

Write for a Month

Christmas Friends



Level
II

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AKA LANGUAGE ARTS LADY

Write-for-a-Month

What Are Write-for-a-Month (WFAM) Writing Books?

The *Write-for-a-Month* (WFAM) series of books is from LAL's line of digital publications. WFAM is a digital arm of the small- press homeschool publisher, Character Ink Press/Language Arts Lady Blog, and houses a variety of month-long writing books, grammar downloads, readers, and more for teachers, parents, tutors, co-op leaders, and homeschoolers.

The WFAM books are writing/composition books of two to four lengthy lessons each, between 50 and 120 pages per book (depending on the level). These books contain writing projects that last one month (four weeks) based on old books/current movies/characters that children and adults love **or** historical characters/animals/nature topics (indicated by titles/covers). The books contain all types of writing, especially focusing on research reports, essays, and stories.

The projects in the WFAM books all use the author's signature "Directed Writing Approach," which takes students by the hand every step of the way from prewriting (brainstorming, character and plot development, research, etc.) to skill building (for projects requiring certain skills, such as quotes or imagery or persuasion, etc.) to outlining (based on the type of writing) to writing rough drafts to editing (via the Checklist Challenge) to final copy. Each project has detailed samples for students to see how the project was written by another student (a rarity in writing programs) and in-depth lessons of all of the skills needed in order to complete that project.

Each series contains five books*

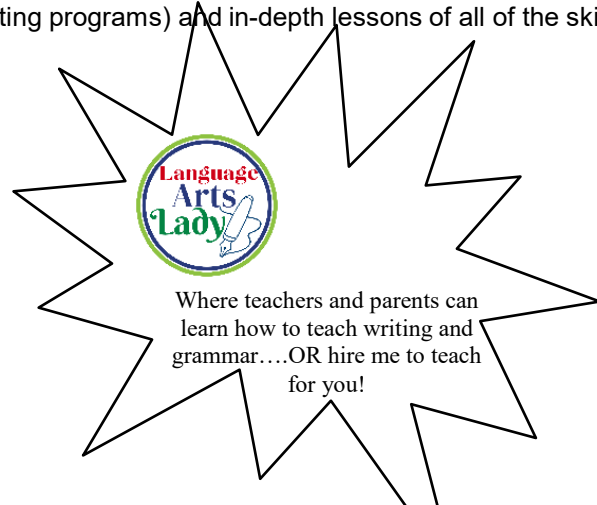
Level I = Grade 2nd & 3rd – Purple

Level II = Grade 4th & 5th – Red

Level III = Grade 6th, 7th, & 8th – Blue

Level IV = Grade 9th & 10th – Green

Level V = Grade 11th & 12th – Yellow



This book, *Write On Christmas Friends, Level II*, is designed for upper elementary students and contains the following projects (from pre-writing through final product with all the instruction and skills needed for each assignment):

- **Elves and the Shoemaker Rewrite Given Story**
- **Retelling Choice Holiday Story in Own Words**
- **Christmas Decorations/History Question and Answer Boxes Over Given Material**

Each project has detailed samples for students to see how the project was written by another student and in-depth lessons of all of the skills needed in order to complete that project—

- Symbols for outlining
- Two outlining models
- Writing a story without dialogue
- Story writing
- Researching
- Question and answer outline
- Checklist Challenge Coding

About the “Write-for-a-Month” Book Series

The Write-for-a-Month (WFAM) composition series is a non-religious, yet meaningful, writing program for use in homes, schools, co-ops, and tutoring situations. The books are writing/composition books of two to four lengthy lessons each, between 50 and 120 pages per book (depending on the level). These books contain writing projects of all types at grades two through twelve. Each WFAM book is either **topic-specific** (Mowgli, Peter Pan, Beauty and Beast, Christmas Friends, Dumbo, Slinky Dog, Fairy Tales, Nature, Animals, Famous People, etc.) or **writing-type-specific** (i.e. story writing, reports, essays, dialogue, Twice-Told Tales, Tools and Tricks, and much more). All of the books are grade-level specific (five levels from 2nd through 12th grades--see note below).

The projects in both series use the author’s signature “Directed Writing Approach,” which takes students by the hand every step of the way from prewriting (brainstorming, character and plot development, research, etc.) to skill building (for projects requiring certain skills, such as quotes or imagery or persuasion, etc.) to outlining (based on the type of writing) to writing rough drafts to editing (via the *Checklist Challenge*) to final copy. No vagueness. No questions as to what to write or how to write.

All of the book types that will be released are listed on the WFAM Series Titles back matter. I recommend that you start out with a *Tools and Tricks* or *Writing Boxes* book if you and your students are unfamiliar with Language Arts Lady’s writing programs. (After that, your student will love any of the books!)

By utilizing our **writing-type-specific** books, you will be able to work on learning the LAL’s ways! ☺
These writing type books include **Tools and Tricks** (introducing my methods to prepare for any future books) and **Twice-Told Tales** (story writing spin off projects).

By using our **topic-specific** books (sub-labeled Write On, _____), your student can choose the characters, books/movie, science, or history themes he would like to write about. Again, both sets are month-long downloads with incremental and extremely-detailed instructions.

Partial sample lessons will be available at the Character Ink and Language Arts Lady stores starting fall 2022 (though the best way to try a WFAM or WO book for your home or classroom is to purchase an early to mid-level book and try it out with your students). I recommend that younger students do a WFAM “Writing Boxes” book and middle and upper level students do a “Tools and Tricks” book first.

There are price differences for home/individual use vs. classroom/co-op use, and we ask that you follow our copyright guidelines of use by the purchaser only for whichever setting it was purchased.

Project Labels/Levels and Printing/Use

The projects within each book are labeled with numbers. A larger project is labeled as Projects 1 and 2, indicating that, that project is lengthy and will likely take two weeks to complete if writing is a daily

subject for your students (longer than that if writing is a twice weekly or non-daily activity). The number of projects in each book roughly coincides with the length of the project in a one-month situation. (Most books will take about one month with daily writing.) The books can be stretched out over two months with less frequent writing or condensed to a two-week time period in remediation or workshop situations.

The author is creating videos about how to teach the projects, so check out the **How I Teach videos** at **Language Arts Lady Blog** or **YouTube** to see if the book you are interested in has a video yet. (There are over fifty there at this time.)

The author has tested each project in each book between three and six times live with fifty to sixty students every year and has made changes according to their responses. We recommend that you print out the books two-sided and three hole-punch them and put them in half or one-inch binders for ease of use. It is especially nice to print the cover in color and slide it into the front of the student binder.

Time Spent in Write-for-a-Month and Write-On

The method of instruction in most of the books will require one or two 30-60 minute meetings each week with the teacher to discuss the assignments, introduce the outlining technique, check the student's rough draft, review his Checklist Challenge (CC), and grade his final composition.

In addition, the student will need to work approximately 20-50 minutes (depending on level of book) per day four days a week by himself in order to complete all the assignments contained herein during a one-month period of time. (High school students will be on the upper end of that.)

Again, the time and teacher assistance needed in each book will vary according to whether the student is learning to write sentences or multiple paragraph compositions (as well as whether he is doing a *Tools and Tricks* book vs a story vs a report—and his interest level in all of those). It is recommended that you start out working together and see which areas your student is able to work alone and which areas he needs your assistance. The time needed will also be different if a book is spread out over two months.

Two Skill Levels in Each Book

All books have two skill levels within each level: Basic and Extension. These two levels provide two different skill levels of writing and revising for students in each book. Thus, a younger student using a certain book would not do as many paragraphs and revisions as an older (or more advanced) student using the same book. The composition is dependent upon a student at least understanding the fundamentals of sentence structure (and these are introduced and built upon in the *Tools and Tricks* books).

Students will be able to complete the projects much more effectively if they understand the functions of subjects and verbs. Students will be able to insert the Checklist Challenge revisions into their writings much more easily if they understand how to do the revisions (how to combine sentences, how to add sentence openers, how to write SSS5's, etc.). The groundwork for many of those skills is laid out in *Tools and Tricks* and *Writing Boxes*—for beginning students as well as older students who need instruction in those fundamentals.

(Also, the *Tools and Tricks* books, in addition to being grade-level appropriate, are strong remediation books with specific instruction in “How to Create and Write From a Sentence-by-Sentence Outline Over Given Material” and “How to Complete the Checklist Challenge,” etc. These are good starter books and are available at all five levels.)

Grade Levels

Note that WFAM books are not *exactly* grade level specific. The books are labeled with numbers that approximate the grade level of the projects. However, writing is extremely subjective. An advanced seventh grader (with years of writing experience) may do great in one of the Level V books whereas a seventh grader without much writing experience may be more comfortable going in the II or III *Tools and Tricks* books for what a sentence or paragraph contains and how to put paragraphs together for essays and reports. Check out the samples at our store to find the right fit for your student(s).

Semester-Long Character Quality Writing Books

Note that homeschoolers or Christian schools who desire the types of projects in WFAM but want a complete writing program with Christian/character emphases should check out my semester-long books, *Meaningful Composition* (MC). Two-week samples of each MC book are available at our [Character Ink store](#).



Christmas Friends, Level II

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Project 1: Sentence-by-Sentence (S-by-S) Outline from Given Material

The Elves and The Shoemaker

Overview of Story From Given Material

This week you will be writing a story over given material. That is, you will not find your own material to write from, but you will use materials provided for you in this weekly project and take an S-by-S (Sentence-by-Sentence) Outline.

I. TOPIC OF STORY

Sentence-by-Sentence Outline over given material about *The Elves and the Shoemaker*.

II. NUMBER OF PARAGRAPHS IN THE BODY OF YOUR STORY

- A. **Basic** students will write 3 paragraphs.
- B. **Extension⁺** students will write 4 paragraphs.

***Note:** PoB stands for Paragraph of the Body (referring to a non-opening or non-closing paragraph). P'soB stands for Paragraphs of Body (more than one PoB).

III. SENTENCES PER PARAGRAPH

All students will write the number of sentences that each paragraph contains in the given passage.

***Note:** You may always choose to write fewer sentences per paragraph but more total paragraphs, with your teacher's permission.

Note: This Overview Box, which is provided at the beginning of each project, is here to give students (and teachers) an at-a-glance look at the entire composition assignment. Each step of each lesson is assigned and detailed throughout the week(s).

***Extensions** are older or more advanced writing students who can handle more paragraphs and/or sentences.

IV. OPENING PARAGRAPH

Students will **not** write an Opening Paragraph. You will weave a Thesis Statement--or story setting sentence--into the beginning of the first paragraph (PoB-A)

V. CLOSING PARAGRAPH

Students will **not** write a **Closing Paragraph**. You will weave your conclusion into the retelling as done in the given passage.

VI. WRITE ON/ADDITIONAL SKILLS

You will learn/further develop the following additional skills:

- A. **Symbols for Outlining**
- B. **Two Outlining Models**
- C. **Writing a story without dialogue**

| | | |
|------------------|-------------|--|
| Extension-PoB-A* | Paragraph 1 | <p>A poor shoemaker had enough leather to make only one more pair of shoes. So, he cut out the leather that evening and fell asleep. In the morning, he was stunned to spot two finished shoes on his table! He examined them and discovered that they had been sewn beautifully. Later that day, the shoemaker sold them for a wonderful price. With the money, he was able to buy enough leather for two pairs of shoes.</p> |
| PoB-B | Paragraph 2 | <p>The next morning, the shoemaker discovered two more beautiful pairs of shoes on his table. He was able to sell them for enough money to buy leather for four pairs of shoes. Once again, the next morning, four beautiful pairs of shoes had appeared. This continued for some time until the shoemaker was no longer poor. Soon, in fact, the shoemaker was wealthy from selling the beautiful shoes.</p> |
| PoB-C | Paragraph 3 | <p>One evening around Christmastime, the man and his wife decided to discover who was helping them. So, they hid behind some hanging clothes in the corner of the room. At midnight, two dwarves in old clothes trotted inside. These small men quickly began sewing the shoes with incredible speed. The shoemaker and his wife watched spellbound. When the shoes were finished, the men disappeared into the street.</p> |
| PoB-D | Paragraph 4 | <p>The shoemaker and his wife felt compassion for the men. They decided to make new clothes and shoes for them. When the gifts were prepared, the shoemaker and his wife hid once again and waited. When the men came in, they were delighted by the clothes and shoes. They put them on and left the shop singing and dancing. They never returned again, but the shoemaker continued to prosper.</p> |

Lesson A. Study Skills/Prewriting: Sentence-by-Sentence Outline

◇ A. Follow these steps to write a Sentence-by-Sentence Outline (S-by-S Outline) for this week's passage:

1. Read Outlining Method page provided next and choose your method. (Or have your teacher read it and review it with you.)
2. Read the first paragraph to yourself.
 - a. **Determine the topic of the entire paragraph.**
 - b. Write the topic of that paragraph on the Topic of Paragraph line.
3. Read the first sentence of the first paragraph and think about what it means
 - a. Highlight **3–5 words** that would most help you to remember the content of the sentence.
 - b. Write those **3–5 words** on the line provided for Sentence One.
 - c. Repeat these steps for all of the sentences in the first paragraph.
4. **Repeat these steps** for all of the paragraphs and sentences in the passage.

Choose an Outlining Method for Taking Notes From a Source

When you take notes to write from a source(s), whether it is a given source or one you find yourself, you must develop a system so that you know when you write from it that you are not using words from the source. In order to be sure that you are always writing originally, it is better for you to choose a set method of notetaking and stick with it all the time. This way, you always know whether your notes contain your words or the source's words--and you can avoid copying words that do not belong to you.

When outlining, always include proper nouns, hard-to-spell words, places, and other details.

Most students and Language Arts Lady prefer to use the source's words when outlining.

- 1) This is my favorite way to do it because I don't have to worry that the words I am using when I write "might" have been in the source. I know which words were in the source from my outline.
- 2) In this way, **you outline using words from the source**, but when you write you purposely do **not** use those words (and for older students, not even the same sentence structure).
- 3) When you write, you will always know that **you use the source's words when you outline**. Thus, you will **always change the words in the outline to be your own as you write**.

Extension Students Only--Paragraph of Body A (PoB-A)

Topic of Paragraph 1 _____

Sentence 1 _____

Sentence 2 _____

Sentence 3 _____

Sentence 4 _____

Sentence 5 _____

Sentence 6 _____

All--Paragraph of Body B (PoB-B)

Topic of Paragraph 2 _____

Sentence 1 _____

Sentence 2 _____

Sentence 3 _____

Sentence 4 _____

Sentence 5 _____

All--Paragraph of Body C (PoB-C)

Topic of Paragraph 3 _____

Sentence 1 _____

Sentence 2 _____

Sentence 3 _____

Sentence 4 _____

Sentence 5 _____

Sentence 6 _____

All--Paragraph of Body D (PoB-D)

Topic of Paragraph 4 _____

Sentence 1 _____

Sentence 2 _____

Sentence 3 _____

Sentence 4 _____

Sentence 5 _____

Sentence 6 _____

Sample Outline--Paragraph 4

Topic of Paragraph 4 Shoemaker & wife → shoes & clothes 2 elves

Sentence 1 Shoemaker & wife → compassion 4 men

Sentence 2 Decided 2 make clothes & shoes 4 them

Sentence 3 Gifts prepared shoemaker & wife hid

Sentence 4 Men came → & delighted clothes & shoes

Sentence 5 Put on & left singing & dancing

Sentence 6 Never returned & shoemaker continued 2 prosper

Sample Paragraph 4 Rewritten

The magical workers' poverty pained the shoemaker and his wife. They constructed fresh clothes and shoes as gifts. After creating these presents, the couple concealed themselves again. The workers arrived and rejoiced to see the gifts. They immediately tried them on and joyfully skipped out of the store. The shoemaker never spotted them again, but he continued to succeed.

Box A

Lesson B. Composition/Creative Writing: Write a Rough Draft Story From an S-by-S Outline Over Given Material

<> B-1. Follow these steps for writing your rough draft story from your S-by-S Outline:

- (1) **Re-read the entire passage** to recall its content.
- (2) **Read your first line of notes** and consider what you want your sentence to say.
- (3) **Practice saying your sentence aloud** to get it just the way you want it.
- (4) **Write your first sentence** in your notebook, or key your report on the computer.
- (5) Be sure to **double space** your story to make inputting the Checklist Challenge revisions easier.
- (6) **Indent** the beginning of each paragraph five spaces.
- (7) **Repeat** these steps for each line of notes, writing on every other line.

<> B-2. Read your story aloud. Do you like the way it sounds?

Lesson C. Composition and Editing: Edit and Revise Using the Checklist Challenge

<> C. Use the Checklist Challenge located after this week's lesson to edit your story.

- (1) Complete **each revision for each paragraph, as indicated**.
- (2) Insert revisions with pen or pencil into your rough draft paper.
- (3) **Highlight (or code) each revision on your rough draft paper** as directed by your teacher.
- (4) **Check off (or code) each item's check box on the Checklist Challenge** for this week.

Note: If you are not familiar with CI's Checklist Challenge, and you feel that you need more help on it than this book provides, you may desire to use a "How to Do the Checklist Challenge" or "Tools and Tricks" products.

Note: Notice that after several tasks of the Checklist Challenge, the items start to contain words like "If you have already done this, highlight the word or sentence in your paper and highlight the check box(es) as directed by your teacher." When you start to see these words, you may just locate the items in your paper and code them for your teacher rather than adding more of them. Be sure you code the items in your paper and in the task list of the CC Chart.

Lesson D. Composition: Final Copy Story From Given Material

- <> **D-1. Write the final copy of your story** in your notebook, writing on every line. If you prefer, you may type it on the computer.
- <> **D-2. Read your final copy aloud.** Do you like the way it sounds now? Do you notice an improvement in your story since you completed the Checklist Challenge?

Advanced Checklist Challenge Coding

Your teacher may desire for you to code your CC for her so that she can grade it/check it more easily. The following steps will help you learn to code your CC for your teacher. For more help on this, see a "Tools and Tricks" product by Donna Reish.

1. Use **colored pencil** or **colored pens** or **highlighters**.
2. **Print off your double spaced rough draft report or essay** (or use your handwritten rough draft).
3. **With your CC on one side and your paper on your dominant side** (right hand side for right handed students), complete the first CC task.
4. **Place a check mark in the check boxes for the items that say "read" or "look for errors,"** etc., with a pen as you complete them.
5. For items that involve inserting things or omitting something and adding something else, code in one of two ways:
 - a. **Insert the change or addition with a pen or pencil on your paper and use a highlighter to mark it in your paper** in a distinguishing way--highlight the addition with an orange highlighter, circle the change with blue highlighter, double underline the title with a pink highlighter, etc. (choosing whatever colors you desire without repeating the exact same marking). **OR**
 - b. **Insert the change or addition with a colored pencil or colored pen** (choosing whatever colors you desire without repeating the exact same marking). (In this method, you will eventually need to add the change AND circle it or underline it so that your exact same marking is not repeated. For example, you might add verbs with a blue pen but add the title with a blue pen and underline the title with that same blue pen--two different markings, one written in blue pen and one written in blue pen *and* underlined with the blue pen.)
6. **Whatever you do to the insertion on your paper should be done to the CC check boxes for that item.**
 - a. For example, if you highlight your new verbs with an orange highlighter in your paper, you will color in the check box with orange highlighter.
 - b. If you underline your title with purple highlighter in your paper, you should underline the check box with purple highlighter.
 - c. If you write your new verbs in green colored pencil in your paper, make a check mark in the check box with that same green colored pencil.
7. **If your teacher gives you permission to skip a CC task** (or you and she do not think a change will improve a paragraph), **place an NC (no change) in the check box for that paragraph**, so your teacher will not look for it.
8. If you skip a task altogether (without your teacher's permission), place an X in the task box(es), so your teacher will know not to search for the revisions. Obviously, it is always preferred that you do all of your assignments, but it would be better to indicate that you skipped something than to leave the box(es) blank.

The point is that **the coding you put into the paper copy of your composition should be identical to what you do to (or above, beneath, around, etc.) the CC check boxes for that task.** This method will allow your teacher to have your CC chart on one side and your "colorful paper" (with the CC revisions inserted with colors) on the other. She can check at a glance to find your new insertions, title, Thesis Statement, and more.

Note: Some students prefer to do the CC on their paper on the electronic document on the computer with the colored shading tool provided in word processing programs. This is fine, too, but the student should still do the same marking/coding on the CC chart as he did on the electronic document--or write beside the tasks what color each task is. For example, if the student shades the verbs he replaced in pink shading, he should write PINK beside the CC task for the verbs on the chart. Then when he prints this "colorful" version, the teacher can still check his revisions easily.

I have a free book and video for students to learn how to code their CC. I also have a few How I Teach... audio/video broadcasts in which I teach how to teach it.

Box C

Checklist Challenge for Project 1: S-by-S Outline from Given Material

The Elves and The Shoemaker

Complete the Checklist Challenge by using these guides:

- Determine which check boxes apply to your level.
- Each box will indicate the number of changes that need to be completed (normally one box for each paragraph).

ALL LEVELS

BASIC LEVEL only

EXTENSION only

OPTIONAL -- Your teacher will decide whether you should complete this task or not, based on your grammar/usage level.

All All All E

Read your sentences to your teacher or an older sibling. Together, listen for sentences that sound unclear. **Be sure to read aloud.** You will “hear” errors you would otherwise not find. **Place a check mark in each CC box with a pen or pencil when this step is completed.**

☞ Focus on content errors at this time.

All All All E

Circle each **verb** in each sentence with a light colored highlighter. This will make it easier to change your verbs and to add adverbs (*ly* words) as further directed. **“Code” the CC box(es) in the same way that you coded your located verbs in your paper.**

Be sure to circle all of the following verbs:

- Action verbs--show what the subject does
- Be, a Helper, Link verbs (BHL)--being, helping, and linking verbs (is, are, am, was, were, has, had, do, does, etc.)
- Infinitives--to + verb (to +action verb on to + BHL verb).

Be sure you circle the verbs in your writings, as this step is crucial later in the Checklist Challenge. However, do not get discouraged if you miss one. You do not need to labor over each word, fearful of missing a verb. The more you look for the verbs, the better you will get at finding them--and the better you will get at the verb-related CC items.

All All All E

Change one of the “**boring**” verbs in one of your sentences to a “**strong**” verb. You may select one from the list below or choose one of your own. **“Code” the CC boxes in the same way that you coded your added verbs in your paper.**

| <u>Instead of</u> | <u>Use</u> | <u>Instead of</u> | <u>Use</u> | <u>Instead of</u> | <u>Use</u> |
|-------------------|------------|-------------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------|
| found | discovered | looking | appearing | run | sprint |
| coming | visiting | sit | recline | talk | communicate |
| go | hasten to | asked | interrogated | lay | recline |
| said | announced | write | pen | lie | deceive |
| look | examine | answered | responded | play | frolic |
| walk | saunter | lie | stretch out | talk | proclaim |
| list | enumerate | become | develop | work | toil |
| look | scan | see | determine | add | enhance |
| help | assist | teach | instruct | | |

☞ Be sure you add or delete words in the sentence when inserting your new verb, as needed for clarity.

All All All E

Add an **adverb** (*ly* word or other) to one of your sentences. You may select one from the list below or choose one of your own. **“Code” the CC box(es) in the same way that you coded your added adverbs in your paper.**

Examples:

| | | | | | |
|-------------|---------------|---------------|------------|------------|------------|
| only | totally | joyfully | willingly | completely | never |
| practically | significantly | closely | finally | diligently | seldom |
| cheerfully | carefully | laboriously | gladly | slowly | later |
| extremely | gratefully | curiously | sometimes | always | tomorrow |
| fully | thoughtfully | interestingly | apparently | cautiously | repeatedly |

☞ **An adverb is a describer that describes or modifies a verb, adjective, or other adverb. An adverb tells *where, when, how, or to what extent.***

All All All E

Add one descriptive **adjective** to one of your sentences. You may select one from the list below or choose one of your own. **“Code” the CC boxes in the same way that you coded the added adjectives in your paper.**

Examples

| | | | | | |
|-------------|------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|
| stringent | gracious | lengthy | trusted | courteous | infallible |
| meek | meager | valiant | understanding | trustworthy | horrendous |
| courageous | fulfilling | preoccupied | horrific | incapable | presumptuous |
| significant | | | | | |

☞ **An adjective is a describer that describes a noun or a pronoun. It tells *whose, which one, how many, or what kind.* You should add descriptive adjectives--those that tell *what kind*--though often clarifying adjectives are needed to tell the reader which one. (These are normally inserted during writing.)**

All All All E

From the **Banned Words List** below, select one word (or form of that word) that you have in one of your sentences, omit it, and substitute a similar, but stronger, word. ***If you do not have any Banned Words, just “code” the CC check box(es) as directed by your teacher (or place a check mark in each one that represents a paragraph with no Banned Words).***

Banned Word List

| | | | | | | |
|------|-------|--------|------|-------|------|--------|
| very | big | really | good | great | fine | slow |
| say | bad | little | want | see | look | such |
| ask | lot | find | walk | said | go | become |
| sit | think | soft | fast | many | find | |

*like (*Like* is only banned when it is a verb. When used as a preposition, *like* often creates a simile--and is not a Banned Word.)

☞ **Advanced students should omit as many Banned Words as possible throughout all paragraphs.**

Create a **title**, and put it at the top of the your paper. *If you have already done this, you should still “code” the CC check box and the title in your paper as directed by your teacher.*

Consider the following ideas:

- Something catchy: "The Surprised Shoemaker"
- Something comical: "The Spontaneous Shoemaker"
- Something bold: "Help in the Darkness"
- A song title or line: "Silent Night"
- Something informative: "The Shoemaking Elves"
- Something about character: "The Beauty of Character"
- Other: "Secret Shoemakers"

 **Tips:**

- **Center your title at the top of the first page of your composition.**
- **Capitalize the first letter of the first and last word.**
- **Capitalize all the words within the title that are important--but not three-letter-or-fewer articles, pronouns, or prepositions.**
- **Do not italicize your title, though you may treat it like a minor work and surround it with quotation marks (regular ones, not single ones), if desired.**

Add a sentence to the beginning of your paper that describes the whole piece. This is called the **Thesis Statement**. *If you have already done this, you should still “code” the CC check box and the Thesis Statement in your paper as directed by your teacher.*

Examples:

- Report about raccoons: Ever wonder how that furry bandit known as a raccoon manages to get into your coolers while you sleep in your tent at night?
- Report about an experience: When I just turned thirteen years old, I found out the challenging way how important siblings truly are.

 **Tips**

- **Write a sentence that describes your paper without telling the reader exactly what it is about.**
- **Do not say: *In this paper you will learn about . . .***
- **Be sure this Thesis Statement is truly representative of the content of your *entire* composition.**
- **Your Thesis Statement is your commitment to write about that topic. It should cleverly introduce your composition’s subject.**
- **If your paper does not have a separate Opening Paragraph, you will want to add an Opening Thesis Statement-Plus--a sentence or two introducing your topic that contains the Thesis Statement--to the beginning of your paper.**

Add a sentence to the very end of your writing that **restates your Thesis Statement** in some way. This is called the **Thesis Statement “Reloaded”** and should conclude your paper. *If you have already done this, you should still “code” the CC check box and the Thesis Statement “Reloaded” as directed by your teacher.*

-  You may choose to include Thesis Statement “Reloaded” that restates the title of your paper rather than the Thesis Statement.

Choose a word (or forms of a word) that you used more than one time within each paragraph. If the word sounds **redundant**, change that word, at least once, to a word with a similar meaning. **If you do not have any redundancy, just “code” the CC check box(es) as directed by your teacher.**

Examples:

- If *joyful* is redundant, substitute *elated* the next time.
- If *drove* is redundant, substitute *careened* the next time.
- If *answered* is redundant, substitute *retorted* the next time.

Note: Advanced level students should omit as much redundancy as possible throughout all paragraphs.

☞ Do not change insignificant words such as *was*, *it*, *and*, etc.

E

Add one **interjection** to the beginning of one of your sentences, or add a new sentence with an interjection in it (or more than one according to your level). **If you have already done this, you should still “code” the CC check box(es) and the interjection in your paper as directed by your teacher.**

Punctuate appropriately

- Follow it with a comma: **Yes**, that “hunter” has an easy meal!
- Follow it with an exclamation mark, then start a new sentence with a capital: **Yes!** That hunter has an easy meal.

☞ **Interjections include words from the following rhyme:**

**My, well, oh!
Wow, yes, no!**

E

Add one **prepositional phrase opener** to one sentence (or more than one, according to your level). If it is long or you hear a pause after it, follow it with a comma. **If you have already done this, you should still “code” the CC check box and the prepositional phrase opener in your paper as directed by your teacher.**

Examples:

- **Within its abdomen**, the spider has special glands that produce silk. (**Optional comma**)
- **From the center of the web**, spokes fan out and anchor the surrounding frame. (**Double prepositional phrase opener**)
- **Onto the surrounding frame**, the center of the bridge is anchored. (**Optional comma**)
- **In the center of a web**, the spider waits patiently for its victim. (**Double prepositional phrase opener**)
- **With even more silk**, the spider further entangles its prey.
- **With leaves tipped with spines that act like prison bars**, the spider catches its prey. (**Prepositional phrase opener & subordinate clause opener**)
- **After digestion**, the leaf gradually reopens and waits for another insect to come too close.

☞ Follow the PP opener with a comma if it is five words or longer or two prepositional phrases in a row, or when a pause is heard when it is read aloud.

All All All E

Edit your sentences with your teacher. Make sure you have done all of the following items to each sentence:

1. Did you put a capital letter at the beginning of the sentence?
2. Did you put an ending punctuation mark at the end of the sentence?
3. Does the sentence “sound” correct when you read it aloud?
4. Do you have proper nouns in your sentence that need to be capitalized?
5. Do you hear a pause in your sentence when you read it aloud? If you do, have your teacher help you add a comma if she thinks it is needed.

Project 2: Retelling a Holiday Story in Your Own Words

Choose a Holiday Story to Retell in Your Own Words

Overview of Story Writing

Choose any Thanksgiving or Christmas story (real or make believe) that you think you can retell in the number of sentences and paragraphs assigned.

I. TOPIC OF ASSIGNMENT

Choose a "holiday" story that you think it would be fun to re-write in your own words.

- A. Pilgrims on the Mayflower
- B. Pilgrims first Thanksgiving
- C. Squanto with the Pilgrims
- D. *Liberty B. Mouse's First Thanksgiving*
- E. Jesus born in the stable
- F. Mary and Joseph's caravan
- G. "Frosty the Snowman"
- H. "How the Grinch Stole Christmas"
- I. "Charlie Brown's Thanksgiving"
- J. "Charlie Brown's Christmas"
- K. Other idea

II. NUMBER OF PARAGRAPHS IN THE BODY OF YOUR STORY*

- A. **Basic** students will write 3 paragraphs.
- B. **Extension**⁺ students will write 5 paragraphs.

***Note: Plan for each paragraph to be a "scene" in your story as shown in the sample.**

III. SENTENCES PER PARAGRAPH

- A. **Basic** students will write 4-6 sentences* per paragraph.
- B. **Extension** students will write 6-8 sentences per paragraph.

***Note: You may always choose to write fewer sentences per paragraph but more total paragraphs in any writing assignment, with your teacher's permission.**

IV. OPENING PARAGRAPH

Students will **not** write an Opening Paragraph.

V. CLOSING PARAGRAPH

Students will **not** write a Closing Paragraph.

VI. SOURCES

Students may use sources as needed.

VII. QUOTES

Do not plan to use quotes unless you are experienced in them. Instead of quotes (unless you are experienced), use the word **THAT**. This will create an indirect quote and will not require speech tags, quotation marks, etc.

- A. For example, you can say *He told Father THAT he would take blankets to the stable for the baby.*
- B. Rather than saying, *He told Father, "I will take blankets to the stable for the baby."*

Note: This Overview Box, which is provided at the beginning of each project, is here to give students (and teachers) an at-a-glance look at the entire composition assignment. Each step of each lesson is assigned and detailed throughout the week(s).

⁺Extensions are older or more advanced writing students who can handle more paragraphs and/or sentences.

Lesson A: Outline Scenes

↔ A-1. Read the sample Holiday Story provided to see an example of this completed project. Pay close attention to how each paragraph has a different "scene" topic written with it.

Zachary Kieser

Sample Story

The Grinch was a bitter, grumpy creature with a tiny, hard heart. He lived with his loyal dog in a cave on Mount Crumpit. This snowy, steep mountain rested near the town of Whoville. The happy, compassionate Whos lived in this nice village. At Christmastime, they loudly and gladly celebrated Christmas together.

[Scene 1: The Grinch and the Whos]

Annoyed, the Grinch had to hear the Whos' shouts and laughter every day. One day, the Grinch decided he would solve the problem of the Whos. He created a plan to seal all the Whos' presents, trees, and food. That way, he was confident they would be unable to celebrate Christmas. **[Scene 2: The Grinch comes up with a plan]**

So, that night, the Grinch dressed up as Santa Claus and hooked up his dog Max to a sleigh. Then, he dropped down each Who family's chimney and stole their presents, trees, and firewood. Having carried out his plan successfully, the Grinch drove his sleigh to the edge of a cliff. Before dumping all the presents into the ravine, the Grinch paused and waited for sunrise. **[Scene 3: The Grinch steals from the Whos]**

The Grinch had hoped to hear the sounds of crying and sadness in Whoville. Instead, he was greeted by a joyful Christmas song! The Grinch was confused and began to wonder what Christmas meant. He thought that maybe it involved more than eating and giving and receiving gifts. **[Scene 4: The Grinch is surprised]**

Suddenly, the Grinch's heart grew several sizes. He carried all the presents back to the Whos who promptly invited him to celebrate with them. So, he attended their feast and received the honor of serving the Roast Beast. The Grinch, who had wanted to stop Christmas, now realized the true meaning of the holiday. **[Scene 5: The Grinch realizes the meaning of Christmas]**

Box A-1

↔ **A-2.** Plan your story following the steps provided:

- (1) In the Scene Box (Box A-2) provided, write down the main "actions" that will take place in your story.
- (2) Number the "actions" in the order they fall in your story. Each of these main actions will be your story's scenes.
- (3) Do this for 3 to 5 scenes according to your level.

↔ **A-3.** Outline your story following these steps

- (1) Write each of your scenes on the outlining lines provided where they say Paragraph One, etc. just like the sample one.
- (2) Outline each Paragraph/Scene with your story's content on the sentence lines.
- (3) Outline according to your level:
 - a. Basic: 4-6 sentences per paragraph
 - b. Extension: 6-8 sentences per paragraph

| Scene Box Sample | |
|--|---|
| Number Each Scene After All Scenes are Listed | Scene/Paragraph/Actions |
| <u>#3</u> | <u>Grinch robs Whos</u> |
| <u>#2</u> | <u>Grinch plots</u> |
| <u>#1</u> | <u>Grinch's grumpiness/hatred of Whos</u> |
| <u>#4</u> | <u>Grinch surprised by Whos joy</u> |
| <u>#5</u> | <u>Grinch joins Christmas celebration</u> |

Sample Box A-2

| Student Scene Box | |
|--|-------------------------|
| Number Each Scene After All Scenes are Listed | Scene/Paragraph/Actions |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

Box A-2

All--Topic of Paragraph One (Scene One) : _____

Sentence 1 _____

Sentence 2 _____

Sentence 3 _____

Sentence 4 _____

Sentence 5 _____

Sentence 6 _____

Sentence 7 _____

Sentence 8 _____

All--Topic of Paragraph Two (Scene Two) : _____

Sentence 1 _____

Sentence 2 _____

Sentence 3 _____

Sentence 4 _____

Sentence 5 _____

Sentence 6 _____

Sentence 7 _____

Sentence 8 _____

All--Topic of Paragraph Three (Scene Three) : _____

Sentence 1 _____

Sentence 2 _____

Sentence 3 _____

Sentence 4 _____

Sentence 5 _____

Sentence 6 _____

Sentence 7 _____

Sentence 8 _____

Extension--Topic of Paragraph Four (Scene Four) : _____

Sentence 1 _____

Sentence 2 _____

Sentence 3 _____

Sentence 4 _____

Sentence 5 _____

Sentence 6 _____

Sentence 7 _____

Sentence 8 _____

Extension--Topic of Paragraph Five (Scene Five) : _____

Sentence 1 _____

Sentence 2 _____

Sentence 3 _____

Sentence 4 _____

Sentence 5 _____

Sentence 6 _____

Sentence 7 _____

Sentence 8 _____

Lesson B. Using Holiday Words

When you write stories (re-writes or originals), it helps your reader to enjoy your story more if you include excellent words that are related to your topic. When you write holiday stories, it is good to include words that express what is happening in your story.

You want to use words that make your reader feel the danger or excitement or festiveness

<> B. As you write your story, use a few words from the Holiday Word Box provided (Box B).

| Holiday Words Box | | | | | |
|--|------------|---|--------------|---|------------|
| <u>Pilgrims on Mayflower</u> | | <u>Squanto with Pilgrims</u> | | <u>Liberty B. Mouse's First Thanksgiving</u> | |
| Vessel | Voyage | Fertilize | Cultivate | Thankfulness | Joy |
| Gale | Storms | Crops | Harvest | Dinner | Blessing |
| Winter | Frigid | Gratitude | Abundance | Appreciativeness | |
| Settlers | Disease | Feast | Celebration | Gratefulness | Obligation |
| Spring | Gratitude | Festival | Thanksgiving | Recognition | Festival |
| | | | | Remembrance | |
| <u>Charlie Brown's Thanksgiving</u> | | <u>Charlie Brown's Christmas</u> | | <u>Frosty the Snowman</u> | |
| Merrymaking | Jubilation | Skate | Performance | Snowdrift | Crisp |
| Merriment | Revelry | Spectacle | Lines | Frozen | Arctic |
| Party | Meal | Script | Decorate | Chilly | Cool |
| Scrumptious | Fare | Trim | Ornament | Merry | Thaw |
| Supper | Enjoy | Adorn | Sapling | Evaporate | Vanish |
| <u>Birth of Christ</u> | | <u>Grinch Stole Christmas</u> | | <u>Festive Holiday Words</u> | |
| Journey | Poor | Presents | Gifts | Amusing | Boisterous |
| Shabby | Stable | Generosity | Evergreen | Enjoyable | Cheer |
| Manger | Hay | Log | Sleigh | Happiness | Gaiety |
| Infant | Birth | Mountain | Singing | Rejoicing | Liveliness |
| Shepherds | Worship | Inhabitants | Village | Comfort | Pleasure |

Box B

Lesson C. Writing: Write Your Scenes

<> C. Use the notes you created in Lesson A to write your story on the lines provided following these steps.

- (1) Turn to the page that has your first scene on it.
- (2) Re-read your notes.
- (3) Write your paragraph!
- (4) Repeat for each scene you have chosen.

Lesson D. Composition and Editing: Edit and Revise Using the Checklist Challenge

<> D. Use the Checklist Challenge located after this week's lesson to edit your story.

- (1) Complete **each revision for each paragraph, as indicated.**
- (2) Insert revisions with pen or pencil into your rough draft paper.
- (3) **Highlight (or code) each revision on your rough draft paper** as directed by your teacher.
- (4) **Check off (or code) each item's check box on the Checklist Challenge** for this week.

Note: If you are not familiar with the Checklist Challenge, and you feel that you need more help on it than this book provides, you may desire to use a "How to Do the Checklist Challenge" or "Tools and Tricks" products from the Language Arts Lady store or LAL's Teachers Pay Teachers store.

Note: Notice that after several tasks of the Checklist Challenge, the items start to contain words like "If you have already done this, highlight the word or sentence in your paper and highlight the check box(es) as directed by your teacher." When you start to see these words, you may just locate the items in your paper and code them for your teacher rather than adding more of them. Be sure you code the items in your paper and in the task list of the CC Chart.

Lesson E. Composition: Final Copy Story From Given Material

- <> **E-1. Write the final copy of your story** in your notebook, writing on every line. If you prefer, you may type it on the computer.
- <> **E-2. Read your final copy aloud.** Do you like the way it sounds now? Do you notice an improvement in your story since you completed the Checklist Challenge?

Advanced Checklist Challenge Coding

Your teacher may desire for you to code your CC for her so that she can grade it/check it more easily. The following steps will help you learn to code your CC for your teacher. For more help on this, see a "Tools and Tricks" product by Donna Reish.

1. Use **colored pencil** or **colored pens** or **highlighters**.
2. **Print off your double spaced rough draft report or essay** (or use your handwritten rough draft).
3. **With your CC on one side and your paper on your dominant side** (right hand side for right handed students), complete the first CC task.
4. **Place a check mark in the check boxes for the items that say "read" or "look for errors,"** etc., with a pen as you complete them.
5. For items that involve inserting things or omitting something and adding something else, code in one of two ways:
 - a. **Insert the change or addition with a pen or pencil on your paper and use a highlighter to mark it in your paper** in a distinguishing way--highlight the addition with an orange highlighter, circle the change with blue highlighter, double underline the title with a pink highlighter, etc. (choosing whatever colors you desire without repeating the exact same marking). **OR**
 - b. **Insert the change or addition with a colored pencil or colored pen** (choosing whatever colors you desire without repeating the exact same marking). (In this method, you will eventually need to add the change AND circle it or underline it so that your exact same marking is not repeated. For example, you might add verbs with a blue pen but add the title with a blue pen and underline the title with that same blue pen--two different markings, one written in blue pen and one written in blue pen *and* underlined with the blue pen.)
6. **Whatever you do to the insertion on your paper should be done to the CC check boxes for that item.**
 - a. For example, if you highlight your new verbs with an orange highlighter in your paper, you will color in the check box with orange highlighter.
 - b. If you underline your title with purple highlighter in your paper, you should underline the check box with purple highlighter.
 - c. If you write your new verbs in green colored pencil in your paper, make a check mark in the check box with that same green colored pencil.
7. **If your teacher gives you permission to skip a CC task** (or you and she do not think a change will improve a paragraph), **place an NC (no change) in the check box for that paragraph**, so your teacher will not look for it.
8. If you skip a task altogether (without your teacher's permission), place an X in the task box(es), so your teacher will know not to search for the revisions. Obviously, it is always preferred that you do all of your assignments, but it would be better to indicate that you skipped something than to leave the box(es) blank.

The point is that **the coding you put into the paper copy of your composition should be identical to what you do to (or above, beneath, around, etc.) the CC check boxes for that task.** This method will allow your teacher to have your CC chart on one side and your "colorful paper" (with the CC revisions inserted with colors) on the other. She can check at a glance to find your new insertions, title, Thesis Statement, and more.

Note: Some students prefer to do the CC on their paper on the electronic document on the computer with the colored shading tool provided in word processing programs. This is fine, too, but the student should still do the same marking/coding on the CC chart as he did on the electronic document--or write beside the tasks what color each task is. For example, if the student shades the verbs he replaced in pink shading, he should write PINK beside the CC task for the verbs on the chart. Then when he prints this "colorful" version, the teacher can still check his revisions easily.

I have a free book and video for students to learn how to code their CC. I also have a few How I Teach... audio/video broadcasts in which I teach how to teach it.

Box D

Checklist Challenge for Project 2: Retelling a Holiday Story

Choose a Holiday Story to Retell in Your Own Words

Complete the Checklist Challenge by using these guides:

- Determine which check boxes apply to your level.
- Each box will indicate the number of changes that need to be completed (normally one box for each paragraph).

All ALL LEVELS

B BASIC LEVEL only

E EXTENSION only

Optional OPTIONAL -- Your teacher will decide whether you should complete this task or not, based on your grammar/usage level.

All All All
 E E

Read your sentences to your teacher or an older sibling. Together, listen for sentences that sound unclear. **Be sure to read aloud.** You will “hear” errors you would otherwise not find. **Place a check mark in each CC box with a pen or pencil when this step is completed.**

☞ Focus on content errors at this time.

All All All
 E E

Circle each **verb** in each sentence with a light colored highlighter. This will make it easier to change your verbs and to add adverbs (*ly* words) as further directed. **“Code” the CC box(es) in the same way that you coded your located verbs in your paper.**

Be sure to circle all of the following verbs:

- Action verbs--show what the subject does
- Be, a Helper, Link verbs (BHL)--being, helping, and linking verbs (is, are, am, was, were, has, had, do, does, etc.)
- Infinitives--to + verb (to +action verb on to + BHL verb).

Be sure you circle the verbs in your writings, as this step is crucial later in the Checklist Challenge. However, do not get discouraged if you miss one. You do not need to labor over each word, fearful of missing a verb. The more you look for the verbs, the better you will get at finding them--and the better you will get at the verb-related CC items.

All All All
 E E

Change one of the “**boring**” verbs in one of your sentences to a “**strong**” verb. You may select one from the list below or choose one of your own. **“Code” the CC boxes in the same way that you coded your added verbs in your paper.**

| <u>Instead of</u> | <u>Use</u> | <u>Instead of</u> | <u>Use</u> | <u>Instead of</u> | <u>Use</u> |
|-------------------|------------|-------------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------|
| found | discovered | looking | appearing | run | sprint |
| coming | visiting | sit | recline | talk | communicate |
| go | hasten to | asked | interrogated | lay | recline |
| said | announced | write | pen | lie | deceive |
| look | examine | answered | responded | play | frolic |
| walk | saunter | lie | stretch out | talk | proclaim |
| list | enumerate | become | develop | work | toil |
| look | scan | see | determine | add | enhance |
| help | assist | teach | instruct | | |

☞ Be sure you add or delete words in the sentence when inserting your new verb, as needed for clarity.

| | | |
|-----|-----|-----|
| All | All | All |
| E | E | |

Add an **adverb** (*ly* word or other) to one of your sentences. You may select one from the list below or choose one of your own. **“Code” the CC box(es) in the same way that you coded your added adverbs in your paper.**

Examples:

| | | | | | |
|-------------|---------------|---------------|------------|------------|------------|
| only | totally | joyfully | willingly | completely | never |
| practically | significantly | closely | finally | diligently | seldom |
| cheerfully | carefully | laboriously | gladly | slowly | later |
| extremely | gratefully | curiously | sometimes | always | tomorrow |
| fully | thoughtfully | interestingly | apparently | cautiously | repeatedly |

☞ **An adverb is a describer that describes or modifies a verb, adjective, or other adverb. An adverb tells *where, when, how, or to what extent.***

| | | |
|-----|-----|-----|
| All | All | All |
| E | E | |

Add one descriptive **adjective** to one of your sentences. You may select one from the list below or choose one of your own. **“Code” the CC boxes in the same way that you coded the added adjectives in your paper.**

Examples

| | | | | | |
|-------------|------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|
| stringent | gracious | lengthy | trusted | courteous | infallible |
| meeek | meager | valiant | understanding | trustworthy | horrendous |
| courageous | fulfilling | preoccupied | horrific | incapable | presumptuous |
| significant | | | | | |

☞ **An adjective is a describer that describes a noun or a pronoun. It tells *whose, which one, how many, or what kind.* You should add descriptive adjectives--those that tell *what kind*--though often clarifying adjectives are needed to tell the reader which one. (These are normally inserted during writing.)**

| | | |
|-----|-----|-----|
| All | All | All |
| E | E | |

From the **Banned Words List** below, select one word (or form of that word) that you have in one of your sentences, omit it, and substitute a similar, but stronger, word. ***If you do not have any Banned Words, just “code” the CC check box(es) as directed by your teacher (or place a check mark in each one that represents a paragraph with no Banned Words).***

Banned Word List

| | | | | | | |
|------|-------|--------|------|-------|------|--------|
| very | big | really | good | great | fine | slow |
| say | bad | little | want | see | look | such |
| ask | lot | find | walk | said | go | become |
| sit | think | soft | fast | many | find | |

*like (*Like* is only banned when it is a verb. When used as a preposition, *like* often creates a simile--and is not a Banned Word.)

☞ **Advanced students should omit as many Banned Words as possible throughout all paragraphs.**

Create a **title**, and put it at the top of the your paper. *If you have already done this, you should still “code” the CC check box and the title in your paper as directed by your teacher.*

Consider the following ideas:

- Something catchy: "The Grouchy Grinch"
- Something comical: "The Grumpy Green Guy"
- Something bold: "The Great Christmas Theft"
- A song title or line: "It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year"
- Something informative: "What Christmas is Actually About"
- Something about character: "The True Meaning of Christmas"
- Other: "The Happy Whos"

☞ **Tips:**

- **Center your title at the top of the first page of your composition.**
- **Capitalize the first letter of the first and last word.**
- **Capitalize all the words within the title that are important--but not three-letter-or-fewer articles, pronouns, or prepositions.**
- **Do not italicize your title, though you may treat it like a minor work and surround it with quotation marks (regular ones, not single ones), if desired.**

Add a sentence to the beginning of your paper that describes the whole piece. This is called the **Thesis Statement**. *If you have already done this, you should still “code” the CC check box and the Thesis Statement in your paper as directed by your teacher.*

Examples:

- Report about raccoons: Ever wonder how that furry bandit known as a raccoon manages to get into your coolers while you sleep in your tent at night?
- Report about an experience: When I just turned thirteen years old, I found out the challenging way how important siblings truly are.

☞ **Tips**

- **Write a sentence that describes your paper without telling the reader exactly what it is about.**
- **Do not say: *In this paper you will learn about . . .***
- **Be sure this Thesis Statement is truly representative of the content of your *entire* composition.**
- **Your Thesis Statement is your commitment to write about that topic. It should cleverly introduce your composition's subject.**
- **If your paper does not have a separate Opening Paragraph, you will want to add an Opening Thesis Statement-Plus--a sentence or two introducing your topic that contains the Thesis Statement--to the beginning of your paper.**

Add a sentence to the very end of your writing that **restates your Thesis Statement** in some way. This is called the **Thesis Statement “Reloaded”** and should conclude your paper. *If you have already done this, you should still “code” the CC check box and the Thesis Statement “Reloaded” as directed by your teacher.*

☞ You may choose to include Thesis Statement “Reloaded” that restates the title of your paper rather than the Thesis Statement.

All All All
E E

Choose a word (or forms of a word) that you used more than one time within each paragraph. If the word sounds **redundant**, change that word, at least once, to a word with a similar meaning. **If you do not have any redundancy, just “code” the CC check box(es) as directed by your teacher.**

Examples:

- If *joyful* is redundant, substitute *elated* the next time.
- If *drove* is redundant, substitute *careened* the next time.
- If *answered* is redundant, substitute *retorted* the next time.

Note: Advanced level students should omit as much redundancy as possible throughout all paragraphs.

☞ Do not change insignificant words such as *was*, *it*, *and*, etc.

E

Add one **interjection** to the beginning of one of your sentences, or add a new sentence with an interjection in it (or more than one according to your level). **If you have already done this, you should still “code” the CC check box(es) and the interjection in your paper as directed by your teacher.**

Punctuate appropriately

- Follow it with a comma: **Yes**, that “hunter” has an easy meal!
- Follow it with an exclamation mark, then start a new sentence with a capital: **Yes!** That hunter has an easy meal.

☞ **Interjections include words from the following rhyme:**

**My, well, oh!
Wow, yes, no!**

E

Add one **prepositional phrase opener** to one sentence (or more than one, according to your level). If it is long or you hear a pause after it, follow it with a comma. **If you have already done this, you should still “code” the CC check box and the prepositional phrase opener in your paper as directed by your teacher.**

Examples:

- **Within its abdomen**, the spider has special glands that produce silk. (**Optional comma**)
- **From the center of the web**, spokes fan out and anchor the surrounding frame. (**Double prepositional phrase opener**)
- **Onto the surrounding frame**, the center of the bridge is anchored. (**Optional comma**)
- **In the center of a web**, the spider waits patiently for its victim. (**Double prepositional phrase opener**)
- **With even more silk**, the spider further entangles its prey.
- **With leaves tipped with spines that act like prison bars**, the spider catches its prey. (**Prepositional phrase opener & subordinate clause opener**)
- **After digestion**, the leaf gradually reopens and waits for another insect to come too close.

☞ **Follow the PP opener with a comma if it is five words or longer or two prepositional phrases in a row, or when a pause is heard when it is read aloud.**

All All All
E E

Edit your sentences with your teacher. Make sure you have done all of the following items to each sentence:

1. Did you put a capital letter at the beginning of the sentence?
2. Did you put an ending punctuation mark at the end of the sentence?
3. Does the sentence “sound” correct when you read it aloud?
4. Do you have proper nouns in your sentence that need to be capitalized?
5. Do you hear a pause in your sentence when you read it aloud? If you do, have your teacher help you add a comma if she thinks it is needed.

Projects 3 & 4: Christmas Decoration Question and Answer Report

Take Notes by Answering Questions Over Given Material

Overview of Informative Report

You will learn how to write a report in this longer lesson. This is a longer lesson because it is a “research” project.

This means that you are going to research from paragraphs that are given to you.

You will take notes from those paragraphs using a Question and Answer Outline. Then you will write a report from your outline.

Don't worry! I will help you learn how to write a report every step of the way!

I. TOPIC OF REPORT

You will write an informative report about a Christmas decoration.

III. SENTENCES PER PARAGRAPH

- A. **Basic** students will write **4-6 sentences per paragraph**.
- B. **Extension** students will write **5-7 sentences per paragraph**.

II. NUMBER OF PARAGRAPHS IN THE BODY OF YOUR REPORT

- A. **Basic** students will write **2 paragraphs** for the body.
- B. **Extension**⁺ students will write **3 paragraphs** for the body.

IV. OPENING PARAGRAPH

Students will not write an **Opening Paragraph**.

V. CLOSING PARAGRAPH

Students will not write a **Closing Paragraph**

VI. ADDITIONAL SKILLS

- A. **Researching**
- B. **Question and Answer Outline**
- C. **Checklist Challenge Coding**

Note: This Overview Box, which is provided at the beginning of each assignment, is here to give students (and teachers) an at-a-glance look at the entire composition project. Each step of each lesson is assigned and detailed throughout the week(s).

⁺Extensions are older or more advanced writing students who can handle more paragraphs and/or sentences.

Lesson A. Reading and Study Skills: Read About Christmas Decorations

<> A. Read the paragraphs about different Christmas decorations aloud to your teacher or someone else.

Christmas Decoration 1: Tree

The **Christmas tree** is the main Christmas decoration in numerous homes. This tradition started in the 16th century in Germany. Today, these trees can be real or artificial. They are decorated with lights. Also, people may put garlands or candy canes on them. An angel or star is often placed atop the tree.

Christmas Decoration 2: Lights

A tradition related to the Christmas tree is **Christmas lights**. In the 18th century, candles were used to light Christmas trees. Today, people use strings of electric lights. Incandescent light bulbs and LEDs are the two most common types of lights. The most commonly used colors are white, red, green, and blue. These lights are also used on the outside of houses and businesses at Christmas.

Christmas Decoration 3: Wreaths

Wreaths are another common Christmas decoration. People use numerous kinds of wreaths for different occasions. The Advent and Christmas wreaths were both first used in 16th century Germany. Advent wreaths include four or five candles. A new candle is lit each week until Christmas. Christmas wreaths are hung on doors or walls and do not have candles.

Christmas Decoration 4: Stockings

A Christmas decoration crucial for Santa Claus is the **Christmas stocking**. The tradition of gifts in stockings started with an 8th century legend about Saint Nicholas. At first, regular socks were used. Now, people use specially-made holiday stockings. Tradition says that Santa Claus places gifts in nice children's stockings. However, he supposedly puts coal in naughty children's

Christmas Decoration 5: Nativity

One of the oldest Christmas decorations is the **nativity scene**. The first of these displays was created by Saint Francis of Assisi in 1223. These scenes today involve either model figures or real people. Every set includes the baby Jesus in a manger, along with Mary and Joseph. Often, angels, shepherds, animals, and wise men are added. Churches, homes, shopping malls, and public buildings set up these displays.

Lesson B. Prewriting: Writing Notes that Become Sentences

(1) When you are older and you write essays, reports, letters, and stories, you will often take notes from a book or write down some notes that you want to remember to use in your writing.

(2) This is a good skill to have—and you will start learning little bits of it throughout this book.

(3) Your parents do this all the time!

(4) For example, when your dad takes a phone message for your mom, he might write

D. call back after 5 Tues—Sarah at 475-9888 about shower.

(5) Those are notes!

(6) Your dad could have written the following down for your mom:

Donna needs to make a call on Tuesday after five o'clock to Sarah. Sarah's number is 475-9888. She wants to talk about the shower.

(7) But instead your dad took notes!

(8) And your mom knows how to read your dad's notes!

(9) It is the same way when you jot down things you want to write later.

(10) The reason you take notes is because you do not have time to write down everything right now.

(11) But you do want to remember the information.

(12) So instead of writing down full sentences now, you just write down notes.

<> **B.** Write down notes that answer the questions listed below about the paragraphs in Lesson A with your teacher's help following these steps.

(1) **Choose two or three Christmas decorations** that you would like to write about from Lesson A

(**Basic--two** Christmas decorations; **Extension--three** Christmas decorations).

a. **Do not write down complete sentences.**

b. Just **write down enough information to help you write** sentences later, such as one word or a few words.

(2) **Read each question and look back in the paragraph for the answers.**

(3) **Write your answer in note form** on the line provided.

(4) **Continue with all questions** for the Christmas decoration you chose.

(5) Repeat these steps for each Christmas decoration paragraph assigned to you.

Question and Answer Outline Box--Your First Christmas Decoration Choice

Question Outline

(1) What is the name of the decoration? _____

(2) What is the type of decoration (highlight or circle one)

- a. Main Christmas decoration
- b. Decoration related to the Christmas tree
- c. Decoration used for occasions besides Christmas
- d. Crucial decoration for Santa Claus
- e. One of the oldest decorations

(3) Years and/or countries developed _____

(4) What is interesting about this decoration or what is it known for? _____

(5) Another interesting fact about this decoration: _____

(6) Notes from last line of paragraph (if not already used): _____

Question and Answer Outline Box--Your Second Christmas Decoration Choice

Question Outline

(1) What is the name of the decoration? _____

(2) What is the type of decoration (highlight or circle one)

- a. Main Christmas decoration
- b. Decoration related to the Christmas tree
- c. Decoration used for occasions besides Christmas
- d. Crucial decoration for Santa Claus
- e. One of the oldest decorations

(3) Years and/or countries developed _____

(4) What is interesting about this decoration or what is it known for? _____

(5) Another interesting fact about this decoration: _____

(6) Notes from last line of paragraph (if not already used): _____

Extension--Question and Answer Outline Box--Your Third Christmas Decoration Choice

Question Outline

(1) What is the name of the decoration? _____

(2) What is the type of decoration (highlight or circle one)

- a. Main Christmas decoration
- b. Decoration related to the Christmas tree
- c. Decoration used for occasions besides Christmas
- d. Crucial decoration for Santa Claus
- e. One of the oldest decorations

(3) Years and/or countries developed _____

(4) What is interesting about this decoration or what is it known for? _____

(5) Another interesting fact about this decoration: _____

(6) Notes from last line of paragraph (if not already used): _____

Lesson C. Composition: Writing Sentences From Notes

(1) In the last lesson, you learned to write notes from information.

(2) You did this by answering questions.

(3) This is a good way to take notes from a book.

(4) Today you will learn how to make notes into sentences.

<> **C.** Look back in your answers from the last lesson and write two or three paragraphs following these steps:

(1) **Read the first question and your short answer.**

(2) Then **use the question and your answer to create a sentence** and say it aloud.

(3) If you and your teacher agree that it answers the question, makes sense, and is a complete sentence, **write the sentence you created on the lines provided** (or key it on the computer).

(4) Continue this for all of the sentences in your paragraph.

(5) Repeat the steps for your assigned paragraphs.

Paragraph 2: _____

Ruled lines for writing the paragraph.

Lesson D. Composition and Revising: Learning the Checklist Challenge (CC)

- (1) Hopefully you know what a sentence must contain.
- (2) You can learn this with CAVES—the five parts of a sentence.
- (3) This week you will work on being sure that the sentences you and your teacher wrote are really sentences according to CAVES.
- (4) You have probably learned about synonyms.
- (5) Did you remember that synonyms are words that mean the same or almost the same?
- (6) Do you know this trick--
 - Capital at beginning
 - All make sense
 - Verb
 - End mark
 - Subject

<> **D-1.** Read the Checklist Challenge item below with your teacher.



Check every sentence in one paragraph (or more, according to the check boxes) to make sure that each one is a complete sentence--**CAVES**:

- Capital at beginning
- All make sense
- Verb
- End mark
- Subject

<> **D-2.** Flip back over to Lesson C of this week and use the sentences you wrote there in one paragraph to do the following:

- (1) Check the first one for all five parts of the CAVES list that are listed in the CC item above:
 - C** apital letter
 - A** ll makes sense
 - V** erb
 - E** nd mark
 - S** ublict
- (2) Put a check in the first check box when you are finished with the first sentence.
- (3) Do the same thing for the sentences in Paragraph Two.

<> **D-3.** Read the Checklist Challenge item below with your teacher.

All Choose a word (or forms of a word) that you used more than one time within each paragraph. If the word sounds **redundant**, change that word, at least once, to a word with a similar meaning. If you do not have any redundancy, just highlight the check box(es) as directed by your teacher.

Examples:

- If *joyful* is redundant, substitute *elated* the next time.
- If *drove* is redundant, substitute *careened* the next time.
- If *answered* is redundant, substitute *retorted* the next time.

☞ Do not change insignificant words such as *was*, *it*, *and*, etc.

(4) This item is one that uses synonyms—words that mean the same.

(5) When you write about something in a report—like a Christmas decoration—you will use the word *decoration* over and over again.

(6) Sometimes it gets boring to read the same word over and over again.

(7) Because of this, the CC will teach you how to put in more interesting words when needed.

<> **D-4.** Choose one word that you could put in place of the word *decoration* from the Synonym or Similar Word Box in one of the sentences below and copy the new sentence with your new words in place of *decoration*.

| Synonym or Similar Word Box | |
|-----------------------------|----------------|
| ornament | illumination |
| adornment | embellishment |
| flourish | frill |
| garnish | elaboration |
| trimming | beautification |

(8) Now you know how to do two CC items really well!

(9) You are becoming a great writer!

Lesson E. Optional: Composition and Editing: Edit and Revise Using the Full Checklist Challenge

<> **E. Optional:** Use the Checklist Challenge located after this week's lesson to edit your report.

- (1) Complete **each revision for each paragraph, as indicated.**
- (2) Insert revisions with pen or pencil into your rough draft paper.
- (3) **Highlight (or code) each revision on your rough draft paper** as directed by your teacher.
- (4) **Check off (or code) each item's check box on the Checklist Challenge** for this week.

Note: If you are not familiar with the Checklist Challenge, and you feel that you need more help on it than this book provides, you may desire to use a "How to Do the Checklist Challenge" or "Tools and Tricks" products.

Note: Notice that after several tasks of the Checklist Challenge, the items start to contain words like "If you have already done this, highlight the word or sentence in your paper and highlight the check box(es) as directed by your teacher." When you start to see these words, you may just locate the items in your paper and code them for your teacher rather than adding more of them. Be sure you code the items in your paper and in the task list of the CC Chart.

Lesson F. Writing: Write Final Paragraphs

<> F. Complete the following steps to create a clean version of one of your paragraphs:

- (1) Pull one of your paragraphs about a Christmas decoration out of your notebook (or print yours).
- (2) Read your paragraph aloud to your teacher. Listen together for errors, and pen the changes in to your paragraph.
- (3) Write the final copy of your paragraph on the lines provided.
 - (a) Indent a couple of fingers so it is obvious that it is a paragraph.
 - (b) Include one of the synonyms for *decoration* from this week's synonym box somewhere in your paragraph.
 - (c) If you penned in Checklist Challenge changes, be sure to include these in your final copy.

Lined writing area consisting of 25 horizontal lines.

Advanced Checklist Challenge Coding

Your teacher may desire for you to code your CC for her so that she can grade it/check it more easily. The following steps will help you learn to code your CC for your teacher. For more help on this, see a "Tools and Tricks" product by Donna Reish.

1. Use **colored pencil** or **colored pens** or **highlighters**.
2. **Print off your** double spaced **rough draft report or essay** (or use your handwritten rough draft).
3. **With your CC on one side and your paper on your dominant side** (right hand side for right handed students), complete the first CC task.
4. **Place a check mark in the check boxes for the items that say "read" or "look for errors,"** etc., with a pen as you complete them.
5. For items that involve inserting things or omitting something and adding something else, code in one of two ways:
 - a. **Insert the change or addition with a pen or pencil on your paper and use a highlighter to mark it in your paper** in a distinguishing way--highlight the addition with an orange highlighter, circle the change with blue highlighter, double underline the title with a pink highlighter, etc. (choosing whatever colors you desire without repeating the exact same marking). **OR**
 - b. **Insert the change or addition with a colored pencil or colored pen** (choosing whatever colors you desire without repeating the exact same marking). (In this method, you will eventually need to add the change AND circle it or underline it so that your exact same marking is not repeated. For example, you might add verbs with a blue pen but add the title with a blue pen and underline the title with that same blue pen--two different markings, one written in blue pen and one written in blue pen *and* underlined with the blue pen.)
6. **Whatever you do to the insertion on your paper should be done to the CC check boxes for that item.**
 - a. For example, if you highlight your new verbs with an orange highlighter in your paper, you will color in the check box with orange highlighter.
 - b. If you underline your title with purple highlighter in your paper, you should underline the check box with purple highlighter.
 - c. If you write your new verbs in green colored pencil in your paper, make a check mark in the check box with that same green colored pencil.
7. **If your teacher gives you permission to skip a CC task** (or you and she do not think a change will improve a paragraph), **place an NC** (no change) **in the check box for that paragraph**, so your teacher will not look for it.
8. If you skip a task altogether (without your teacher's permission), place an X in the task box(es), so your teacher will know not to search for the revisions. Obviously, it is always preferred that you do all of your assignments, but it would be better to indicate that you skipped something than to leave the box(es) blank.

The point is that **the coding you put into the paper copy of your composition should be identical to what you do to (or above, beneath, around, etc.) the CC check boxes for that task.** This method will allow your teacher to have your CC chart on one side and your "colorful paper" (with the CC revisions inserted with colors) on the other. She can check at a glance to find your new insertions, title, Thesis Statement, and more.

Note: Some students prefer to do the CC on their paper on the electronic document on the computer with the colored shading tool provided in word processing programs. This is fine, too, but the student should still do the same marking/coding on the CC chart as he did on the electronic document--or write beside the tasks what color each task is. For example, if the student shades the verbs he replaced in pink shading, he should write PINK beside the CC task for the verbs on the chart. Then when he prints this "colorful" version, the teacher can still check his revisions easily.

I have a free book and video for students to learn how to code their CC. I also have a few How I Teach... audio/video broadcasts in which I teach how to teach it.

Box E

Checklist Challenge for Projects 3 & 4

Christmas Decoration Question and Answer Report

Complete the Checklist Challenge by using these guides:

- Determine which check boxes apply to your level.
- Each box will indicate the number of changes that need to be completed (normally one box for each paragraph).

All ALL LEVELS

B BASIC LEVEL only

E EXTENSION only

Optional OPTIONAL -- Your teacher will decide whether you should complete this task or not, based on your grammar/usage level.

All All E

Read your sentences to your teacher or an older sibling. Together, listen for sentences that sound unclear. **Be sure to read aloud.** You will “hear” errors you would otherwise not find. **Place a check mark in each CC box with a pen or pencil when this step is completed.**

☞ Focus on content errors at this time.

All All E

Circle each **verb** in each sentence with a light colored highlighter. This will make it easier to change your verbs and to add adverbs (*ly* words) as further directed. **“Code” the CC box(es) in the same way that you coded your located verbs in your paper.**

Be sure to circle all of the following verbs:

- Action verbs--show what the subject does
- Be, a Helper, Link verbs (BHL)--being, helping, and linking verbs (is, are, am, was, were, has, had, do, does, etc.)
- Infinitives--to + verb (to +action verb on to + BHL verb).

Be sure you circle the verbs in your writings, as this step is crucial later in the Checklist Challenge. However, do not get discouraged if you miss one. You do not need to labor over each word, fearful of missing a verb. The more you look for the verbs, the better you will get at finding them--and the better you will get at the verb-related CC items.

All All E

Change one of the “**boring**” verbs in one of your sentences to a “**strong**” verb. You may select one from the list below or choose one of your own. **“Code” the CC boxes in the same way that you coded your added verbs in your paper.**

| <u>Instead of</u> | <u>Use</u> | <u>Instead of</u> | <u>Use</u> | <u>Instead of</u> | <u>Use</u> |
|-------------------|------------|-------------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------|
| found | discovered | looking | appearing | run | sprint |
| coming | visiting | sit | recline | talk | communicate |
| go | hasten to | asked | interrogated | lay | recline |
| said | announced | write | pen | lie | deceive |
| look | examine | answered | responded | play | frolic |
| walk | saunter | lie | stretch out | talk | proclaim |
| list | enumerate | become | develop | work | toil |
| look | scan | see | determine | add | enhance |
| help | assist | teach | instruct | | |

☞ Be sure you add or delete words in the sentence when inserting your new verb, as needed for clarity.

All All E

Add an **adverb** (*ly* word or other) to one of your sentences. You may select one from the list below or choose one of your own. **“Code” the CC box(es) in the same way that you coded your added adverbs in your paper.**

Examples:

| | | | | | |
|-------------|---------------|---------------|------------|------------|------------|
| only | totally | joyfully | willingly | completely | never |
| practically | significantly | closely | finally | diligently | seldom |
| cheerfully | carefully | laboriously | gladly | slowly | later |
| extremely | gratefully | curiously | sometimes | always | tomorrow |
| fully | thoughtfully | interestingly | apparently | cautiously | repeatedly |

☞ **An adverb is a describer that describes or modifies a verb, adjective, or other adverb. An adverb tells *where, when, how, or to what extent.***

All All E

Add one descriptive **adjective** to one of your sentences. You may select one from the list below or choose one of your own. **“Code” the CC boxes in the same way that you coded the added adjectives in your paper.**

Examples

| | | | | | |
|-------------|------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|
| stringent | gracious | lengthy | trusted | courteous | infallible |
| meek | meager | valiant | understanding | trustworthy | horrendous |
| courageous | fulfilling | preoccupied | horrific | incapable | presumptuous |
| significant | | | | | |

☞ **An adjective is a describer that describes a noun or a pronoun. It tells *whose, which one, how many, or what kind.* You should add descriptive adjectives--those that tell *what kind*--though often clarifying adjectives are needed to tell the reader which one. (These are normally inserted during writing.)**

All All E

From the **Banned Words List** below, select one word (or form of that word) that you have in one of your sentences, omit it, and substitute a similar, but stronger, word. ***If you do not have any Banned Words, just “code” the CC check box(es) as directed by your teacher (or place a check mark in each one that represents a paragraph with no Banned Words).***

Banned Word List

| | | | | | | |
|------|-------|--------|------|-------|------|--------|
| very | big | really | good | great | fine | slow |
| say | bad | little | want | see | look | such |
| ask | lot | find | walk | said | go | become |
| sit | think | soft | fast | many | find | |

*like (*Like* is only banned when it is a verb. When used as a preposition, *like* often creates a simile--and is not a Banned Word.)

☞ **Advanced students should omit as many Banned Words as possible throughout all paragraphs.**

Create a **title**, and put it at the top of the your paper. *If you have already done this, you should still “code” the CC check box and the title in your paper as directed by your teacher.*

Consider the following ideas:

- Something catchy: **"Christmas Conifers"**
- Something comical: **"One Decoration or Many?"**
- Something bold: **"The Tree"**
- A song title or line: **"O Christmas Tree"**
- Something informative: **"The Christmas Tree"**
- Something about character: **"Life in the Dead of Winter"**
- Other: **"The Main Christmas Decoration"**

🔑 **Tips:**

- **Center your title at the top of the first page of your composition.**
- **Capitalize the first letter of the first and last word.**
- **Capitalize all the words within the title that are important--but not three-letter-or-fewer articles, pronouns, or prepositions.**
- **Do not italicize your title, though you may treat it like a minor work and surround it with quotation marks (regular ones, not single ones), if desired.**

Add a sentence to the beginning of your paper that describes the whole piece. This is called the **Thesis Statement**. *If you have already done this, you should still “code” the CC check box and the Thesis Statement in your paper as directed by your teacher.*

Examples:

- Report about raccoons: Ever wonder how that furry bandit known as a raccoon manages to get into your coolers while you sleep in your tent at night?
- Report about an experience: When I just turned thirteen years old, I found out the challenging way how important siblings truly are.

🔑 **Tips**

- **Write a sentence that describes your paper without telling the reader exactly what it is about.**
- **Do not say: *In this paper you will learn about . . .***
- **Be sure this Thesis Statement is truly representative of the content of your *entire* composition.**
- **Your Thesis Statement is your commitment to write about that topic. It should cleverly introduce your composition’s subject.**
- **If your paper does not have a separate Opening Paragraph, you will want to add an Opening Thesis Statement-Plus--a sentence or two introducing your topic that contains the Thesis Statement--to the beginning of your paper.**

Add a sentence to the very end of your writing that **restates your Thesis Statement** in some way. This is called the **Thesis Statement “Reloaded”** and should conclude your paper. *If you have already done this, you should still “code” the CC check box and the Thesis Statement “Reloaded” as directed by your teacher.*

🔑 You may choose to include Thesis Statement “Reloaded” that restates the title of your paper rather than the Thesis Statement.

All All E

Choose a word (or forms of a word) that you used more than one time within each paragraph. If the word sounds **redundant**, change that word, at least once, to a word with a similar meaning. **If you do not have any redundancy, just “code” the CC check box(es) as directed by your teacher.**

Examples:

- If *joyful* is redundant, substitute *elated* the next time.
- If *drove* is redundant, substitute *careened* the next time.
- If *answered* is redundant, substitute *retorted* the next time.

Note: Advanced level students should omit as much redundancy as possible throughout all paragraphs.

☞ **Do not change insignificant words such as *was*, *it*, *and*, etc.**

E

Add one **interjection** to the beginning of one of your sentences, or add a new sentence with an interjection in it (or more than one according to your level). **If you have already done this, you should still “code” the CC check box(es) and the interjection in your paper as directed by your teacher.**

Punctuate appropriately

- Follow it with a comma: **Yes**, that “hunter” has an easy meal!
- Follow it with an exclamation mark, then start a new sentence with a capital: **Yes!** That hunter has an easy meal.

☞ **Interjections include words from the following rhyme:**

**My, well, oh!
Wow, yes, no!**

E

Add one **prepositional phrase opener** to one sentence (or more than one, according to your level). If it is long or you hear a pause after it, follow it with a comma. **If you have already done this, you should still “code” the CC check box and the prepositional phrase opener in your paper as directed by your teacher.**

Examples:

- **Within its abdomen**, the spider has special glands that produce silk. (**Optional comma**)
- **From the center of the web**, spokes fan out and anchor the surrounding frame. (**Double prepositional phrase opener**)
- **Onto the surrounding frame**, the center of the bridge is anchored. (**Optional comma**)
- **In the center of a web**, the spider waits patiently for its victim. (**Double prepositional phrase opener**)
- **With even more silk**, the spider further entangles its prey.
- **With leaves tipped with spines that act like prison bars**, the spider catches its prey. (**Prepositional phrase opener & subordinate clause opener**)
- **After digestion**, the leaf gradually reopens and waits for another insect to come too close.

☞ **Follow the PP opener with a comma if it is five words or longer or two prepositional phrases in a row, or when a pause is heard when it is read aloud.**

All All E

Edit your sentences with your teacher. Make sure you have done all of the following items to each sentence:

1. Did you put a capital letter at the beginning of the sentence?
2. Did you put an ending punctuation mark at the end of the sentence?
3. Does the sentence “sound” correct when you read it aloud?
4. Do you have proper nouns in your sentence that need to be capitalized?
5. Do you hear a pause in your sentence when you read it aloud? If you do, have your teacher help you add a comma if she thinks it is needed.

Appendix A: Editing and Revising

It is recommended in this curriculum that students be taught from the beginning of their writing days how to edit and proofread their compositions using proofreaders' marks. It will be laborious at the beginning, but these marks ensure consistency in editing, as well as efficiency in marking. When students devise their own systems for marking errors, they are often long and indistinguishable markings that are different each time. Then when the teacher edits a paper for her student, her markings will be different too. By teaching proofreaders' marks, everyone who edits will mark errors in the same way. (This also encourages peer editing, which is valuable for both those who are editing and those being edited.)

Obviously, young students will not learn all the proofreaders' marks the first year of writing, but when used consistently, everyone will begin using the same markings and these markings will take on immediate meaning for anyone who sees them in writing. Begin with the simplest, most commonly-used markings and continue adding new markings as your student matures as an editor.

The author has used proofreaders' marks with hundreds of students over the years, and even the youngest students enjoy learning proofreaders' marks and catch on rather quickly. Editing often becomes a challenge--a game, of sorts--for analytical students, and even those without superb editing skills enjoy the thrill of finding errors and recommending changes.

Proofreader's Marks

Symbol

Meaning



Capitalize a letter



Make a capital letter into a lowercase letter.



Delete (take out)

He went to town. 

Insert punctuation

When he left,  he went to town.



He went town.

Insert

He  town.

Reverse

He went [#] totown.

Insert space

He went ^{stet...}  town.

Leave as it was before the mark was added.

He town went to. 

Move



Make a new paragraph

Teacher Tips & Free Resources

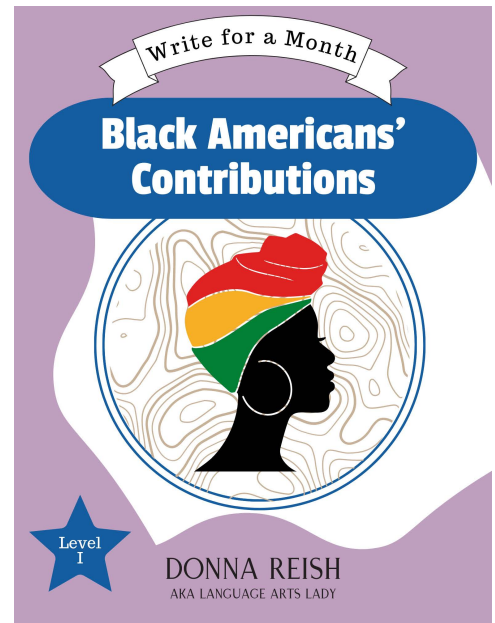
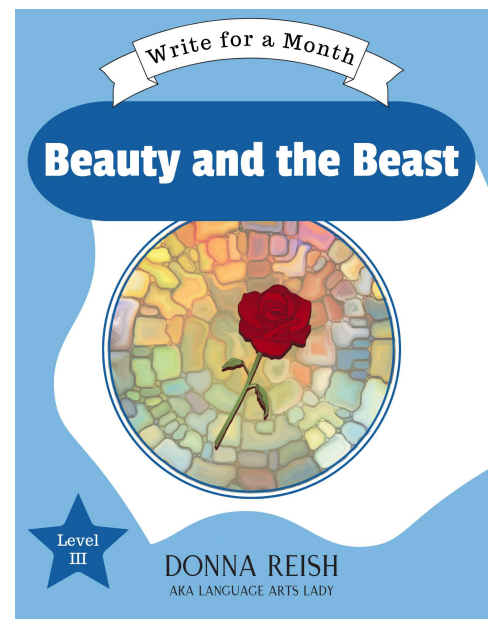
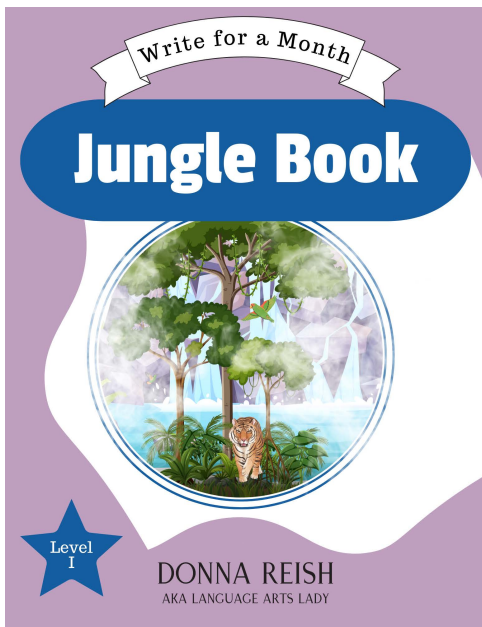


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Write-for-a-Month Series Titles



Write-for-a-Month Series Titles

Write for a Month

Toy Room



Level II

DONNA REISH
AKA LANGUAGE ARTS LADY

Write for a Month

Fairy Tales




Level III

DONNA REISH
AKA LANGUAGE ARTS LADY

Write for a Month

Peter Pan



Level IV

DONNA REISH
AKA LANGUAGE ARTS LADY

Write for a Month

Twice-Told Tales



Level V

DONNA REISH
AKA LANGUAGE ARTS LADY

Click on My TPT Products

Bug on a Log
Preposition practice

Ladybug Dan™ Preposition Sentences

In blanks with prepositions:

from over above away from within beneath below

Student Sheets and Answer Keys

Grades
4th, 5th,
6th, & 7th

Tricky Tricks to Help II Stick
Posters

5 Parts of a
Sentence
TO HELP IT
STICK

Reference Ring

Beauty and the Beast

Preposition Practice

8 Parts of Speech Posters

Grades
4th, 5th,
6th, & 7th

Articles

Articles: Indefinite
an a the

Articles: Definite
the

Using a or an

Using an

Using the

Articles Poster Set

Fairy Tale Writing

Little Red Riding Hood
Level I

Sentence and Paragraph Writing
for Beginning Writers

Christmas Writing
Twice - Told Tale

Grades
6th, 7th
& 8th

The Elves and The
Shoemaker

Grades
3rd, 4th,
5th & 6th

Beginning Think Fast Grammar
Quiz

Grammar Quiz and Answer Key

Christmas Writing

Grades
6th, 7th
& 8th

Three Holiday Traditions
Essay -
Level III

Three Holiday Traditions

Color and Read,
Mowgli!

the
ABC
Sounds Song
Packet

Aa Bb Cc

Baby Shark Plays
by Donna Reish

Twice-Told Tales

Classic Stories
With Spin Off Versions for Read
Aloud or Read Alone Fun!

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Teaching Services



Donna Reish, mother of seven grown children, Nonna to ten lovies, and thirty-two year homeschool veteran, is a prolific curriculum writer, blogger, and teacher from Indiana. She graduated from Ball State University with a degree in Elementary Education and did master's work in Reading Specialist following that. Donna began writing curriculum for a publisher out of Chicago specifically for homeschoolers twenty-five years ago. Following the completion of those thirty books over ten years, she and her husband started a

small press publishing company writing materials for homeschools and Christian schools. With the surge of digital products, Donna now writes curriculum books that are digital downloads (both secular and faith-based products), bringing her total curriculum products to 120 books of 50,000+ pages. Donna tests all of her books with 50-80 in-person students each year locally before they are published--and this is her real love: Seeing the faces of students who achieve language arts goals that they never thought were possible using her creative, incremental approaches and materials. Donna teaches parents, teachers, and teaching parents about grammar, language arts, writing, reading, learning, and more at her teaching website, *Language Arts Lady Blog*, and through her videocasts/podcasts, *How I Teach & 10 Minute Grammar*.

Want daily grammar, writing, & teaching tips? Follow me
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