

# Grade 4 ▶

## Unit Four

### PRE-INSTRUCTION CHECKLIST

MECHANICS	ACQUAINTANCE & ANALYSIS
<input type="checkbox"/> review as necessary	<input type="checkbox"/> Expository: Cause & Effect/Problem & Solution
	WRITING ON DEMAND
	<input type="checkbox"/> ongoing, all disciplines

#### PATTERN STATEMENT

More immediate is often more exciting.

#### NOTES

Both the genre and the revision skill may be new to students.

In general, verbs convey the most power when they are in their simplest, most immediate form. Complex verb forms—e.g., The dog had been jumping for several hours—cause writing to lose steam because the reader must wade through and process the complexity to understand what the author is saying. The most immediate verb form that maintains the author’s intended meaning is generally the best choice.

Obviously, consistency in verb form also matters. A writer who begins telling a story in past tense should not switch to present or more complex past tense forms unless a good reason exists for the switch.

Revising verbs, therefore, requires a twofold focus. Is the verb form the most immediate form that maintains meaning? and Are the verb forms consistent throughout the text?

#### ADDITIONAL NOTES

The pattern, *More immediate is often more exciting*, can be illustrated by asking students to imagine something they experienced in the past, imagine that same experience in the future, and then providing the experience. For example, ask the students to imagine their last birthday and the cake (or special treat) they had. Ask them to rate their excitement (e.g., scale of 1-10) at the memory. Then ask them to imagine having that same treat in a week and to rate their excitement. Then ask them to imagine that they would have that treat tomorrow and to rate their excitement. If possible, suggest they imagine having the treat right now and reveal the treat prepared for them (e.g., cupcakes). Again, have them rate their excitement.

These scenarios could be presented as the EX-ex activity. Discussion (EX-co) could focus on comparing the levels of excitement: how did a memory of the past compare in excitement to a future possibility and to an immediate reality? What made the difference in excitement level? What pattern do we see? If needed, guide students to the pattern: *More immediate is often more exciting* (EX-el). Additional examples of *More immediate is often more exciting* from the students’ life experiences provide additional reference points (EX-ap).

**REVISION SKILL**

VERB TENSE			
Objective		Checklist	
<p>With teacher prompting and support, student identifies and revises verbs within a sentence, paragraph, or passage to the most immediate (i.e., least complicated) tense appropriate (e.g., <i>The dog had been outside for hours</i> revised to <i>The dog was outside for hours</i>).</p>		<p><input type="checkbox"/> Read the draft sentence by sentence and identify any verbs that are more elaborate than simple past or present tense.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Reword the sentence with a more immediate verb tense. If the meaning remains constant, keep the more immediate verb tense.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Check each paragraph/section for consistency in verb tense.</p>	
Rubric			
EXEMPLARY	PROFICIENT	ADEQUATE	NOT YET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Writing features no examples of verb forms that are more complex than needed for the author's meaning</li> </ul> <p>AND</p> <p>no examples of changes (i.e., inconsistency) in verb tense.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Writing features appropriate and lively verbs that increase the text's interestingness and relevance.</li> <li>▶ Additional revisions may improve some elements but verb tense and choice are effective and appropriate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Writing features no examples of verb forms that are more complex than needed for the author's meaning</li> </ul> <p>AND</p> <p>no examples of changes (i.e., inconsistency) in verb tense.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Additional revisions could strengthen the writing through better verb choice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Writing features few examples (2 or fewer) of verb forms that are more complex than needed for the author's meaning</li> </ul> <p>OR</p> <p>of changes (i.e., inconsistency) in verb tense.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Additional revision could strengthen writing by using more immediate verb forms or making verb forms consistent.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Writing features several examples (2 or more) of verb forms that are more complex than needed for the author's meaning,</li> </ul> <p>AND/OR</p> <p>features several changes (i.e., inconsistency) in verb tense.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Significant revision could strengthen writing by using more immediate verb forms and/or making verb forms consistent.</li> </ul>

## GENRE

EXPOSITORY: Cause & Effect/Problem & Solution			
Definition		Objective	
Explains how something occurs (e.g., how photosynthesis happens) or explains a problem and a solution to it.		With teacher prompting and support, student writes a cohesive (unified and complete) and coherent (clear and logical) paragraph explaining a complex cause and effect (i.e., one cause with at least two effects or at least two causes with one effect) relationship.	
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>▶ Explanation flows.</li> <li>▶ Steps/Ideas are connected and allow for smooth reading.</li> <li>▶ Explanation simplifies its subject without offending its reader. The writing is clear and at an appropriate level of complexity.</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>▶ Explanation flows.</li> <li>▶ Steps/Ideas are connected and allow for smooth reading.</li> <li>▶ While cohesive and coherent, writing fails to simplify its subject. The reader has to work to comprehend the explanation,</li> <li>OR</li> <li>the explanation is simplified to the point of offending the reader.</li> <li>▶ Additional development or revision may increase the ease with which the explanation is understood.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Writing presents a cohesive (unified and complete) and coherent (clear and logical) paragraph explaining a complex cause and effect (i.e., one cause with at least two effects or at least two causes with one effect) relationship.</li> <li>▶ Explanation reads like a list in sentence form—lacks flow and/or interestingness</li> <li>OR</li> <li>While cohesive and coherent, the explanation lack(s) connections between steps/ideas. The writing seems choppy, disconnected.</li> <li>▶ Additional development or revision could significantly improve the explanation'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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gradeunit  
**Four**REVISION  
SKILL

Verb Tense



GENRE

Expository:  
Cause & Effect/  
Problem &  
Solution

**PRACTICE TEXT**

In nineteenth century America men, women, and children had been traveling on a difficult journey from south to north. They had followed a route called the Underground Railroad—not a real railroad, but a series of safe houses where brave people had been helping runaway slaves escape to a new life. If we could ask a frightened slave on the railroad, “Why are you risking your life to go north?” there would be many reasons mentioned for the daring escape. The main reason in the slaves’ minds would certainly be the desperate longing for freedom burning in their souls. Secondly, many slaves had been running away to keep their families together. Masters often had sold individual family members and they were never seen again by those who loved them. Thirdly, mistreated slaves were running from pain and suffering at the hands of cruel overseers or slave owners. Whatever the reasons for going, the result was a challenging, dangerous trek for all the courageous travelers who attempted the journey.

**A POSSIBLE REVISION**

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

In nineteenth century America men, women, and children traveled on a difficult journey from south to north. They followed a route called the Underground Railroad—not a real railroad, but a series of safe houses where brave people helped the runaway slaves escape to a new life. If we could ask a frightened slave on the railroad, “Why are you risking your life to go north?” there would be more than one reason mentioned for the daring escape. The first driving force in the slaves’ minds would certainly be the desperate longing for freedom burning in their souls. Secondly, many slaves ran away to keep their families together. Masters often sold individual family members and they were never seen again by those who loved them. Thirdly, mistreated slaves ran from pain and suffering at the hands of cruel overseers or slave owners. Whatever the reasons for going, the outcome was a challenging, dangerous trek for all the courageous travelers who attempted the journey.