

Step 4: Edit & Publish

Students learn the importance of editing, and then use the checklist provided to take this final step before publishing for a real audience. Once the work is posted in the class ezine, students celebrate their accomplishments by reading and commenting on one another's stories online.

Lesson 4.1: Edit Your Work

Students edit their writing for grammar and punctuation using the *Editing Checklist* (Handout 4.1a). They pay particular attention to including capital letters at the beginning of sentences and punctuation at the end. Students work on computers to correct their typed drafts.
(Checkpoint)

Lesson 4.2: Title and Publish

Students develop titles for their snapshots. Then they upload their first completed pieces of writing to the class ezine, where they can be shared with their classmates and other members of the learning community.

Lesson 4.3: Reflect on Your Work and the Unit

Students reflect on what they learned in this first unit as well as goals for future writing. They also create an "About the Author" paragraph based on their online profile to include in the class ezine.

Lesson 4.4: Respond and Celebrate

Students read each other's snapshots and comment on them using guidelines established in class. The class celebrates its hard work and prepares to move forward to the rest of the *Writing Matters* genre studies over the rest of the year.

New York City and State Learning Standards

The lessons in this project support the New York City ELA Middle School Performance Descriptions for writing.

According to ELA Standard E2:

Writing is a process through which a writer shapes language to communicate effectively. Writing often develops through a series of initial plans and multiple drafts and through access to informed feedback and response. Purpose, audience and context contribute to the form and substance of writing as well as to its style, tone and stance.

E2c:

The student produces a narrative account (fictional or autobiographical) that

- engages the reader by establishing a context, creating a point of view and otherwise developing reader interest.

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(Addressed in Step 2)

- establishes a situation
- creates an organizing structure

(Addressed in Steps 2, 3)

- includes sensory details
- excludes extraneous details and inconsistencies

(Addressed in Step 3)

- uses a range of appropriate strategies, such as dialogue, tension or suspense and naming, and specific narrative action, such as movement, gestures and expressions
- provides a sense of closure to the writing.

(Addressed in Steps 2, 3, 4)

Examples of narrative accounts include

- a fiction or non-fiction story.

E3a:

The student participates in one-to-one conferences with a teacher, paraprofessional or adult volunteer, in which the student

- asks relevant questions
- responds to questions with appropriate elaboration
- confirms understanding by paraphrasing the adult's directions or suggestions.

(Addressed in every step)

Examples of one-to-one interactions include

- student-teacher conferences regarding a draft.

E4a:

The student demonstrates an understanding of the rules of the English language in written and oral work and selects the structures and features of language appropriate to the purpose, audience and context of the work. The student demonstrates control of

- grammar
- punctuation
- spelling
- usage.

(Addressed in Steps 3 and 4)

Examples of activities through which students might demonstrate an understanding of the rules of the English language include

- demonstrating in a piece of writing the ability to manage the conventions, grammar and usage of English so that they aid rather than interfere with reading
- proofreading acceptably the student's own writing or the writing of others, using dictionaries and other resources, including the teacher or peers, as appropriate
- revising a piece of writing by combining sentences.

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E4b:

The student analyzes and subsequently revises work to clarify it or make it more effective in communicating the intended message or thought. The student's revisions should be made in light of the purposes, audiences and contexts that apply to the work. Strategies for revising include

- adding or deleting details
- adding or deleting explanations
- clarifying difficult passages
- rearranging words, sentences, and paragraphs to improve or clarify meaning
- sharpening the focus.

(Addressed in Step 3)

E5a:

The student responds to non-fiction, fiction, poetry and drama using interpretive, critical and evaluative processes; that is, the student

- identifies recurring themes across works
- interprets the impact of authors' decisions regarding word choice, content and literary elements
- identifies the characteristics of literary forms and genres
- evaluates literary merit
- identifies the effect of point of view
- analyzes the reasons for a character's actions, taking into account the situation and basic motivation of the character
- makes inferences and draws conclusions about fictional and non-fictional contexts, events, characters, settings and themes.

(Parts addressed in Reading Companions for Steps 1–4)

New York State English Language Arts Learning Standards

ELA 1.1c:

Students use the process of pre-writing, drafting, revising and proofreading (the "writing process") to produce well-constructed informational texts.

(Addressed in every step)

ELA 2.2:

Speaking and writing for literary expression involves producing imaginative texts that use language and text structures that are inventive and often multilayered.

Students

- explain the meaning of literary works with some attention to meanings beyond the literal level
- write stories, poems, literary essays and plays that observe the conventions of the genre and contain interesting and effective language and voice
- use Standard English effectively.

This is evident, for example, when students

- write stories or poems for their peers or younger children.

(Addressed in every step)

Mastering the Essentials – Unit Overview

ELA 3.1:

Students evaluate their own and other's work based on a variety of criteria (logic, clarity, comprehensiveness, conciseness, originality, conventionality), and recognize the varying effectiveness of different approaches. They analyze, interpret and evaluate information, ideas, organization and language from academic and nonacademic texts, such as textbooks, public documents, book and movie reviews and editorials.

(Addressed in Step 4 as well as Reading Companions for Steps 1–4)

ELA 4.1:

Students express ideas and concerns clearly and respectfully in conversations and group discussions.

ELA 4.3:

Students share the process of writing with peers and adults.

ELA 4.4:

Students use the conventions of electronic mail.

(Addressed in every step)