

CONVENTIONS

Simple and complex editorial skill
Consistency and accuracy
Making reading simple and interesting

Of course, there are always a number of students who...can learn to produce relatively flawless prose without much effort... Students like these are continually praised for their lack of errors, rather than their original ideas, strong supporting evidence, vivid details, apt wording, or effective organization.

In fact, these writers may have none of the above, but because they have no mistakes, they still do well. They, too, become convinced that good writing is simply error-free writing. Because they have always been “correct” on the first try, they may have had little experience accepting and learning from mistakes. Mistakes and failure are seen as things to be avoided at all costs.

Donald Graves & Virginia Stuart
Write From the Start

CONVENTIONS

- ✓ **SPELLING**
- ✓ **GRAMMAR AND USAGE**
- ✓ **PUNCTUATION**
- ✓ **CAPITALIZATION**
- ✓ **PARAGRAPHING**

Conventions are the mechanical correctness of the piece ~ spelling, grammar and usage, paragraphing, use of capitals, and punctuation.

CONVENTIONS

- Spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar/usage, and paragraphing (indenting)
- Ready for a public audience
- Control brings out style and enhances the ideas
- Experimentation that works well
- Shows more than just “the basics”

OOPS...

- Her spelling was abyzmall.
- Terrorists are (deadly).
- It's me! Your breast friend.
- Space...the finnel fruter...



CORRECT & CREATIVE

- I see you there, calling from your tree house, beckoning in your squeaky, stuttering voice... “D-D-Donny! C-C-Come h-here! L-Let's d-d-drop th-this cat fr-from the tr-treehouse a-a-a-nd s-see what h-h-happens!”

PLAYING AROUND

WITH CONVENTIONS

TO CREATE STYLE

- ...but it'll never be like them three years when she was mine.

CONVENTIONS

The first editor of any piece is always the writer...

-Nancie Atwell
in the Middle

EDITING.

Conventions are the rules of language—Spelling, Punctuation, Grammar/Usage, Paragraphing, and Capitalization—that make your text correct and easy for others to read. When you follow the rules, readers don't need to waste energy mentally editing; they can pay attention to your clever ideas, creative organization, unique voice, vibrant word choice, and lyrical fluency.

Conventions are different from the first five traits (Ideas, Organization, Voice, Word Choice, and Sentence Fluency) because to improve those traits you have been learning how to revise—how to rethink and re-see your work. Editing is fixing—making sure the text is as error-free as possible. The purpose is to make your paper readable to someone else. Sometimes mistakes in conventions get in the way and keep the reader from understanding your message. They also irritate some readers—something no writer sets out to do deliberately!

Editing is easy. All you have to do is cross out the wrong words.

-Mark Twain

Develop a proofreader's eye. Check everything. Then check it again. It's often hard to spot your own mistakes. Try reading aloud; it makes you slow down. You may also find it helpful to have someone else look at your work. Editing is a skill in itself—quite a bit different from writing. To be a good editor you must practice. Teach yourself to read slowly, and with care. Be honest; dare to see what is.

One of the hardest tasks of the writer is to read what is on the page, not what the writer hoped would be on the page.

-Donald Murray

CONVENTIONS

CONSIDER ALL THE KEY COMPONENTS:

- ... spelling
- ... punctuation
- ... capitalization
- ... grammar and usage
- ... paragraphing (indenting)

SPELLING IS A HOT SPOT-BEWARE!

THE TEXT SHOULD LOOK CLEAN, EDITED, POLISHED-NOT PERFECT

CONVENTIONS SHOULD BE UNDER CONTROL & ENHANCE THE READABILITY

CONVENTIONAL STYLE GUIDELINES CHANGE OVER TIME AND MAY VARY BY TOPIC AND AUDIENCE

KEY QUESTION:

How much editing would have to be done to be ready to share with an outside audience?

A whole lot? Score in the "1-2" range

A moderate amount? (A little of this, a little of that...) Score in the "3" range

Very little-just a touch-up here or there? Score in the "4-5" range

TRAIT: CONVENTIONS

RATING OF 5 (STRONG): The writer demonstrates a good grasp of standard writing conventions (e.g., grammar, capitalization, punctuation, usage, spelling, paragraphing) and uses them effectively to enhance readability. Errors tend to be so few and minor the reader can easily skim right over them unless specifically searching for them.

- Paragraphing tends to be sound and to reinforce the organizational structure.
- Grammar and usage are correct and contribute to clarity and style.
- Punctuation is smooth and guides the reader through the text.
- Spelling is generally correct, even on more difficult words.
- The writer may manipulate conventions—particularly grammar—for stylistic effect.
- The writing is sufficiently long and complex to allow the writer to show skill in using a wide range of conventions (This criterion applies to grade 7 and up only.)
- Only light editing would be required to polish the text for publication.

RATING OF 3 (DEVELOPING): The writer shows reasonable control over a limited range of standard writing conventions. However, the paper would require moderate editing prior to publication. Errors are numerous or serious enough to be somewhat distracting, but the writer handles some conventions well.

- Spelling is usually correct (or reasonably phonetic) on common words.
- Terminal (end-of-sentence) punctuation is almost always correct; internal punctuation (commas, apostrophes, semicolons) may be incorrect or missing.
- Problems with grammar usage are not serious enough to distort meaning.
- Paragraphing is attempted. Paragraphs sometimes run together or begin in the wrong places.
- The paper seems to reflect light, but not extensive or thorough, editing.

RATING OF 1 (BEGINNING): Errors in spelling, punctuation, usage and grammar, capitalization and /or paragraphing repeatedly distract the reader and make the text difficult to read. More than one of the following problems is likely to be evident:

- The reader must read once to decode, then again for meaning.
- Spelling errors are frequent, even on common words.
- Punctuation (including terminal punctuation) is often missing or incorrect.
- Paragraphing is missing, irregular, or so frequent (e.g., every sentence) that it does not relate to organization of the text.
- Errors in grammar and usage are very noticeable and may affect meaning.
- Extensive editing would be required to polish the text for publication.

CONVENTIONS - A

5 The writer demonstrates a good grasp of standard writing conventions (e.g., spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, usage, paragraphing) and uses conventions effectively to enhance readability. Errors tend to be so few that just minor touch-ups would get this piece ready to publish.

- Spelling is generally correct, even on more difficult words.
- Grammar and usage are correct and contribute to clarity and style.
- Punctuation and capitalization are accurate and guide the reader through the text.
- The writer may manipulate conventions-especially grammar and spelling for stylistic effect.
- The piece is very close to being ready to publish.
- GRADES 7 AND UP ONLY: The writing is sufficiently long and complex to allow the writer to show skill in using a wide range of conventions.

3 The writer shows reasonable control over a limited range of standard writing conventions. Conventions are sometimes handled well and enhance readability; at other times, errors are distracting and impair readability.

- Spelling is usually correct or reasonably phonetic on common words, but more difficult words are problematic.
- Terminal (end-of sentence) punctuation is usually correct; internal punctuation (commas, apostrophes, semicolons, dashes, colons, and parentheses) is sometimes missing/wrong.
- Most words are capitalized correctly; control over more sophisticated capitalization skills may be spotty.
- Paragraphing is attempted but may run together or begin in the wrong places.
- Problems with grammar or usage are not serious enough to distort meaning but may not be correct or accurately applied all of the time.
- Moderate (a little of this, a little of that) editing would be required to polish the text for publication.

1 Errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, usage and grammar and/or paragraphing repeatedly distract the reader and make the text difficult to read. The writing reflects more than one of these problems:

- Spelling errors are frequent, even on common words.
- Punctuation (including terminal punctuation) is often missing or incorrect.
- Capitalization is random and only the easiest rules show awareness of correct use.
- Errors in grammar or usage are very noticeable, and affect meaning.
- Paragraphing is missing, irregular, or so frequent (every sentence) that it has no relationship to the organizational structure of the text.
- The reader must read once to decode, then again for meaning.
- Extensive editing (every line) would be required to polish the text for publication.



CONVENTIONS - B: PRESENTATION

(OPTIONAL)

5 The form and presentation of the text enhances the ability for the reader to understand and connect with the message. It is pleasing to the eye.

- If handwritten (either cursive or printed), the slant is consistent, letters are clearly formed, spacing is uniform between words, and the text is easy to read.
- If word-processed, there is appropriate use of fonts and font sizes which invites the reader into the text.
- The use of white space on the page (spacing, margins, etc.) allows the intended audience to easily focus on the text and message without distractions. There is just the right amount of balance of white space and text on the page. The formatting suits the purpose for writing.
- The use of a title, side heads, page numbering, bullets, and evidence of correct use of a style sheet (when appropriate) makes it easy for the reader to access the desired information and text. These markers allow the hierarchy of information to be clear to the reader.
- When appropriate to the purpose and audience, there is effective integration of text and illustration, charts, graphs, maps, tables, etc. There is clear alignment between the text and visuals. The visuals support and clarify important information or key points made in the text.

3 The writer's message is understandable in this format.

- Handwriting is readable, although there may be discrepancies in letter shape and form, slant, and spacing that may make some words or passages easier to read than others.
- Experimentation with fonts and font sizes is successful in some places, but begins to get fussy and cluttered in others. The effect is not consistent throughout the text.
- While margins may be present, some text may crowd the edges. Consistent spacing is applied, although a different choice may make text more accessible (e.g. single, double or triple spacing).
- Although some markers are present (titles, numbering, bullets, side heads, etc.) they are not used to their fullest potential as a guide to the reader to access the greatest meaning from the text.
- An attempt is made to integrate visuals and the text although the connections may be limited.

1 The reader receives a garbled message due to problems relating to the presentation of the text.

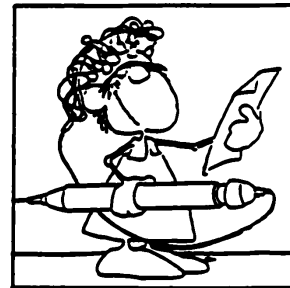
- Because the letters are irregularly slanted, formed inconsistently or incorrectly, and the spacing is unbalanced or not even present, it is very difficult to read and understand the text.
- The writer has gone wild with multiple fonts and font sizes. It is a major distraction to the reader.
- The spacing is random and confusing to the reader. There may be little or no white space on the page.
- Lack of markers (title, page numbering, bullets, side heads, etc.) leave the reader wondering how one section connects to another and why the text is organized in this manner on the page.
- The visuals do not support or further illustrate key ideas presented in the text. They may be misleading, indecipherable, or too complex to be understood.

CONVENTIONS

5 PAPER-MOSTLY CORRECT

There are very few errors in my paper; it wouldn't take long to get this ready to publish.

- I have used capitals correctly.
- Periods, commas, exclamation marks, and quotation marks are in the right places.
- My spelling is accurate.
- Every paragraph is indented to show where a new idea begins.
- My grammar/usage is consistent and shows control.



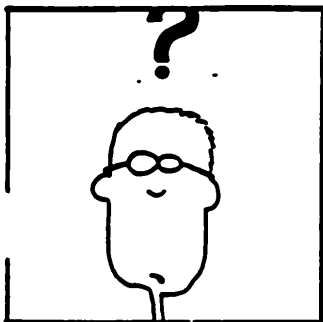
3 PAPER-ABOUT HALFWAY HOME

A number of bothersome mistakes in my paper need to be cleaned up before I am ready to publish.

- Spelling is correct on simple words. It may not always be right on the harder words.
- Most sentences and proper nouns begin with capitals, but a few have been overlooked.
- Paragraphs are present, but not all begin in the right spots.
- A few problems with grammar and punctuation might make a reader stumble or pause now and again.
- My paper reads like a first draft; I was more concerned with getting my ideas down than making sure all the editing was taken care of.

1 PAPER-EDITING NOT UNDER CONTROL YET

It would take a first reading to decode, and then a second reading to get the meaning of my paper.



- Speling error our comun, evin on simpl werdz.
- My paper, have errors in punctuation? And grammar that send the reader back two the beginning from a sentence to sort thing out
- i've got caPital lEtTers scattered in All Over tHe pLaCe or NOT aT all.
- I haven't got the hang of paragraphs yet.
- The truth is, I haven't spent much time editing this paper.

CONVENTIONS

5 I MADE SO FEW ERRORS, IT WOULD BE A SNAP GETTING THIS READY TO PUBLISH!

- *Caps are in the right places.*
- *Great punctuation-grammar, too.*
- *Spelling to knock your socks off.*
- *Paragraphs are indented-you gotta love it.*

3 SOME BOTHERSOME MISTAKES SHOW UP WHEN I READ CAREFULLY.

- *Spelling's correct on SIMPLE words.*
- *Caps are mostly there.*
- *Grammar's O.K., though not award-winning.*
- *Yeah, you might stumble over my innovative punctuation.*
- *Reads like a first draft, all right.*

1 READ IT ONCE TO DECODE, THEN AGAIN FOR MEANING.

- *Mistakes make the going rough.*
- *I've forgotten some CAPS-otherS aren't Needed.*
- *Look out four spelling mysteaks.*
- *Want the truth? I didn't spend much time editing.*

CONVENTIONS

-THE MECHANICAL CORRECTNESS-

Readable to broad audience - Punctuation smoothly guides reader
Grammar contributes to clarity and style - In control - "Clean copy"
Paragraphing complements organization - Evidence of editing/proofing
Spelling mostly correct-even on harder words
Only light editing needed

Spelling correct on common words
Simple things done well
Paragraphing attempted

Problems don't obscure meaning
Writer occasionally "stumbles"
Errors consistent - Minor problems in grammar/usage
Hastily edited - Terminal punctuation basically correct

Tough to decode - Numerous errors - Couldn't publish yet
Little or no control over conventions - Paragraphing random or not present
Struggling - Readability impaired - Errors extremely distracting
Cries out for editing



CONVENTIONS IN CONTEXT

Conventions are more than just the things we do to make our writing correct. They are a means of communication between reader and writer. Conventions have meaning just like words, and it is the skillful writer taking advantage of a full range of meaning-making symbols and situations who is best able to communicate with the reader.

Tuna can of Death
Chapter 1 – The attempt on my life

I walked into the kitchen and asked, "What are we having for dinner?"
"Tuna casserole," she replied.
"Mom, you know I hate tuna," I said unhappily.
"Come on Matt, give it another try. You haven't had any tuna fish since last year."
"OK, I'll give it a little try," I whined.
I went and sat down at the dining room table. I picked up my fork and tried to scoop up some tuna. The minute my fork touched the disgusting food, I knew something was wrong.
"Mom, this stuff's stale!" I shouted at her. "Let me see the date on the can."
My mom brought the can the tuna came out of. I silently read the date.
"Eeeewww!" I cried out. "The date says 2/1/96!"
"Whoops," said my mom. "I thought it said '97. I'm sorry," she said apologetically.
"This stuff could've killed me."

Chapter 2 – The tuna can lives.

That night, I woke up hearing voices.
"Rats, he noticed my date. Couldn't you have 'accidentally' cut off my date?" a voice said angrily.
"If I did that the mother would have thrown me away," another voice replied.
"I can't believe it!" I thought to myself. "The tuna can lives, and the can opener is in it with him!"
The tuna can spoke again, "Let's get him now! We'll sneak into his room and you can cut him with your blade!"
"OK!" the opener replied.
I snuck out my window and went into my garage. I grabbed the sledge hammer and went back into the house
When the tuna can and the can opener opened my door, I ran towards them waving the sledge hammer and screaming "Yoa, death to tuna!!!"
My mom came running in the room to find me smashing the can opener and a tuna can to itty bitty smidgens.
"What are you doing?!" she yelled. "You're grounded!"

Epilogue

I didn't care about getting grounded. What I did care about is destroying tuna. Today I am still against tuna and probably will be for a long time to come.

Correct punctuation of dialog.

Effective use of chapter subheadings.

Good formatting on dates.

Correct use of quotes around 'accidentally' and correct choice of single quotes inside of dialog.

Consistent and effective use of short paragraphs to sustain the flow of action.

Correct and effective use of an epilogue.

CONVENTIONS

Any activity that allows students to practice...

Identifying reasons for editing

Understanding the difference between revision and editing

Keeping editing in proportion-ideas come first

Learning & using editing symbols

Thinking like an editor

Developing a proofreader's eye

Letting students be their own editors

1. ERROR HUNT

Ask students to find errors in published works. This will help build a proofreader's eye, which every good editor needs. Besides, students love finding things that other people (who are supposed to know better) still overlook. It helps reinforce the idea that while we edit to make the text as flawless as possible, there are many different interpretations of what precision in editing looks like. And sometimes, even editors miss big glaring errors.

2. PUBLISHING HOUSE

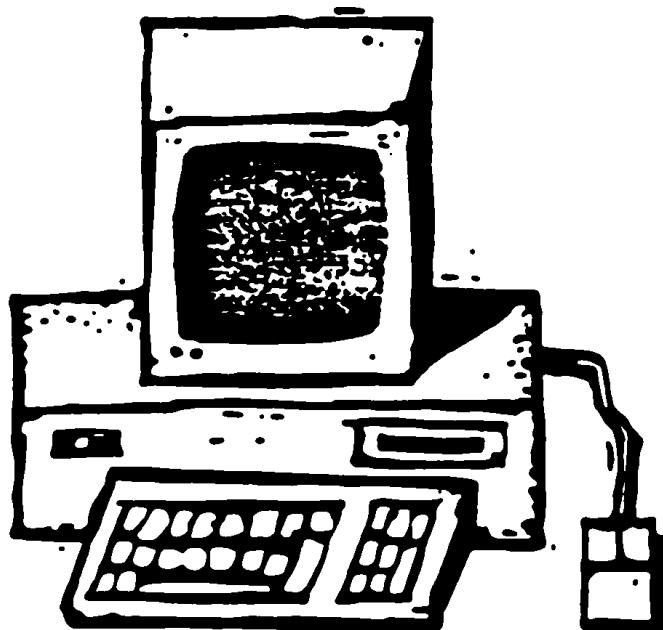
Let pairs or groups of students take turns having editing responsibility for published work from within the classroom. They will work with the author(s) in doing the final editing. Volunteer parents can be helpful in this process, too. Another possibility is to have older students work with younger students. How nice to let older students (even a year or two) work with younger writers as they learn to edit and polish their final copy. Be sure to let the computer be a part of this process. Publishing is so much simpler when you have the use of technology.

3. CHANGING ONE VERB

Write a sentence with one bland verb: e.g. Paul WALKED down the road. Let students play with changing this verb to alter the meaning of the sentence (staggered, stumbled, fled, raced, etc.). Now write more to develop the story and make a game of it to see how many different active verbs can be used. The first person to fall in "passive verb land" is out. This works well for bringing home the power of verbs-also supports teaching word choice and fluency, too!

4. SOFTWARE

Just because it's available for the computer doesn't mean it will help students understand how to use conventions well in their writing. Explore all the spell checker options, the thesaurus, the grammar checker and other programs available on your system. Teach them how to use the features that help them the most and to ignore the others. Just for fun sometime, put in a paragraph of the science or social studies text and let the grammar checker do its thing. See if there are any surprises.



So we went in the house and it was spooky and I mean spooky but Brad just kept right on going and he said he wasn't scared because he had been in haunted houses before even if they weren't quite like this one though I wasn't sure I believed him because I didn't think he had really been in a haunted house but then...

↑
Whew! Take a breath now and then. Don't let ands, buts, because and so thens hook together so many clauses and phrases that your reader passes out from lack of oxygen. Punctuate! Breathe! Divide!



TIPS FOR MAKING CONVENTIONS STRONGER

WAIT!

Wait to edit (if you can) till your final draft is at least 2-3 days old. You will see errors much more clearly. Don't do ANY editing until your final draft is finished. You might cut a whole paragraph from your first draft. Why edit it?



GET 'EM ONE BY ONE.

Look for one kind of error at a time. You can usually find grammatical errors by reading aloud. Look next for missing punctuation at the ends of sentences. Now, paragraphs-do you have any? Do they begin in the right spots? Use a highlighter pen to mark words you need to check for spelling. OR, use the spell checker on your computer. But don't trust it totally! Ewe could halve encore wrecked words that where steal words and the computer wood never ketch them.

BEGIN IN THE MIDDLE.

When you edit, don't ALWAYS begin at the beginning. Go through it once beginning in the middle. Once from the start of the final paragraph. That way, you'll cover each part when you're fresh.

ASK A TRUSTED FRIEND.

Got a friend who is a good editor, who has a proofreader's eye? Ask that person to help you once you've found all the errors you can find to spot what you've missed. Trade off. Maybe you can put your proofreader's eye to work for your friend, too!

KEEP WRITING TOOLS HANDY.

Get a good dictionary, spelling list, handbook with punctuation and grammar tips-whatever you need to make your work look as you want it to look. Have these things handy before you begin to edit so you won't have to get up and hunt for them. Who wants to do that?

READ S-L-O-W-L-Y.

Lots of little stuff gets missed when you read too quickly. Slow down. Look. Take your time. Read aloud. Editing is like looking for clues. You have to look carefully and look in the corners or you'll miss things.



EDITING

FOR ONE CONVENTION

AT A TIME...

FOR SPELLING:

A warm summer day in June. The slight breiz was comferting. We sat like stumps in the grasy feald whating four somone to do the dare. Noone had the curage to do the dare even if it was eattng the wurm that sat in the middle of the circkle.

FOR CAPITALIZATION:

a Warm summer day in june. The slight Breeze was Comforting. We sat like Stumps in the GraSsy field waiting for SomeOne to do the Dare. No One had the courage to do the dare even If it was eating the Worm that sat in the middle of the circle.

FOR PUNCTUATION:

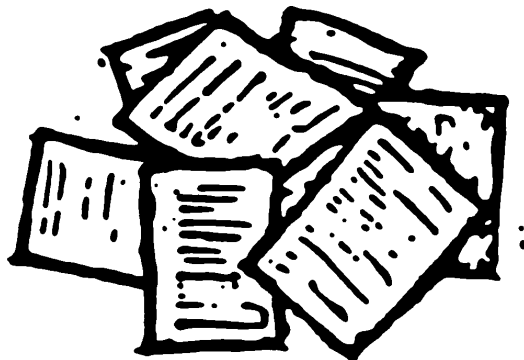
A warm...summer day in June, the slight breeze was, comforting we sat like stump's in the grassy field waiting- for someone to do the dare, no one had the courage to do the dare even! If it was eating the worm; that sat in the middle circle,

USE PICTURE BOOKS TO TEACH THE TRAIT OF:

CONVENTIONS

- Look at picture books with an editor's eye. Can you find any mistakes?
- Select several picture books that contain dialogue: What convention rules do they follow?
- Make a list of the conventions that should be standard and another list of those things that the author should personally control.
- Deliberately make five spelling, five punctuation, five capitalization, and five grammar/usage errors in your own picture book text. Ask someone to find and correct them. (they can correct other things they find, too!)
- Type your picture book onto the computer and use the spell checker, grammar checker, and thesaurus options. What do you have to know about conventions to make the best use of these tools?

In general, the trait of conventions is not one that lends itself well to being taught through picture books. You can use them as wonderful examples, however, of how conventions make the text more readable when done well.



A GUIDE TO GRADE LEVEL CONVENTIONS

	SPELLING	CAPITALIZATION	PUNCTUATION	GRAMMAR/USAGE	PARAGRAPHING
KINDER - GARTEN	Notices and discusses letter/sound correspondence.	Begins to use both upper and lower case letters, notices and discusses the difference.	Notices and discusses punctuation.	Notices and discusses correct grammar in literature environment (e.g., complete sentence, subject-verb agreement).	
GRADE 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spells grade level words correctly in final draft. Experiments with expanded vocabulary words. 	Begins to capitalize name, first word of a sentence, pronoun I, and people's names. Uses both upper and lower case letters, notices and discusses the difference.	Begins to use correct end marks: periods and question marks.	Begins to identify complete sentences. Begins to use sentences with subject-verb agreement	
GRADE 2			Begins to use commas in dates, uses correct end marks: periods, exclamation, and question marks.	Identifies complete sentences. Identifies adjectives and adverbs in a sentence.	Recognizes paragraphs.
GRADE 3		Capitalizes holidays, titles, greeting and closing of letters, personal titles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses commas for day, month, and year, greetings and closing of letters, cities and states. Begins to use apostrophes correctly in contractions, and singular possessives. Begins to use a period at the end of abbreviations 	Writes complete sentences.	Begins to indicate paragraphs.
GRADE 4	Spells grade-level words correctly in final draft. Mostly correct on expanded vocabulary words.	Uses capitalization correctly in final draft.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use commas for words in a series, quotation marks and complex sentences. Uses apostrophes correctly in contractions and singular possessives. Knows and applies the rules for simple quotation marks. 	Writes a complete sentence using irregular plurals of nouns. Begins to use the correct verb tense including past, present, future.	Consistently indicates paragraphs.



A GUIDE TO

GRADE LEVEL CONVENTIONS - PT.2

	SPELLING	CAPITALIZATION	PUNCTUATION	GRAMMAR-USAGE	PARAGRAPHING
GRADE 5			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses commas correctly in separating dependent clauses and after introductory words. • Uses quotation marks correctly. 	<p>Begins to write a complete sentence using appropriate forms of irregular verbs.</p> <p>Begins to use adjectives correctly.</p>	
GRADE 6		<p>Uses capitalization correctly in outlines.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins to punctuate compound sentences. • Uses apostrophes correctly in plural possessives. • Begins to use more complex punctuation; semicolons, dashes, colons, hyphens, parentheses, underlining. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writes a complete sentence using appropriate forms of irregular verbs. • Correctly uses adjectives in sentences. 	
GRADE 7	<p>Spells correctly in final draft except for stylistic effect.</p>	<p>Uses capitalization correctly.</p>	<p>Punctuates compound and compound-complex sentences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correctly uses adjectives and adverbs in sentences. • Combines sentences by using a coordinate conjunction. • Uses effective transitions in writing including pronoun referents. 	<p>Begins to use correct paragraphing stanza, divisions and other textual markers.</p>
GRADE 8				<p>Combines sentences using subordinate conjunctions.</p>	
GRADES 9 THRU 12		<p>Manipulates capitalization for emphasis and stylistic effect.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins to manipulate punctuation for emphasis and stylistic effect. • Manipulates punctuation for emphasis and stylistic effect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses extensive variety of sentences. • Eliminates or manipulates sentence fragments for emphasis and stylistic effect. • Manipulates sentences with varied structures and cadences for effect. 	<p>Uses correct paragraphing stanza, divisions and other textual markers to enhance meaning.</p> <p>Uses paragraphing and stanza division to reinforce text's organizational structure.</p>



EDITOR'S MARKS



Delete the material

There are ~~six~~ six traits.



Spell it out.

I LOVE the ~~o~~ traits.



Close the gap.

Organi zatio n is critical.



Delete material & close the gap.

Mem Fox has a wry sense of humor.



Return to the original.

Never ~~ever~~ send me a letter that lacks voice.



Insert a letter, word, or phrase.

Mem Fox has ^{a powerful,} voice.



Change a letter or letters.

Shef's a slack writer.



Make a space.

The lead must [#] be a grabber.



Transpose letters or words.

Gary Paulsen says, "Read like a wolf eat ^{it}"



Insert a comma.

Write with voice, spirit, detail and editorial precision.



Add a period.

Write what you think ~~o~~.



Insert a semicolon.

Good conventions won't buoy up muddled ideas. ~~Good~~ conventions won't rescue voiceless claptrap.



Insert a colon.

Use these marks of punctuation sparingly: parentheses, exclamation points and colons.



Insert an em dash (like two hyphens)

Terry Kay [^] what a fine writer. ¹/_m



Add a question mark.

Who stole my [^] scoring guide [^]?



Insert an apostrophe.

Garrison Keillor's ^v essay on letter writing inspired me.



Insert a hyphen.

Novelist [^] poet Maya Angelou can rock a room with her verbal rhythm.



Change lower case to capital.

Road [^] dahl never shrinks from reality-even if it's ugly.



ear John,

I want a man who knows what love is.

All about you are generous, kind, thoughtful people

who are not like you.

Admit to being useless and inferior.

You have ruined me.

For other men, I yearn.

For you, I have no feelings whatsoever.

When we're apart, I can be happy forever.

Will you let me be?

Yours,

Gloria



Dear John,

I want a man who knows what love is all about.

You are generous.

*Kind, thoughtful people who are not like you
admit to being useless and inferior.*

You have ruined me for other men.

I yearn for you.

I have no feelings whatsoever when we're apart.

I can be happy forever.

Will you let me be yours?

Gloria

"Dear Annie"

Dear Annie,

Gosh I miss you ever since you moved to California my life has been a drag, all my friends have a girl friend but not me.

Lets talk about something else, will my parents and I went to bend for a snowboarding trip just last week end. We stayed in a fancy inn called "Touch of Class" man, I'm teelen you it was fancy! it even had a telephone hooked to the toilet.

how have you been? I wish I could see or get your number. I want to hear your voice again, maybe I can come and see you over spring Break. but I will only see you for about three day because your spring Break is different then mine, I well just have to wate tell summer I guess?

so I say agine, I miss you so much I had so much fun last summer, the time I had with you was something spiecal.

Will I guess I got to go now cant wate tell summer? OH wen you write me back could you send me a picture. I lost 1 oter one, sorry!

Yours Trully
(forever)

Chris

"The Gift"

To me there appears to be two basic types of people, complex people and simple people. Aside from the obvious effects my parents have had on me, the one that I treasure the most is their molding of me into a complex personality.

What I am grateful for is that I am not the one who writes to a magazine for amateur astronomers and wants to know what the Milky Way is. I am not the person who reads nothing but comic books, nor am I the student who elects to take a band class in order to escape Home Ec., and then doesn't practice. Because of my parents I, am learning Japanese, play two instruments, am likely to start learning Chinese this summer, have a garden, know some carpentry, and can grasp basic ideas of quantum physics. When I see the other people around me, the comparison makes me doubly appreciative of my parents' gift.

For a better understanding of how this happened, I should explain some aspects of my early childhood. One of my earliest memories is that accompanying my mother to the University of Oregon where she was conducting research in the field of Microbiology. On many of those occasions she would demonstrate the use of various pieces of equipment and explain their purpose.

At home we would grow cultures of bacteria and fungi, and then examine them under a powerful microscope. This was where I first became interested in minute things.

Later, my father taught me gardening and carpentry while I helped around the house. But to him I am most thankful for teaching me mathematics and electronics early. Although my first projects were small, recently he helped me construct a highvoltage generator capable of creating an arc almost an inch long.

Finally, my parents made me culturally and geographically literate. With them I have traveled over seas to Japan, Britain, Scotland, Hong Kong, China, Taiwan, and Wales. They also awoke in me an appreciation for classical music and Shakespearean plays.

For all this I am grateful, and perhaps you understand why. My parents have given me much more than a head start, the finishline is already in sight.

CHALLENGE!

A warm summer day in June the slight breeze was comforting. We sat like stumps in the grassy field waiting for someone to do the dare. No one had the courage to do the dare even if it was eating the worm that sat in the middle circle.

Tonya sat in a grin looking at everyone and then looking at the worm. Her thoughts were She Did the dare so she didn't have to eat the slimy worm.

The circle was still really quite no one moved no one breathed. Their eyes were looking at the worm with disgust. The challenge between the worm and the kids was very great. Their mouths were gawked open and their eyes were open as wide as could be.

The giggle from Tonya was so aggravating that I couldn't let her get away with calling me a chicken.

By the time I thought about eating the worm it had crawled over to me. I felt myself say out loud "I will do it. I will eat the worm!" everyone looked at me in amazement. I picked up the worm and I almost stuck it in my mouth and Tonya yelled "tear it in half". I took the worm put 4 fingers around it and pulled it in 2 parts. One part I stuck in my mouth and gulped it and the other half went down. After and from then on when we played truth or dare they never called me a chicken.