

Skill 13: Edit and Proof

Students will be able to (SWBAT):

1. Define the skill *Edit and Proof* and identify why the skill is important.
2. Develop a plan to improve their own proficiency in the skill *Edit and Proof*.

Provided Materials: Skill 13: *Edit and Proof*– Development Plan

Skill Definition: *Edit and Proof* means frequently reviewing and correcting mistakes in one's work.

Warm Up Brainstorm (5-10 minutes): Write the following two sentences on the board.

The panda is a bear that eats shoots and leaves.

The panda is a bear that eats, shoots, and leaves.

Ask students to discuss the different meanings of the two sentences, even though they are constructed of the exact same words. Obviously the commas, or lack of commas, dramatically change the meaning and reality of the sentence. See if the students can come up with any other examples of how making a simple grammatical mistake can completely alter meaning**.

Then write the provided skill definition on the board for students to copy. Ask the class how often they review and correct their work before handing it in, or if they usually just do the work and pass it in without looking over it (which is usually the most common answer among teenagers). Remind them that in college and/or the workplace, if you don't review your work to catch mistakes such as the panda example, it can really affect how well you perform and are perceived.

****If you want to tell them the original joke, it is as follows:**

A panda walks into a café. He orders a sandwich, eats it, then draws a gun and proceeds to fire it at the other patrons.

"Why?" asks the confused, surviving waiter amidst the carnage, as the panda makes towards the exit. The panda produces a badly punctuated wildlife manual and tosses it over his shoulder.

"Well, I'm a panda," he says, at the door. "Look it up."

The waiter turns to the relevant entry in the manual and, sure enough, finds an explanation. "Panda. Large black-and-white bear-like mammal, native to China. Eats, shoots, and leaves."

Guided Activity (20-25 minutes): Divide the class into groups of 3-5 students. Assign each student in the group a role in one of the provided skits below to act out for the class (if you have more students you will need to come up with more skits):

- **Skit One:** An employee presents a new product proposal to a group of co-workers. On presentation material, the name of the new product is misspelled, causing the employee to mispronounce the product's name. The employee attempts to correct himself, but some of the co-workers become frustrated. They ask why the mistake was not caught and tell the presenter errors like misspellings are very unprofessional. All co-workers act disengaged throughout the remainder of the employee's presentation. **Roles:** Employee, co-workers.

- **Skit Two:** A newspaper journalist missed a factual error in his or her article about a governor’s speech in yesterday’s paper. Now the governor’s office is calling to complain. The newspaper editor is furious that the journalist did not take the necessary time to check the facts of his or her article before sending it to the publisher; additionally, the publisher is mad at the editor for not having caught the journalist’s mistake. Mistakes like this one are bad for the reputation of the newspaper. **Roles:** journalist, editor, publisher, governor’s office, other reporters (possibly).
- **Skit Three:** A lab technician makes notes in a patient’s file indicating that the blood test conducted on the patient says that the patient **does not** have cancer (or any other life-threatening illness). But the lab technician made a mistake when quickly writing down the notes and did not double check her work before the file went to the patient’s doctor, who now reports to the patient that, unfortunately, he has cancer. By the time the lab technician catches up to the doctor and patient, the patient has already been suffering from this devastating news and begins to talk about suing the hospital. **Roles:** lab technician, doctor, patient, patient’s family members (possibly).
- **Skit Four:** Students are taking a standardized test for the state and a big part of the test involves filling in 50 questions on a scantron card. One student in the class accidentally skips #2 on the scantron and fills in the answer to #2 in a #3 bubble. This throws off all of his answers for the rest of the test and the student does not go back to check all of his answers after finishing the exam. When the teacher gives the students their grades back a few days later, the student completely failed the test even though he felt very confident and was very strong in the subject area. **Roles:** students, teacher.

After each skit is acted out, ask students to recognize how each scenario identifies the importance of editing and proofreading. They can explain by citing how the main actor in each skit could have avoided making an error.

Independent Practice (5-10 minutes): Students complete the **Skill 13: *Edit and Proof* – Development Plan**.

Evaluation: Assess the quality of the plans completed by the students and provide feedback using Part Three of this manual; compare to the responses they gave for Skill 13 in their initial **Student Skills Assessment**.

Extension Activities:

- Give students opportunities to peer-edit the work of their classmates.
- Assign students “editing and proofing” assignments where they have to provide feedback and correct mistakes in a document; this could even be used as a competition for extra credit in the class where the students are trying to find more mistakes/errors than others.
- Grade harshly for editing/proofing mistakes so that students get the idea that it is a critical skill.

Skill 13: *Edit and Proof* – Development Plan

Name: _____

Date: _____

Directions: Give yourself a rating of 1, 2, 3, or 4 in this skill, with 1 indicating poor proficiency and 4 indicating excellence in the skill. Provide evidence for your rating.

Rating: _____

Evidence:

Where do you want to be in six months and how will you measure your progress?

List academic and non-academic activities to help you achieve your goal in six months, using the back of this page if necessary. Each activity should be a specific academic experience, class, community service project, extra-curricular activity, internship or job. List them in order from the most important to the least important.
