

# Grade 10 ▶

## Unit One

### PRE-INSTRUCTION CHECKLIST

MECHANICS	ACQUAINTANCE & ANALYSIS
Review as necessary to enable revision skill use	<input type="checkbox"/> Expository: Autobiographical Article
	WRITING ON DEMAND
	<input type="checkbox"/> ongoing, all disciplines

### REVISION SKILLS

Idea Redundancy  
Narrative Thread  
Telling Details

### GENRE FOCUS

Expository: Autobiographical Article

### NOTES

Good writers recognize when and where to include a detail that moves the text toward the writer's goal. For example, knowing every detail about a writer's journey to a foreign country sometimes gets in the way of understanding the author's overall experience. However, the detail and fine rivets in the elephant's tusk while riding on its back allow the reader or listener to imagine the moment. An important part of learning to write is developing a sense of what details to include and where to place them within a text. Such decisions can cause the reader to lean forward in anticipation or set the text aside in boredom.

An autobiographical article can be challenging because it often requires a balance between telling a true story and telling a good story. Writers often take liberty with details while remaining true to the essence of what happened. For example, a writer may compress a dialogue that took place over several days into a conversation that takes place over lunch at a diner, perhaps where the dialogue began. This remains true to the essence of what happened (an important conversation took place) without losing the reader in details ("The next day, I said..."; "Two days later, halfway down the hallway, he said,..."; "The next

day, while feeding the dog, I said,..."). If such changes are needed in a student's article, encourage him/her to add a succinct note at the beginning of the article that explains that while the article is essentially autobiographical, some liberties have been taken in presenting the events (or whatever details were altered/compressed/lengthened). This enables the writer to be up front with the reader and still write an interesting article.

### PATTERN STATEMENT

*Specifics increase clarity*

### ADDITIONAL NOTES

The pattern, *Specifics increase clarity*, can be illustrated by having students work in pairs. One student in each pair will be blindfolded. The student who is not blindfolded gives verbal directions to the blindfolded partner, guiding him to a certain place or having him complete a defined act (e.g., shoot basketball into a net, walk to a defined spot in the room) (EX-ex). When each pair has completed the task, have the students switch roles and assign a new challenge for the blindfolded partner to complete. After each student has experienced both roles, combine the student pairs to create small groups of 4-6 students, and have the groups discuss the following:

- What was required for the blindfolded student to be successful?
- How did the un-blindfolded student have to think about the directions he/she gave? What made the directions more effective?
- How would the directions you gave have been different if your partner had not been blindfolded?

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- What relationship was there between the details or specifics you gave in your directions and the blindfolded student's understanding of what to do? (EX-co)

pattern statement, *Specifics increase clarity* (EX-el). Students are then asked to identify other experiences and illustrations of the pattern. Strong examples can be listed and displayed for the duration of the unit (EX-ap).

Using additional questioning and rephrasing of student responses, the teacher leads the students to recognize the

**REVISION SKILLS**

IDEA REDUNDANCY			
Objective		Checklist	
Student independently identifies scattered occurrences of the same idea throughout a draft and revises the piece so the ideas appear together or so that repeated ideas are deleted.		<input type="checkbox"/> Read each paragraph and section to identify ideas communicated more than once. <input type="checkbox"/> Revise to eliminate the redundancy.	
Rubric			
EXEMPLARY	PROFICIENT	ADEQUATE	NOT YET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Writing features no awkward repetition of ideas. No hints of redundancy exist.</li> <li>▶ Ideas and their supporting details are presented once, presented strongly, and presented clearly. The included ideas leave no reason for the reader to question their inclusion.</li> <li>▶ Additional revisions may improve some elements, but issues of redundancy have been effectively addressed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Writing features no awkward repetitions of ideas. No hints of redundancy exist.</li> <li>▶ While not a true repetition, a few ideas or supporting details fail to contribute to the author's intended message. The reader is left feeling that some ideas are included for reasons other than their lack of power or relevance.</li> <li>▶ Additional revisions could strengthen the writing by including only the strongest ideas or supporting details.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Writing features no obvious, awkward repetitions of ideas.</li> <li>▶ The text includes very slight differences in the presentation of some ideas. These near-repetitions give the reader a sense that the idea has been presented previously even though technically no repetition occurs.</li> <li>▶ Additional revision could strengthen writing by more strongly differentiating ideas and or combining nearly identical ideas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Writing features awkward idea repetition.</li> <li>▶ Significant revision could strengthen writing by eliminating idea repetition. Additional exposition or other approaches should be used to give additional emphasis to critical ideas.</li> </ul>

NARRATIVE THREAD			
Objective		Checklist	
<p>With teacher prompting, student identifies a narrative thread that can be used to carry a reader from the text's opening to its conclusion and revises the piece to include such a thread.</p>		<p><input type="checkbox"/> Read the draft sentence by sentence, focusing on the flow (or lack of it) from one to the next.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Rework the writing to base the transitions on an obvious narrative "thread," such as chronology (i.e., an obvious thread frees the writer from being too concerned with transitions).</p>	
Rubric			
EXEMPLARY	PROFICIENT	ADEQUATE	NOT YET
<p>▶ Writing features a narrative thread that promotes consistent, effective flow.</p> <p>Choice of connecting idea highlights the text's elements of story, making it interesting and possibly dramatic or surprising for the reader.</p> <p>Additional revisions may improve some elements, but issues of effective and interesting flow through narrative thread have been effectively addressed.</p>	<p>▶ Writing features a narrative thread that promotes a consistent, effective flow.</p> <p>While consistent, the narrative thread does not make optimal use of the elements of story. A different connecting idea (e.g., cause and effect rather than straight sequence) could improve storytelling and increase interest for the reader.</p> <p>Additional revisions could strengthen the writing by using a connecting idea that better emphasizes the text's elements of story.</p>	<p>▶ Writing features an attempt at improving flow through use of a narrative thread.</p> <p>The narrative thread gets lost in a few places. The writing strays from the elements of story.</p> <p>Additional revision could strengthen writing by making transitions consistently and clearly relate to the connecting idea .</p>	<p>▶ Writing lacks a narrative thread. At least some of the basic elements of a story are missing from the text.</p> <p>Significant revision could strengthen writing by improving flow through use of a narrative thread.</p>

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TELLING DETAILS			
Objective	Checklist		
<p>Student independently identifies a draft's details (e.g., details of a character, details of a place, details of a process), evaluates the details to recognize those that are and are not "telling," and revises the draft to include or emphasize "telling" details.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Read the draft to identify sentences/paragraphs/sections that explain something.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Ask yourself if it is possible to show the same ideas through action or dialogue. If so, make the revisions that entrust the reader to reach appropriate conclusions.</p>		
Rubric			
EXEMPLARY	PROFICIENT	ADEQUATE	NOT YET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Writing features well-chosen details that communicate something important for the reader to understand or of interest to the reader. Few included details are unimportant and unnecessary.</li> <li>▶ Many of the selected details are not only necessary but imply more than what is stated; the details reveal more than the basic meaning of the words</li> <li>▶ The writer communicates most details through action or dialogue. Very few details are merely declared.</li> <li>▶ Additional revisions may improve some elements, but issues of "telling" details have been effectively addressed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Writing features well-chosen details that communicate something important for the reader to understand or of interest to the reader. Few included details are unimportant and unnecessary.</li> <li>▶ The details are presented in ways that do not interfere with the text's continuity. The reader never has to slow down to understand an overload of details.</li> <li>▶ In a few places, the writer tells the reader details that would be more interesting if shown through action or dialogue</li> <li>▶ Additional revision could strengthen writing by communicating most details through action or dialogue rather than merely stating them for the reader.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Writing features well-chosen details that communicate something important for the reader to understand or of interest to the reader. Few included details are unimportant and unnecessary.</li> <li>▶ While well-chosen, details overwhelm some passages of the text, causing the reader to slow down and process the vast amount of information; the overload of details interfere with the text's continuity</li> <li>AND/OR</li> <li>In many places, the writer tells the reader details that would be more interesting if shown through action or dialogue</li> <li>▶ Additional revision could strengthen writing by communicating most details through action or dialogue rather than declaring them for the reader.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Writing features many unimportant details that distract reader from the author's message or that make complicate the author's message</li> <li>OR</li> <li>The writing includes almost no details, making the reading dull or difficult to imagine.</li> <li>▶ Significant revision could strengthen writing by including "telling" details and eliminating unnecessary details</li> </ul>

**GENRE**

<b>EXPOSITORY: Autobiographical Article</b>			
Definition		Objective	
Retelling of the writer's experience, usually focused on one event or a related series of events, that reads like story.		With teacher prompting and support, student writes an autobiographical narrative article detailing an event or series of events.	
Rubric			
EXEMPLARY	PROFICIENT	ADEQUATE	NOT YET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Writing presents an autobiographical narrative article detailing an event or series of events, that read like a story.</li> <li>▶ Article flows with all details and events connected so that the reader can easily follow the writer's experience from beginning to end.</li> <li>▶ Additional revisions may minimally improve the article.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Writing presents an autobiographical narrative article detailing an event or series of events, that read like a story.</li> <li>▶ Article includes details and/or events that are not obviously connected to the text's focus. This affects the reader's ability to easily follow the writer's experience from beginning to end.</li> <li>▶ Additional development or revision may focus and clarify the writer's experience for the reader.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Writing presents an autobiographical narrative article detailing an event or series of events, that read like a story.</li> <li>▶ Article reads like a list of events, lacking some basic storytelling elements that guide the reader easily through the writer's experience from beginning to end.</li> <li>▶ Additional development or revision may significantly improve the writing by making it more life a story and less like a list of unconnected ideas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Writing is not an autobiographical narrative article. It fails to detail an event or series of events from the writer's experience.</li> <li>▶ Additional development or revision could significantly improve the writing by making it an authentic autobiographical article.</li> </ul>

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Expository:  
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Article**PRACTICE TEXT**

I am five years old and ready for life. I go into the bathroom, because my dad is getting ready for work. He has a smooth face and wears a perfect necktie. His hair is in place. He is going to work.

My dad looks perfect before he leaves for work. His face is clean-shaven, and his necktie is perfectly tied. His hair lays neatly on his head.

Dad and I mow the backyard. We even collect the grass in bags for the compost. Mom's gardens look nice. They have beds like hills. Mom likes to see her daffodils, so the rolling hills of mulch help all to see the yellow flowers. Dad helps me make mom's rolling beds look beautiful and gorgeous.

At that time in my life when I was young, I didn't even know that my Dad would make that much impact or have that much influence on me.

Later in life I get out of bed at 5:30 am in the morning. I shower and get ready. Just like my dad, I tie my tie. I comb my hair into place. I was going to teach my first day, and teaching there would prove to be of impact.

I forget a basic grammar principle, and I call my dad. He responds: "The semicolon separates two independent clauses."

I get my dad on the phone and ask him about a semicolon. He explains that it can be used to separate two independent clauses.

Later, a student is confused about when to use a semicolon. I explain the principle. I feel confident that I can be a good teacher. My dad was a good role model, but now I have to take the responsibility for becoming good at my job.

## A POSSIBLE REVISION

This is not THE correct revision, but one possibility. Accept any justifiable revisions.

Five years old, observant, and wide awake I scamper to the light in the bathroom where I hear my dad. He is shaving, or should I say sculpting, his chiseled face. Taking his tie, he forms the dangling cloth into a classic Windsor knot. The routine continues as he fluffs his jet black hair into place. The transformation complete, he grabs a satchel and heads for the door. His professorial presence graces Houghton College for the first time that day.

Years pass. Dad and I mow prescribed shapes into the backyard. We even place the loose grass in bags for compost. Mom's gardens need to be immaculate, so we create rolling hills to bring full attention to the daffodils. Dad guides my hands along the high and low areas. The beds must look flawless.

Growing up, I was mostly unaware of my Father's influence.

Almost twenty years later, I rise at 5:30 am. Stumbling down the worn steps I approach the bathroom. Shower, shave, and shine. Now my hands form the dangling cloth into a less-than-perfect Windsor knot. I force my brown hair into place, determined my first day of teaching will impact young minds.

Heading into class, I forget a basic grammar principle. I call my dad. He responds with care, patience, guidance: "The semicolon separates two independent clauses."

I confidently step into the classroom and begin. No longer concerned about the daffodils getting noticed, my hands, mind, and words guide students as they shape their ideas into writing that deserves attention.

"When should I use a semicolon?" a student asks.

"When you have two clauses that are related but independent," I explain.

"Oh, that's right," replies the student. "Related but independent."

"Exactly," I respond. "Related but independent." I catch my reflection in one of the classroom's windows. Standing taller, I straighten my tie and move on to the next raised hand.

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