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INTRODUCTION

The Need for Practice

To be successful in today’s writing classrooms, students must deeply understand both concepts and procedures so that they can discuss and demonstrate their understanding. Demonstrating understanding is a process that must be continually practiced for students to be successful. Practice is especially important to help students apply their concrete, conceptual understanding of each particular writing skill.

Understanding Assessment

In addition to providing opportunities for frequent practice, teachers must be able to assess students’ writing skills. This is important so that teachers can adequately address students’ misconceptions, build on their current understandings, and challenge them appropriately. Assessment is a long-term process that involves careful analysis of student responses from a discussion, project, practice sheet, or test. When analyzing the data, it is important for teachers to reflect on how their teaching practices may have influenced students’ responses and to identify those areas where additional instruction may be required. In short, the data gathered from assessments should be used to inform instruction: slow down, speed up, or reteach. This type of assessment is called *formative assessment*.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK *(cont.)*

Using the Practice Pages

The activity pages provide practice and assessment opportunities for each day of the school year. Teachers may wish to prepare packets of weekly practice pages for the classroom or for homework. As outlined on pages 5–6, each two-week unit is aligned to one writing standard. **Note:** Before implementing each week’s activity pages, review the corresponding prompt on pages 7–8 with students and have students brainstorm thoughts about each topic.

On odd weeks, students practice the daily skills using mentor texts. On even weeks, students use what they have learned in the previous week and apply it to their own writing.

Each day focuses on one of the steps in the writing process: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing.

There are 18 overarching themes. Each odd week and the following even week focus on unique themes that fit under one overarching theme. For a list of the overarching themes and individual weekly themes, see pages 5–6.

WEEK 1 DAY 1
NAME: _____ **DATE:** _____
Directions: Place check marks in the circles with information that you would include in an informative/explanatory paragraph about desert animals.

Desert

- You can do a lot of fun things in a desert.
- Polar bears are interesting animals.
- Volcanoes are really cool.
- Most desert animals spend their time underground.
- Lizards hide under rocks to protect themselves from the sun.
- Many people like to camp in deserts.
- Desert animals have adaptations that help them survive in the desert.

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Using the Resources

The following resources will be helpful to students as they complete the activity pages. Print copies of these resources and provide them to students to keep at their desks.

Rubrics for the three genres of writing (opinion, informative/explanatory, and narrative) can be found on pages 202–204. Use the rubrics to assess students’ writing at the end of each even week. Be sure to share these rubrics with students often so that they know what is expected of them.

NARRATIVE WRITING RUBRIC
Directions: Evaluate students’ work in each category by circling one number in each row. Students have opportunities to score up to five points in each row and up to 15 points total.

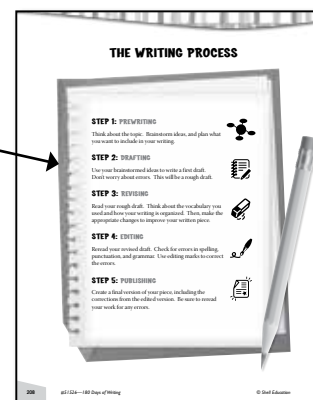
	Exceptional Writing	Quality Writing	Developing Writing
Focus and Organization	Identifies the topic of the story and maintains the focus throughout the writing. Develops clear steps in a sequence and supporting characters, plot, and setting throughout the piece. Demonstrates clear understanding of the intended audience and purpose of the piece.	Maintains a consistent topic and supports a clear and logical thought process. Shows sensory language and word choice.	Includes an interesting opening, rising action, and a conclusion. Demonstrates some understanding of the intended audience or purpose of the piece. Provides lack of clarity in the beginning, middle, and/or conclusion.
Written Expression	Uses descriptive and precise language with clarity and intention. Maintains a consistent voice and uses an appropriate tone that supports the message. Uses multiple sentence types and transitions smoothly between ideas.	Uses a broad vocabulary. Maintains a consistent topic and supports a clear and logical thought process. Shows sensory language and word choice.	Provides an introduction in a work, voice and tone. Provides lack of clarity in the beginning, middle, and/or conclusion.
Language Conventions	Capitalizes, punctuates, and spells accurately. Demonstrates complete fluency within sentences, with no or one instance each of error. Uses paragraphs appropriately and with clear purpose.	Capitalizes, punctuates, and spells accurately. Demonstrates complete fluency within sentences and appropriate grammar. Paragraphs are properly divided and supported.	Uses correctly capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. Uses fragmented or run-on sentences. Paragraphs are poorly divided and unsupported.
Total Points:	5	3	1

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HOW TO USE THIS BOOK (cont.)

Using the Resources (cont.)

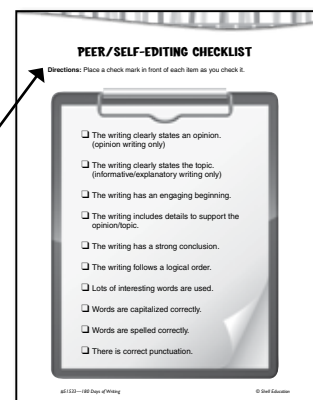
The Writing Process can be found on page 208 and on the Digital Resource CD (filename: writingprocess.pdf). Students can reference each step of the writing process as they move through each week.



EDITING MARKS		
Editing Mark	Symbol/Name	Example
capitalization symbol	cap	great published up the grapes.
uppercase symbol	U	My mother begged fish when I came home.
lowercase symbol	L	The clouds danced in the sky.
check spelling symbol	sp	I felt up on the day.
comma symbol	com	Here I sing!
insert symbol	ins	Would you give the peas?
insert comma symbol	com	I have two cats, two dogs, and a golden.
insert question symbol	que	That's amazing! She showed.
deletion symbol	del	Will you call me on the phone tonight?
new paragraph symbol	para	...in the room. Then back, I gave the day.
add space symbol	spa	I can refer too.

Editing Marks can be found on page 209 and on the Digital Resource CD (filename: editingmarks.pdf). Students may need to reference this page as they work on the editing activities (Day 4s).

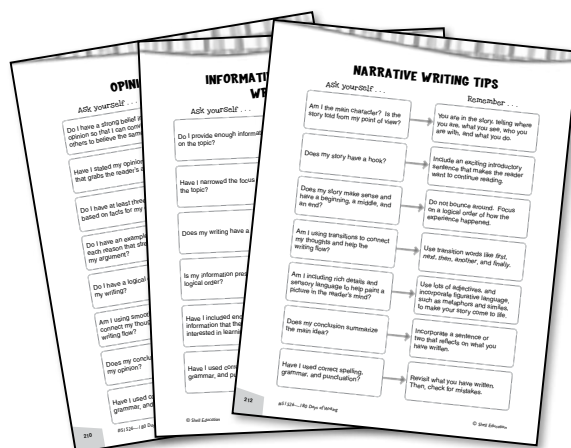
If you wish to have students peer or self-edit their writing, a *Peer/Self-Editing Checklist* is provided on the Digital Resource CD (filename: editingchecklist.pdf).



Writing Signs for each of the writing genres are on pages 213–215 and on the Digital Resource CD (filename: writingsigns.pdf). Hang the signs up during the appropriate two-week units to remind students which type of writing they are focusing on.



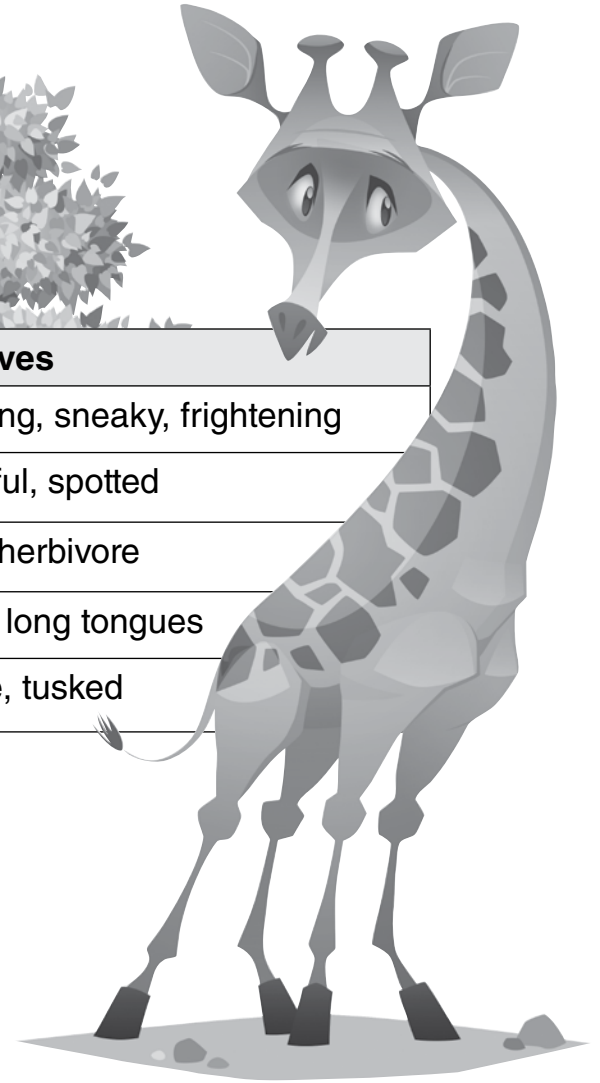
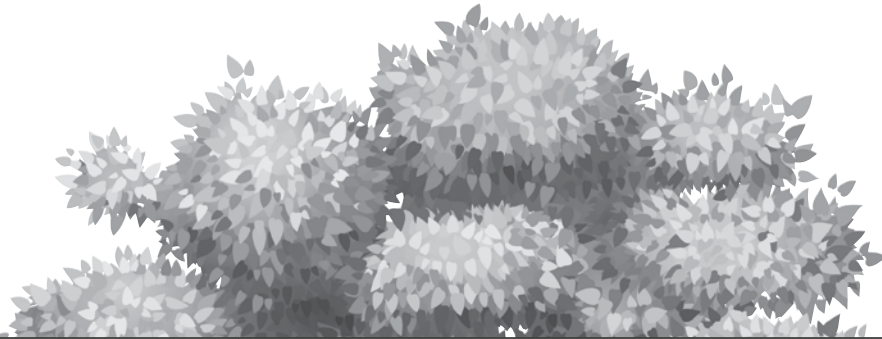
Writing Tips pages for each of the writing genres can be found on pages 210–212 and on the Digital Resource CD (filename: writingtips.pdf). Students can reference the appropriate *Writing Tips* pages as they work through the weeks.



NAME: _____ DATE: _____

Directions: Look at the wild animals and the adjectives that describe them. Then, form two opinions below.

Prewriting
Wild Animals



Wild Animals	Adjectives
wolf	ferocious, aggressive, intimidating, sneaky, frightening
cheetah	swift predator, agile, fast, graceful, spotted
gorilla	social, strong, hairy, intelligent, herbivore
giraffe	graceful, tall, spotted, big eater, long tongues
elephant	gigantic, wise, big-eared, gentle, tusked

1. My favorite wild animal is a(n) _____ because

_____ .

2. My least favorite wild animal is a(n) _____ because

_____ .

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

Directions: Circle the correct adjective to make each sentence complete.

1. The air here is some of the (cleaner **or** cleanest) in the United States.
2. It is 4 miles (6 kilometers) wide at the (narrower **or** narrowest) point.
3. The Colca Canyon is (deeper **or** deepest) than the Grand Canyon.
4. The Grand Canyon is the (more **or** most) famous canyon in the world.
5. Its (wider **or** widest) point stretches 18 miles (29 kilometers) across.



.....
Quick Practice ⌚

Directions: Draw a line between the subject and the predicate.

People take helicopter rides into the canyon.



Revising
Grand Canyon

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

Directions: Use the \equiv , the \wedge , and the \circlearrowleft symbols to edit the paragraph.
Hint: There are six mistakes.

There are many unique facts about the pyramids. The Great Pyramid of Giza points to the north. The pyramids of Egypt were all built to the west of the Nile River. The base of the pyramid was always a perfect square. The pyramids were built mostly of limestone. There were traps and curses put on the pyramids to try to keep the robbers out. It's unbelievable how advanced the culture was thousands of years ago.



Time to Improve! 

Go back to the draft you wrote on page 100. Reread your writing to make sure that you spelled and capitalized the words correctly.



Editing
Egyptian Pyramids

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

Directions: Read the paragraph. Then, answer the questions.

Butterflies are the most amazing insects in the world.

They have six legs. Butterflies are peaceful to watch. There are about 15,000 to 20,000 species of butterflies in the world. The four stages of metamorphosis are interesting and complex. Butterflies have three body parts.



1. Is this a strong opinion paragraph? Why or why not?

2. What advice can you give the author to improve this paragraph?

This week I learned: 

- how to identify statements and opinions
- how to use adjectives to make my writing more interesting
- how to add adverbs to sentences

NARRATIVE WRITING TIPS

Ask yourself . . .

Remember . . .

Am I the main character? Is the story told from my point of view?

You are in the story, telling where you are, what you see, who you are with, and what you do.

Does my story have a hook?

Include an exciting introductory sentence that makes the reader want to continue reading.

Does my story make sense and have a beginning, a middle, and an end?

Do not bounce around. Focus on a logical order of how the experience happened.

Am I using transitions to connect my thoughts and help the writing flow?

Use transition words like *first*, *next*, *then*, *another*, and *finally*.

Am I including rich details and sensory language to help paint a picture in the reader's mind?

Use lots of adjectives, and incorporate figurative language, such as metaphors and similes, to make your story come to life.

Does my conclusion summarize the main idea?

Incorporate a sentence or two that reflects on what you have written.

Have I used correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation?

Revisit what you have written. Then, check for mistakes.

Opinion
Writing