homonyms, Antonyms	I/S	M	S	S
Prefixes	I	S	M	M
Suffixes	I	S	M	M
Root Words	---	M	M	M
Predicting	M	M	M	M
Summarizing	I	S	M	M
Paraphrasing	---	I	M	M

I = Introduce
 S = Stress
 M = Maintain

Literary Terms

The following is a listing of literary terms and their meanings. If students are familiar with these terms, they will be able to recognize these techniques in the reading and will have a common vocabulary for discussions, literary analysis, and written work.

Alliteration – The repetition of initial consonant sounds: “Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers...”

Assonance – The repetition of vowel sounds when consonant sounds are not alike, creating partial rhyme, like “breeze through the trees” or “alas and a lack.”

Antagonist – One who forces the evil or conflict; one who opposes; often the villain.

Characterization - The way in which an author develops the characters so that the reader can picture them and understand their feelings. This is done in four ways: what they do, what they say/think/feel, what other characters say about them, or what the author simply tells the reader.

Characters – The people or animals that take part in the story. There are main and secondary characters. There are also characters that play small but important roles. **Static** characters do not change during the story while **dynamic** characters do.

Climax – The most exciting part of the story; when the main character takes steps to solve the problem.

Conflict – The problem in the story; the basic struggle between central elements in fiction. Conflict can be internal or external. There are several types of conflict: man vs. man, man vs. himself, man vs. nature, man vs. fate, and man vs. society.

Dynamic – refers to characters that change during the story.

Exposition – Introduction of material necessary for the understanding of the story; usually includes a description of the setting, the characters and anything else the reader needs to know about the story.

Fiction – A category of literature that has imaginary characters and events; includes novels, short stories, etc.

Figurative language – The description of something by comparison beyond the literal.

Flashback – The interruption of a narrative to tell about an incident from the past.

Foreshadowing – Hints or clues that suggest that certain events will occur later.

Genre – A distinctive type or category of literary composition: poetry, drama, novel, short story, essay, article, satire, myth, fable, biography, and autobiography.

Hero/Heroine – The main character, often noted for courageous and daring acts.

Hyperbole – An overstatement or exaggeration used for humor or emphasis.

Imagery – Vivid language used to convey sensations.

Irony – The contrast between what is expected or what appears to be and what actually exists; it implies the opposite of what is said. Includes verbal irony, situational irony, and dramatic irony.

Metaphor – An implied comparison between two unlike things, such as Shakespeare’s reference to life as “a brief candle.”

Mood – The atmosphere created by the setting and the situation; the feeling the reader gets from the story.

Nonfiction – Literary works other than fiction.

Onomatopoeia – Words that sound like what they mean, such as, “crash” or “sizzle.”

Personification – Giving human qualities to objects, animals, ideas, or other non-human beings.

Plot – A series of related events that happen in a story. It is made up of these:

- exposition/opening – introduces the story, setting and characters
- complications – the conflict or problem to be solved
- climax – usually an event in which the character has to choose a way to settle the conflict
- resolution – the problem is solved and the action ends

These events can be grouped in rising action and falling action.

Point of view – The angle of narration used to tell the story. First person (I, as the narrator) or third person (he or she.)

Protagonist – The main character or the leading figure in a cause; often a hero or heroine.

Resolution – The solution to the problem or the resolution of the action.

Satire – The use of ridicule to expose customs, manners, individuals or political or social institutions.

Setting – Where and when the story takes place; must have both.

Simile – A figure of speech in which two unlike items are compared by using the words “like” or “as.”

Static - Refers to characters who stay essentially the same.

Style – The type of writing an author uses to create a mood or set the tone of the story.

Subject – The topic on which the author has chosen to write. Is different from the theme but can be used as a vehicle to convey the theme.

Symbolism -- Someone or something that represents itself and also stands for something else. Can be people, things, or actions.

Theme – The message, a universal one, that the reader gets from a story. It is a main idea, underlying message, lesson, piece of advice or moral that the author is trying to convey. Not all stories have themes, but those that do may have their themes either stated or merely implied.

Tone – The author’s attitude toward a subject or the relationship the author has with the reader.

Notes

Reading Response Journals

Students in the middle school use reading response journals for various reasons. Because of the many benefits journals provide, students have opportunities for both personal and expository writing.

Students reflect on what they have read. They make connections with prior knowledge, agree or disagree with each other, wonder/interpret, explain, compare or contrast, analyze, evaluate, etc.

Use of reading response journals to facilitate learning need not be limited to language arts classes.

- Response Journals/ “I” prompts

Students initiate response to what has been read. Statements begin with such leads as “I noticed,” “I don’t understand,” “I loved,” etc. Ideas can be used both to clarify and explore individual thinking and as a springboard for group or class discussion.

The following is an example of a journal entry from a reading response journal by sixth-graders from The Castle in the Attic, Chapters 1 and 2.

I was surprised by the amount of information I learned about William on the first page of the novel. In these chapters, *I learned* what I think will be William's problem during the story. Getting clues so early in the story makes me want to read on to see if I am correct. If Mrs. Phillips was my nanny, *I never would have screamed* at her the way William did. *It was strange* that Mrs. Phillips still liked William even though he was rude to her, stole her precious things, and lied. I would have told him that I knew he took them and to put my things right back where he got them and never touch them again! *I hope* that William does not stay like he is now the rest of the story.

- **Buddy/Dialogue Journals**

This is an extension of the “I prompt.” Students record their thinking, exchange journals and respond to one another’s ideas. TWO students do the writing.

The following is an example of a buddy journal entry from seventh-graders. The Outsiders, Chapter 2.

<p>I was disappointed in Cherry when she told Pony not to say "Hi!" in the hall at school or that she could never let her parents see her with him. After all the confidences they had shared and after their open and honest chats, it seems like a slap back to reality - the total unfairness of the social class situation. If I were Pony, I would have felt very frustrated, confused <u>and</u> angry.</p>	<p><i>Before Cherry said that to Pony I was actually thinking what she would do if they saw each other in the halls. I don't really think it's Cherry's fault, though, that she can't be seen with Pony anymore. Her boyfriend, Bob, might start something with Pony or her, and he might tattle to her parents just to make things difficult for her.</i></p>
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- **Quote/Feeling Journals**

Students select an excerpt that has an impact and write to explain their feelings or thinking. One student does both columns of writing.

The following seventh-grade example is taken from Where The Red Fern Grows by Wilson Rawls.

<p>Rubin spat a mouthful of tobacco juice on the clean floor. He said, "Well, we've heard so much about them hounds of his, we just think it's a lot of talk and lies. We'd like to make a little bet; say about two dollars." I had never seen my old grandfather so mad. The red had left his face. In its place was a sickly, paste-gray color. The kind old eyes behind the glasses burned with a fire I had never seen. In a loud voice he asked, "Bet on what?"</p>	<p>Rubin and Rainie are so disgusting in this scene with their rudeness and spitting. I really do not like them, especially in contrast to Billy who is so respectful to his grandpa. I was a little worried that Grandpa was going to have a heart attack because his color is gray and he is burning with anger. Besides, I know he just wants to smack those two Pritchard boys for being so obnoxious! Billy is very quiet through all of this because I think he is a little scared of these bullies. Honestly, I would be too!</p>
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- **Guided Reading Journals**

Teachers provide students with content questions on various levels of thinking, and students respond to these questions as they read.

The following eighth-grade example refers to The Adventures of Tom Sawyer by Mark Twain.

Is there a good reason for Tom Sawyer to fight the new boy who moves to St. Petersburg? If you were Tom, would you have fought? Explain your answer.

Tom has a very negative impression of the new boy when he first sees him on the street in St. Petersburg, but that is not a good reason for Tom to start a fistfight. Tom is obviously annoyed that the new boy, who is wearing pantaloons, a necktie, a hat, and even shoes, is dressed so nicely. Tom feels that his own outfit is "shabby" in comparison. Tom wants to put the new boy in his place; therefore, he says in a confrontational manner, "I can lick you!" Tom is not considering how the new boy feels.

If I had been Tom, I would have tried to welcome the newcomer, not fight him. It is difficult to be the new kid in town. Clothing styles differ from place to place, and the new boy probably already felt embarrassed, not superior, because of his clothes. I would have tried to be friendly.

- **Cued Retelling Journals**

Teachers provide students with characters, setting, plot incidents, etc., and students explain the significance of these elements to the literary work.

The following is an eighth-grade example taken from The Pearl by John Steinbeck.

The scorpion	The scorpion, which stings Kino and Juana's son, Coyotito, introduces the novel's initial conflict, makes the reader aware of Kino's love for his family, and begins the use of the songs as symbols throughout the novel.
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BUSINESS LETTER FORMAT

We write formal business letters **to request** information, **to complain** about problems, and **to state our opinions** or feelings about issues. These letters create an impression on the reader and must follow well-established rules if our words are to be taken seriously.

Parts of a Business Letter

1. The **heading** includes the address of the writer and the date. It should be written at least one inch from the top of the stationery.
2. The **inside address** is made up of the name and address of the person or business to whom you are writing.
 - Always include a person's title if you know it. A short title can be written on the same line as the name; a long title can move to the next line.
 - The name of an organization or business can be substituted at the beginning of the inside address if you are not writing to a specific person.
3. The **salutation** is the greeting of the letter. It is always followed by a colon.
 - Use a person's name if you know it. **Dear Ms. Wilkins:**
 - Use a title if you do not know a specific person's name. **Dear Members of the Board of Education:, Dear Editor:, Dear Somerset Hills Soccer Club:**
4. The **body** is the main part of your message. Block format is preferred. Skip a line between paragraphs.
5. The **closing** is written after the body of the letter and is always followed by a comma. Preferred closings are **Yours truly,** and **Sincerely,**. Only the first word is capitalized.
6. The **signature** is your handwritten ending to the letter. On a computer, leave four spaces after the closing and then type the signature. Above the typed name, write the signature.

SAMPLE BUSINESS LETTER

The following letter shows each part explained on the previous page. An actual letter would not be numbered, of course!

One inch from top

1. 47 Fair Oaks Lane
Bernardsville, NJ 07924
April 28, 2002

Four to Seven Spaces

2. Mr. Thad Conover,
Distribution and Sales Director
Walt Disney Recordings
983 Scully Drive, Suite A
Santa Barbara, CA 31211

Double Space

3. Dear Mr. Conover:

Double Space

4. I recently purchased a "Lady and the Tramp II" video for my little sister. I bought it at Sam Goody for \$24, yet I was angered at the many movie "commercials" tagged onto the beginning of our video.

Is there a way to remove advertising clips from videos purchased for home use? I am sure I am not the only consumer who resents being subjected to "coming attractions" when I am in the privacy of my own home.

Please send me information regarding the rationale for this practice. Please consider discontinuing such lengthy and annoying lead ins.

Double Space

5. Sincerely,

6. *Renee Clarke*

Four Spaces

Renee Clarke

SCIENCE LAB FORMAT

Page 1

Title (5 points)

A brief description of the experiment--the question to be solved

Abstract (15 points)

A brief summary of the experiment--similar to the summary of a book found on the back cover

Page 2

Title (5 points)

A brief description of the experiment

Purpose (5 points)

The question to be solved

Hypothesis (10 points)

An educated guess as to how the experiment will turn out--includes research about other similar experiments and their conclusions

Equipment/materials (10 points)

A list of materials and equipment required for the experiment

Procedure (15 points)

A summary of the experimental procedure and setup--the exact steps used to perform the experiment

Results (15 points)

The data collected during the experiment--graphs, tables, or charts to represent collected data, along with explanatory captions

Conclusion (15 points)

A justification and explanation of the results--states whether the hypothesis is correct or incorrect and why--states any problems experienced during the experiment and how they may have affected the results

References (5 points)

A list of references in the following format:

Author(s); Title of the Experiment (Name of Web Site):
Journal Title (Magazine, Web site address, Newspaper,
etc.); Page #'s (25-33); Date.

*Length of report varies depending upon experiment and grade level. Point values also may vary.

SCIENCE LAB EXEMPLAR

The Distillation of Wood

Purpose – To learn about a form of matter by breaking it down through heating

Hypothesis – The wood will start to split after a few minutes of heating. Then, it will become discolored.

Equipment/Materials –

1. Two glass test tubes
2. Two rubber-coated, glass tubes
3. A beaker
4. A bucket filled with water
5. A pegboard
6. A Bunsen burner
7. A Bunsen burner cord
8. Two plugs
9. Two clamps
10. Wax paper
11. Note paper
12. Pen or pencil
13. Goggles
14. Wood splints
15. Natural gas
16. Matches

Procedure –

1. Set up the equipment as shown in the diagram.
2. Pack the heating test tube with wood splints.
3. Start heating it after it has been checked.
4. Make observations during heating.
5. Continue heating until all the wood has reacted.
6. Remove glass tube from bucket with water and stop heating.
7. Remove the condensing test tube and cover it with wax paper.
8. Examine the remains of wood and clean up equipment.
9. Re-examine the condensing test tube and note observations.

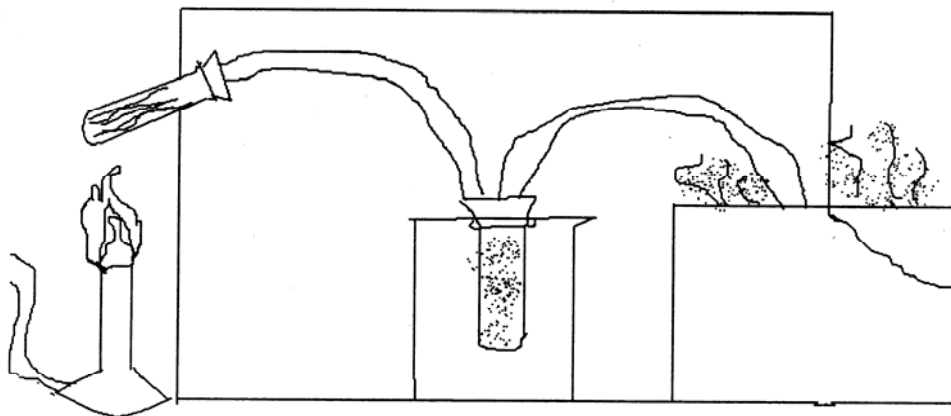
Results –

When I turned on the burner, action had already started. First, I saw that a kind of gas was running through the glass tubes from the wood test tube to the condensing test tube. I saw that this gas was coming from the heated wood. Next, I saw that the condensing test tube was filled up with gas. Some of this gas was streaming through the second test tube into the bucket with water. Interestingly enough, the gas was coming up through the water as bubbles. When the bubbles reached the top of the water, they popped and the gas came out. When the “gas bubbles” popped, the gas was released into the air. The gas looked like smoke but smelled terrible.

Over at the other side of the experiment, the heating test tube was becoming a blackish/yellowish color on the outside, almost as if the test tube itself were getting burned. At the same time, the wood inside the test tube was completely charred.

Suddenly, the smoke/gas slowed down. The condensing test tube started to get clearer. At the same time, the wood was releasing a type of liquid into the heating test tube. This liquid was boiling because of the heat. Wood residue was dripping into the condensing test tube. This residue was a brownish, yellowish liquid.

Soon, the gas stopped coming into the condensing test tube, and the gas bubbles stopped. There was then an even greater aroma than there had been before. Next, I stopped the burner and waited for everything to cool down before examining the wood remains. The remains were very charred and very brittle. The experiment was then over.



Conclusion –

In my experiment I proved that a person cannot know by looking at the matter what a matter is made of. It must be broken down and then examined before one can make a true theory. The bad part is that once matter is broken down, it can never be put back together. Also, I learned all about the lab equipment and how it should be used.

Distillation is the process of breaking down matter by heating so that a scientist can determine what something is really made of. Condensing is taking a hot substance and then cooling it down to see what happens.

In my experiment I encountered no problems. The substances from the wood turned out to fill up two test tubes, and then the odor filled the science room for more than two days.

After conducting this experiment, I am concluding that my hypothesis was wrong. First, I did not say anything about a type of gas that would come out of the wood, and I also did not say that the wood was going to be charred or brittle. I was right in saying that the wood was going to change color, so my hypothesis was not totally wrong.

The equation for wood is $Wood = Gas + Liquid$.

References –

No references were used for this experiment.

This exemplar is courtesy of Marc Shapiro, Bernardsville Middle School, Grade 8, 2002.

OPEN-ENDED SCORING RUBRIC

For Reading, Listening, and Viewing

Sample Task: The author takes a strong position on voting rights for young people. Use information from the text to support your response to the following.

- *Requirements:**
- Explain the author’s position on voting.
 - Explain how adopting such a position would affect young people like you.

Points	Criteria
4	A 4-point response clearly demonstrates understanding of the task, completes all requirements, and provides an insightful explanation/opinion that links to or extends aspects of the text.
3	A 3-point response demonstrates an understanding of the task, completes all requirements, and provides some explanation/opinion using situations or ideas from the text as support.
2	A 2-point response may address all of the requirements, but demonstrates a partial understanding of the task, and uses text incorrectly or with limited success resulting in an inconsistent or flawed explanation.
1	A 1-point response demonstrates minimal understanding of the task, does not complete the requirements, and provides only a vague reference to or no use of the text.
0	A 0-point response is irrelevant or off-topic.

***Requirements for these items will vary according to the task.**

Scoring Guide for Mathematics Open-Ended (OE) Questions (Generic Rubric)

3-Point Response

The response shows complete understanding of the problem's essential mathematical concepts. The student executes procedures completely and gives relevant responses to all parts of the task. The response contains few minor errors, if any. The response contains a clear, effective explanation detailing how the problem was solved so that the reader does not need to infer how and why decisions were made.

2-Point Response

The response shows nearly complete understanding of the problem's essential mathematical concepts. The student executes nearly all procedures and gives relevant responses to most parts of the task. The response may have minor errors. The explanation detailing how the problem was solved may not be clear, causing the reader to make some inferences.

1-Point Response

The response shows limited understanding of the problem's essential mathematical concepts. The response and procedures may be incomplete and/or may contain major errors. An incomplete explanation of how the problem was solved may contribute to questions as to how and why decisions were made.

0-Point Response

The response shows insufficient understanding of the problem's essential mathematical concepts. The procedures, if any, contain major errors. There may be no explanation of the solution or the reader may not be able to understand the explanation. The reader may not be able to understand how and why decisions were made.

The above generic rubric is used as a guide to develop specific scoring guides or rubrics for each of the open-ended (OE) questions that appear on the New Jersey fourth-grade (ESPA), eighth-grade (GEPA) and eleventh-grade (HSPA) proficiency assessments in Mathematics. The generic rubric helps ensure that students are scored in the same way for the same demonstration of knowledge and skills regardless of the test question.

**GEPA SOCIAL STUDIES
GENERIC SCORING RUBRIC
(for Open-Ended Questions)**

Score-Point Description

5-Point Scale

- 4** A response at this level demonstrates an advanced understanding of the content or concepts. The content and/or concepts are skillfully applied within the given context. The response is thorough, detailed, and accurate. The logic and reasoning used are sophisticated. The treatment of the topic reveals a superior understanding.
- 3** A response at this level demonstrates an adequate understanding of the content or concepts. The content and/or concepts are applied accurately within the given context. The response is generally complete and accurate, although minor errors may be present. The logic and reasoning employed are justified, but may contain minor flaws. The development of ideas is sufficient to demonstrate understanding.
- 2** A response at this level demonstrates some understanding of the content or concepts. The response is partially accurate but incomplete. Explanations, if required, are somewhat unclear or inadequately developed. Some evidence of logic or reasoning is present, but it is incomplete or partially flawed. The development of ideas will reveal partial understanding.
- 1** A response at this level demonstrates minimal understanding of the content or concepts. The response is largely inaccurate and incomplete. Explanations, if required, are exceedingly vague and/or inaccurate. Logic or reasoning, if in evidence, is exceedingly simplistic and/or seriously flawed. The response typically exhibits minimal development.
- 0** A response at this level demonstrates no understanding of the content or concepts. The response is totally inaccurate or incomplete. Explanations, if required, are missing or inaccurate. Logic or reasoning is missing or completely flawed.

The purpose of an open-ended question is to allow you to demonstrate your understanding of the content and your ability to communicate that understanding. Open-ended responses do not necessarily require fully developed paragraphs. Depending on the particular question, responses can take several forms, including—but not limited to—outlines, Venn diagrams, charts and graphic organizers, or combinations thereof, and could receive scores within the full rubric range with no prejudice.

OPEN ENDED SOCIAL STUDIES EXEMPLAR

The world is becoming increasingly urbanized. Today more than half the world's population live in cities. People living in these urban centers will face some challenges.

- Identify and explain **two** of these challenges. Consider the need for services, as well as the environmental, social, and economic impacts of increased urbanization.

A response at a four-point level indicates an advanced understanding of the impact of worldwide urbanization. The student clearly identifies and explains or describes **two** of the challenges facing people living in a more urbanized world. The response is thorough and accurate, with details or examples provided for each challenge identified which reveal a sophisticated level of understanding of the topic. Possible topics for discussion include:

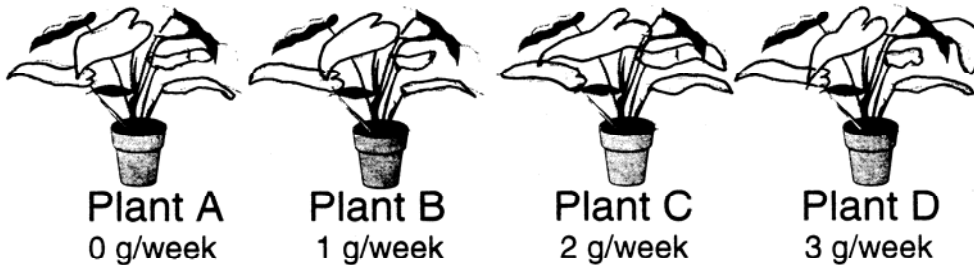
- Increased need for city services (e.g., hospitals, schools, public services, sewers, utilities, transportation, communication systems, etc.)
- Recreational facilities (e.g., open space, parks, playgrounds, bike paths, etc.)
- Environmental stressors (e.g., noise, air and water pollution, resource depletion, etc.)
- Social/economic stressors (e.g., traffic, overcrowding, poverty, jobs, crime, health issues, etc.)
- Increased need for crop yields to feed population due to decreasing availability of farmland
- Other plausible responses

Scoring Guide for Science Open-Ended Questions

The 0-3 point scoring guide below was created to help readers score open-ended responses consistently. In scoring, the reader will accept the use of appropriate diagrams, charts, formulas, and/or symbols that are part of a correct answer even when the question does not specifically request their use.

3-point response	Student response is reasonably complete, clear, and satisfactory.
2-point response	Student response has minor omissions and/or some incorrect information.
1-point response	Student response includes some correct information, but most information included in the response is either incorrect or not relevant.
0-point response	Student attempts the task but the response is incorrect, not relevant, or inappropriate.

Plant Experiment



Four identical plants pictured above are given different amounts of a chemical to determine what effect the chemical has on the growth rate over a period of time. Each plant receives the amount shown once each week for six weeks and each plant receives equal amounts of water and sunlight.

- Identify the control in this experiment.
- Explain how this control will aid in making observations and drawing conclusions.
- What observations would be made to determine whether the chemical had any effect?

Sample Response: The control is plant A, and having a control gives you a basis of comparison. If you did not have a control, you would not be able to determine the effect of the chemical. You can draw conclusions by seeing how the variable (amount of chemical) affects each plant and comparing the results to control. You could measure the height of the plants to determine an effect of the chemical.

Scoring Rubric

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| 3 Points | Student correctly completes the task by identifying the control and explaining the purpose of the control, incorporating a discussion of the variable. Student also identifies a valid observation (height of plant, mass of plant, fullness of plant, or any other acceptable measure). |
| 2 Points | Student adequately completes the task by correctly identifying the control and explaining the purpose of the control; or, identifies the control without explaining and gives appropriate means of observation. |
| 1 Point | Student partially completes the task by giving an appropriate means of observation, by giving a general description of a control, or by giving an appropriate means of observation. |
| 0 Points | Student attempts the task, but the response is incorrect, incomplete, or inaccurate. |



Task 5 - Synthesis – How does it fit Together?

1. Organizing Information from Multiple Sources

1. All notes should be sorted according to the main idea of the topic.

- Remove any notes that have nothing to do with your thesis statement or questions.
- Organize the notes so that the main ideas are in the order you will write about. This may change as you begin your paper.

2. An outline (storyboard, script, etc.) should be developed for the topic.



TIP: Remember to check out Inspiration on the computer for help in organizing main ideas and supporting details. You can print out a formal outline or web!



TIP: Do not throw away any of your note cards, webs, charts, diagrams or printouts! You will need all of this material once you begin writing your first draft and when it is time to put together your Works Cited Page!

II. Putting it all together

1. Once the notes are organized and you have a plan for your research paper, you are ready to write the first draft.
 - Remember that there are three main parts: the introduction, the body, and the conclusion.
 - Explain what your research is about using your thesis statement. Use interesting words to get the reader's attention. The introduction should be one paragraph.
 - In the body of the paper you will expand the topics and subtopics from your outline or graphic organizer. Sentences should develop the ideas in your notes. Paragraphs will develop as you write about the information from your notes. Your teacher will tell you how long the research paper is to be.
 - You might want to include documentation of quotations or original ideas within the paragraphs. When using a direct quotation or original idea, the source must be credited within the paragraph. Follow these guidelines for crediting various types of sources:

Parenthetical Citations: The purpose of a parenthetical citation is to document where you found your information. You give credit to the authors for using their works. When you directly quote an author, use quotation marks and give credit to the author.

Examples:

Author in parentheses, direct quote: "George Washington did not have wooden teeth" (Jones 12).

Author in parentheses, paraphrase: Our first president's teeth were not wooden as some have speculated (Jones 12).

Author's name in sentence, direct quote: According to Jones, "George Washington did not have wooden teeth" (12).

Author's name in sentence, paraphrase: Many scholars, such as Jones, have argued that Washington's teeth were not wooden (12).



TIP: Not crediting the source results in plagiarism, which is taking the words and ideas of some one else!

The conclusion is a summary of the important points presented in the body of your research paper. This should be written in one paragraph.

2. The next step is to revise your paper.

- Check spelling, sentence and paragraph structures.
- Check punctuation.
- Check capitalization.
- Check your choice of words.
- Check to see if there is a clear beginning, middle, and ending.
- Check to see if the research paper flows in a logical order.

3. The last step is to write your final copy. According to **The MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Paper, 6th edition**, by Joseph Gibaldi, the following guidelines apply to putting your research paper together:

- Use only white 8 1/2- by 11- inch paper.
- Print or type on one side of the paper only.
- Leave margins of one inch at the top and bottom and both sides of the text.
- Indent the first word of the paragraph five spaces (or one-half inch) from the left margin.
- Double space throughout the paper, including quotations and the list of works cited.
- A research paper does not need a title page. Instead, beginning one inch from the top of the first page and next to the left margin, type your name, your teacher's name, the subject, and the date on separate lines, double - spacing between the lines. Double- space again and center the title.

- Number all pages consecutively throughout the paper.
 - The list of the works cited is located at the end of the paper on a separate page.
4. Now is the time to prepare the Works Cited Page. There are very specific rules to follow in order to put together a Works Cited Page. They are taken from the MLA standards. Use a separate piece of paper for the Works Cited Page.
- Center the words Works Cited at the top of the page. The words Work Cited have caps only on the **W** and the **C**. **These words should not be underlined or in quotes.**
 - Put each source in alphabetical order by the author's last name. When no author is listed, alphabetize according to the first word of the title.
 - The words "A", "An", and "The" do not count when alphabetizing sources.
 - Each entry is double-spaced, with double spacing between sources.
 - Do not number the sources.



TIP: This is a lot of information! Be sure to check the examples that follow. There will always be a guide for you to follow! Your teacher and media specialist are there to help you!

Sample Citations

Book, Reference, or Pamphlet

NOTE: If an additional line is required in the citation, it is **indented five spaces**. Use punctuation correctly. All citations end with a period.

Needed information in order:

- Name of author (s)/ editor (s) - (last name, first name; reverse for second/third authors, followed by a period.
- Title of book/ pamphlet - (**underlined**, followed by a period)
- Place of publication - (followed by a colon)
- Publisher - (followed by a comma)
- Date of publication - (followed by a period)

Book

Example:

Gibaldi, Joseph. The MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers,
6th edition. New York: Modern Language Association of America,
2001.

Magazine or Newspaper Article

NOTE: Online information must be included when obtaining magazine or newspaper articles from a data base.

Needed information in order:

- Name of author (s) - (last name, first name; reverse for second/third authors) followed by should period
- Title of article: - (**in quotes**) followed by a period
- Name of magazine or newspaper - (**underlined**)
- Date of publication followed by a colon
- Section and/or page number (s) followed by a period

Example - Magazine:

Smith, Thomas. "Our National Parks". National Geographic 22 April
2001:20-32

Example - Newspaper:

Rogers, Donald. "Literacy in America". New York Times 18
September 2003: C2.

Encyclopedia

Needed information in order:

- Name of author(s) - (last name, first name; reverse for second/ third authors) followed by a period
- Title of article - (**in quotes**) followed by a period
- Name of encyclopedia - (**underlined**) followed by a period
- Year of publication - (the letters **ed. stand for edition**) followed by a period

Example:

Brooks, Joseph. "New Jersey". The World Book Encyclopedia. 2003 ed.

Electronic Sources

Needed information in order:

- Author (if available) – last name first, first name – followed by a period
- Title of article – (**in quotes**) followed by a period
- Edition or version (if relevant)
- CD-ROM
- City of publication - followed by a colon
- Publisher - followed by a comma
- Date of publication - followed by a period

Example :

Dunn, Katherine. "John Adams". World Book Multimedia Encyclopedia 2002ed. CD-ROM. Chicago, World Book, 2002.

World Wide Web

Needed information in order:

- Author (if known) – last name first, first name – followed by a period
- Title of article - (**in quotes**) followed by a period
- Title of complete work (**underlined**)
- Date of visit
- Full <http. Address> (**enclosed in angle brackets**) followed by a period.

Example:

Anderson, William. "The Nine Planets". Space 21 May 2004

<http://sedslpl.Arizona.edu/nineplanets/nineplanets/comets.html>.

Additional Works Cited Examples:

Online Magazine Article:

EBSCO (Online) <http://ebSCO.com> , date of download.

E-Mail:

Mawbry, Linda. lmawbry@shsd.org. "How to print images". E-Mail to the author. 8 April 2004.

Personal Interview:

Sanders, Elizabeth. Personal Interview. 22 June 2004.

Television or Radio Program:

"The Hero's Adventure". Smith: David Campbell and the Myth. Prod.

Jane Smith. NBC, New York. 18 July 2000.

Films:

The Secret Garden. Dir. James Lang. With actors Mary Barrett and

Richard Brown. United Artists. 1999.

Cassettes (Audio and Video):

The Red Balloon. Videotape. Columbia. 1994.



TIP: Look at the works cited information charts that follow this tip! They are good visuals to use to help you organize information in order to create a Works Cited Page.

Speaking and Listening

Good communication requires more than strong writing skills. It also requires the ability to speak effectively and listen carefully.

In addition, using the means of communication most appropriate to the situation is important.

Class Discussion

	Often	Sometimes	Seldom
1. Participates freely in discussion			
2. Listens carefully and respectfully			
3. Shares personal experiences and opinions			
4. Supports own viewpoint with reasons			
5. Displays tolerance for different opinions			
6. Demonstrates ability to modify thinking			

Small Group Activities

	Often	Sometimes	Seldom
1. Stays on task			
2. Cooperates with other group members			
3. Treats everyone with respect			
4. Makes important contributions to the group			
5. Completes all assigned work with best effort			

Outline for Oral Presentation

Title (Do not underline or use quotation marks.)

Purpose of presentation _____

Introduction

- I. **Attention device:** question, reference to occasion, startling information, illustration, or humor related to the subject.

- II. **Background information:** information that listeners need for a clear understanding of the subject.

- III. **Thesis statement:** one short declarative sentence that previews all the main points in the speech.

Body

Write each main point in a complete declarative sentence. Try to use active verbs (subject-verb-direct object). Try to use parallel phrasing in writing these main points.

- I. Main point number one: _____
-

(Now provide specific support: illustrations, quotations, statistics, comparisons, and explanations. You may add additional letters if you need them.)

A.

B.

C.

Transition from I to II: _____

(Do not combine this transition and main point number two in a single statement. Let the transition be a bridge from the first point to the next point. Listeners need reminders.)

II. Main point number two: _____

A.

B.

C.

Transition summing up II and I and leading to III: _____

III. Main point number three: _____

A.

B.

C.

Conclusion

- I. Summary: a restatement of the main ideas. (*Do not say, "In conclusion, I want to say..."*)

- II. A rounding-out of the thought: a reinforcing quotation, a challenge, perhaps an echo of the beginning of your speech. (*Avoid saying, "Thank you."*)

Speech Preparation Self-check

- ____ 1. Did I select a subject appropriate for my audience?
- ____ 2. Did I narrow the subject so that I can cover it in the time limit?
- ____ 3. Did I choose the best organizational plan?
- ____ 4. Is my thesis sentence as short and clear as I can make it?
- ____ 5. Are my main points logical divisions of my subject?
- ____ 6. Do any two of my main points refer to the same idea?
- ____ 7. Did I use short, declarative statements (not questions) for all main points?
- ____ 8. Did I use active (not passive) voice for all main points?
- ____ 9. Did I provide adequate support for each main point?
- ____ 10. Did I use clear transitions that remind my audience of a point or points already covered? Did I preview the next point?
- ____ 11. Did my conclusion include both of the points listed on the outline?
- ____ 12. Did I make *brief* speaker's notes (note cards) to use during my oral presentation?
- ____ 13. Did I make attractive visual aids, if they are needed?
- ____ 14. Did I spend enough time rehearsing for this oral presentation so that I can share my information enthusiastically and confidently?
- ____ 15. Did I practice looking at my audience and maintaining good posture?
- ____ 16. Did I time my presentation so that I adhere to the required time limit?

My Quick Reference Guide for Literacy Success

(Examples)

1. Heading for final copy of writing assignments pg. 33-34
2. List of prepositions pg. 37
3. Capitalization of proper adjectives pg. 39

SPEAKING RUBRIC

	Strong 4	Adequate 3	Limited 2	Inadequate 1
CONTENT and ORGANIZATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintains clear focus on a central idea or topic -Elaborates details to support central idea -Has an opening and a closing -Includes a clearly stated opinion that is linked to central idea -Uses varied sentence structure and word choice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Conveys a central idea or topic -Provides sufficient details; may have some elaboration -Has an opening and a closing -Includes an opinion that is linked to central idea or topic -May use varied sentence structure and word choice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attempts to focus on a central idea -Lists related details but provides no elaborations -May have an opening or closing -Attempts to form an opinion -Has little varied sentence structure and word choice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Has little or no focus on central idea -Offers insufficient or unrelated details -May have an opening or closing -May have little or no opinion -Has little or no varied sentence structure and word choice
DELIVERY (SPOKEN)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Clearly attends to audience through good eye contact and gestures -Speaks audibly with expression; uses pacing and intonation effectively -Pronounces words clearly and correctly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Attends to audience through eye contact and gestures -Speaks audibly with expression; attempts to use pacing and intonation -Pronounces most words clearly and correctly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Exhibits some awareness of audience through minimal or excessive eye contact or gestures -Speaks too softly or loudly with little or no expression; gives little evidence of pacing or intonation -Mispronounces many words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Exhibits little or no awareness of audience -Speaks too softly or loudly with little or no expression; gives no evidence of pacing or intonation -Mispronounces many words; speaks unclearly
<u>VOICE /IMPACT:</u> Tone of writing reflects personal expression. Writing interests the reader.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Innovative personality - Sustains high interest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evidence of personality - Generally keeps interest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Beginning sense of personality - Interest drifts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Little personality - Of little interest
<u>CONVENTIONS:</u> Student uses correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Very few, if any, errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Few errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Numerous errors