

# Grade 4 ▶

## Unit Three

### PRE-INSTRUCTION CHECKLIST

MECHANICS	ACQUAINTANCE & ANALYSIS
<input type="checkbox"/> comma use: appositives <input type="checkbox"/> grammar: adverb identification	<input type="checkbox"/> Expository: Step-by-Step How-to/How it Happens
	WRITING ON DEMAND
	<input type="checkbox"/> ongoing, all disciplines

#### PATTERN STATEMENT

Find, assess, streamline, review.

#### NOTES

Both the genre and the revision skill should be somewhat familiar to students.

Adverbs accumulate and weaken writing. Unfortunately some of our teaching contributes to this tendency of young writers. In vocabulary instruction, teachers tend to choose adverbs to introduce as new words. In writing assignments, teachers tend to encourage extensive adverb usage. As a result, students believe that adverbs strengthen writing. When a teacher suggests that a student revise a text, adverbs often get added.

We need to train students to do just the opposite—to find adverbs and eliminate most of them. Strong verbs characterize strong writing. Consider the following: “Clyde walked very slowly down the hallway” vs. “Clyde shuffled down the hallway.” The second sentence gains strength from its verb and its efficiency.

Use the coaching sessions to help individual students identify adverbs that can be eliminated and to replace weak verb-adverb combinations with powerful verbs. Help students recognize that strong writing gains and keeps a reader’s attention.

#### ADDITIONAL NOTES

The pattern, *Find, assess, streamline, review*, can be illustrated by placing a pile of glitter or confetti on the “screen” of an overhead projector. Have an assortment of tubes nearby (e.g., a wide tube from a roll of newsprint, a tube from a roll of paper towels, and a drinking straw). Starting with the largest tube, blow gently, aiming the opposite end of the tube toward the glitter or confetti. (The glitter or confetti should move but not a lot.) Discuss what happened with the students. Have a student come place a hand near the end of the tube and blow again. Have the student rate the force the air had (e.g., on a scale of 1 to 10). Repeat with each tube down to the drinking straw. Emphasize the streamlining of the air; as the tubes got smaller, more air was focused, less was wasted, and the impact was greater.

These scenarios could be presented as the EX-ex activity. Discussion (EX-co) could initially focus on comparing the effects of air blown through each tube, recognizing that streamlined air possesses more force and can have greater impact. Remind the students of the process demonstrated with the tubes: air was blown, the tool was assessed, a more streamlined tool was selected, and that tool was evaluated for effectiveness. If needed, guide students to the pattern: *Find, assess, streamline, review* (EX-el). Additional examples of Find, assess, streamline, review from the students’ life experiences provide additional reference points (EX-ap).

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REVISION SKILL

ADVERBS			
Objective		Checklist	
<p>With teacher prompting, student revises sentences containing adverbs by eliminating unnecessary modifiers and keeping only adverbs that clarify the sentence's meaning (e.g., It is not necessary to say "She smiled happily" because <i>smiled</i> indicates happiness, but it is necessary to say "She smiled slyly" because smiling and being sly are not naturally associated).</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identify every adverb in the draft, including prepositional phrases acting as adverbs.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Question the necessity of each one. Could a stronger verb eliminate the need for an adverb?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Look for redundancy created by modifiers (e.g., She <i>smiled</i> happily.) Eliminate redundancy.</li> </ul>	
Rubric			
EXEMPLARY	PROFICIENT	ADEQUATE	NOT YET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Writing features no examples of unnecessary adverbs that could be eliminated through different verb choices or sentence restructuring.</li> <li>▶ Writing includes effective and creative similes to provide direction/explanation rather than weak verb-adverb combinations. All adverbs are essential for clarity.</li> <li>▶ Additional revisions may improve some elements but adverb use is effective and appropriate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Writing features no examples of unnecessary adverbs that could be eliminated through different verb choices or sentence restructuring.</li> <li>▶ Some adverbs used to modify adjectives (e.g., <i>very</i> cold) or other adverbs (e.g., <i>quite</i> slowly) could be eliminated by using more specific descriptors or by using a creative tool, such as a simile.</li> <li>▶ Additional revisions could strengthen the writing through better verb choice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Writing features few examples (two or fewer) of unnecessary adverbs that could be eliminated through different verb choices or sentence restructuring.</li> <li>▶ Additional revision could strengthen writing through better verb choice and reduced adverb use.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Writing features several examples (two or more) of unjustifiable word repetition within a sentence or paragraph.</li> <li>▶ Significant revision could further reduce word repetition.</li> </ul>

## GENRE

EXPOSITORY: Step-by-Step How-to/How it Happens			
Definition		Objective	
Presents clear explanation or directions for a complete process		Student writes cohesive and coherent directions within a connected format for a humorous, possibly imaginative, process, such as how to travel to Mars or how to capture a rainbow.	
Rubric			
EXEMPLARY	PROFICIENT	ADEQUATE	NOT YET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Writing presents cohesive (unified and complete) and coherent (clear and logical) directions/explanation for a process.</li> <li>▶ Directions/Explanation flows.</li> <li>▶ Steps/Ideas are connected and allow for smooth reading.</li> <li>▶ Directions/Explanation features elements of interestingness, such as connections to the reader through similes or comparisons with familiar ideas/objects.</li> <li>▶ Additional revisions may minimally improve the text.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Writing presents cohesive (unified and complete) and coherent (clear and logical) directions/explanation for a process.</li> <li>▶ Directions/Explanation flows.</li> <li>▶ Steps/Ideas are connected and allow for smooth reading.</li> <li>▶ Directions/Explanation lack(s) elements of interestingness, such as connections to the reader through similes or comparisons with familiar ideas/objects.</li> <li>▶ Additional development or revision may increase the writing's interestingness.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Writing presents cohesive (unified and complete) and coherent (clear and logical) directions/explanation for a process.</li> <li>▶ Directions/Explanation reads like a list in sentence form—lacks flow and/or interestingness</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>While cohesive and coherent, the directions/explanation lack(s) connections between steps/ideas. The writing seems choppy, disconnected.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Additional development or revision could significantly improve the essay's flow and/or interestingness.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Writing fails to present a cohesive (unified and complete) and coherent (clear and logical) directions/explanation for a process.</li> <li>▶ Additional development or revision could significantly improve content and/or clarity of the essay.</li> </ul>

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**THREE**REVISION  
SKILL

Adverbs



GENRE

Expository:  
Step-by-Step  
How-to/How it  
Happens

**PRACTICE TEXT**

If you really want to be very ready to be president of the United States when you completely grow up, you must follow these simple steps. First, you must be extremely handsome or absolutely beautiful because your face will usually be in newspapers and often on magazine covers as well as on television. Secondly, you certainly must be just the right age. If you are too young, people will not willingly vote for you because you still have a lot to learn. If you are too old, people will refuse to vote for someone who is always tired, and falls asleep nightly on the couch during the news. Thirdly, you undoubtedly need a lot of money to buy commercials on radio and television. That's the best way to really invade people's minds so they will certainly remember to vote for you at the polls. Fourth, you must have an enormous appetite to eat all the lunches, dinners, and banquets the president must attend. Fifth, your sparkling personality has to continually shine through the smiles, waves, and handshakes. Hugging and kissing babies is also a plus for a truly presidential personality. Finally, you must completely enjoy living in a mansion with lots of people standing around, waiting for your next command. If you have all of these outstandingly presidential qualities, you are well on your way to presidential fame!

**A POSSIBLE REVISION**

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

If you really want to be ready to be president of the United States when you grow up, you must follow these simple steps. First, you must be handsome or beautiful because your face will be in newspapers and on magazine covers as well as on television. Secondly, you must be just the right age. If you are too young, people will not vote for you because you still have a lot to learn. If you are too old, people will refuse to vote for someone who is tired and falls asleep on the couch during the news. Thirdly, you need a lot of money to buy ads on radio and television. That's the best way to invade everyone's thoughts so they will remember to vote for you at the polls. Fourth, you must have a big appetite to eat all the lunches, dinners, and banquets where people pay \$1000.00 apiece. Fifth, your personality has to shine through the continual smiles, waves, and handshakes. Hugging and kissing babies is also a plus for a truly presidential personality. Finally, you must enjoy living in a big house with lots of people standing around, waiting for your next command. If you have all these qualities, you are well on your way to presidential fame!