

Grade 4 ▶

Unit Five

PRE-INSTRUCTION CHECKLIST

MECHANICS	ACQUAINTANCE & ANALYSIS
<input type="checkbox"/> capitalization: a person's title	<input type="checkbox"/> Communicative: Friendly Letter
	WRITING ON DEMAND
	<input type="checkbox"/> ongoing, all disciplines

PATTERN STATEMENT

Important details upfront make understanding easier.

NOTES

Both the genre and the revision skill may be instructionally new to students, but the genre should be somewhat familiar from experience.

Writing gains strength and clarity when the subject and verbs appear near the beginning of a sentence. Editors often talk about a writer “burying” ideas. Placing subjects and verbs late in a sentence is one way ideas can get buried.

With its emphasis on efficiency, this unit invites students to consider previous revision skills, such as eliminating modifiers by choosing strong nouns and verbs.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

The pattern, *Important details upfront make understanding easier*, can be illustrated a few different ways. Students can be shown photographs of items that do not reveal the items’ use or value. For example, students could be shown a photograph of a small section of a person’s head (e.g., a strand of hair) and asked if they know the

individual. The photos could continue to reveal more and more details until the person in the photographs is obvious.

Alternately or additionally, students could be given information in pieces with the most important information being held until the end. For example, students could be told, in sections, about a wonderful trip to a desirable destination and all the experiences they will have while there. The build-up leads to the important information: a high price and a very limited time (e.g., \$10,000, offer good for 45 seconds).

Either or both of these scenarios could be presented as the EX-ex activity. Discussion (EX-co) could focus on comparing the information presented late to the information presented early. How/Why would having the information presented later have been helpful if presented earlier? What pattern do we see? If needed, guide students to the pattern: *Important details upfront make understanding easier* (EX-el). Additional examples of Important details upfront make understanding easier from the students’ life experiences (e.g. getting lost because the location details were not available, trying to choose an ice cream flavor without having tasted the options) provide additional reference points (EX-ap).

REVISION SKILL

SUBJECT and VERB PLACEMENT			
Objective		Checklist	
<p>With teacher prompting and support, student identifies sentences with subjects and/or verbs placed so far into a sentence that they lose power and revises the sentence by moving the subject and verb closer to the sentence's beginning (e.g., Because the man who robbed the house ran across the yard, the dog barked revised to The dog barked when the man who robbed the house ran across the yard).</p>		<p><input type="checkbox"/> Read the draft sentence by sentence.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Identify sentences where subjects and verbs do not appear in the first few words.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Where possible, shift phrases to move the subject and verb closer to the sentence opening.</p>	
Rubric			
EXEMPLARY	PROFICIENT	ADEQUATE	NOT YET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Writing features no examples of sentences with subjects and/or verbs placed so far into a sentence that they lose power. ▶ Writing is characterized by efficiency due to subject and verb word choices (i.e., need for modifiers is limited by good noun and verb choices). ▶ Additional revisions may improve some elements but subject/verb placement and noun/verb choices are effective and appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Writing features no examples of sentences with subjects and/or verbs placed so far into a sentence that they lose power. ▶ Some sentences could be made more efficient by stronger nouns and verbs that eliminate the need for modifiers (e.g., adjectives, adverbs). ▶ Additional revisions could strengthen the writing through stronger nouns and verbs and fewer modifiers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Writing features few examples (two or fewer) of sentences with subjects and/or verbs placed so far into a sentence that they lose power. ▶ Additional revision could strengthen writing by moving subjects and verbs closer to sentence beginnings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Writing features several examples (two or more) of sentences with subjects and/or verbs placed so far into a sentence that they lose power. ▶ Significant revision could strengthen writing by using more immediate verb forms and/or making verb forms consistent.

GENRE

COMMUNICATIVE: Friendly Letter			
Definition		Objective	
<p>Letter written to a friend or family member—an individual the writer knows well—characterized by a casual tone. Common components include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Date in upper right hand corner of first page. Optional: writer's address included above date. 2. Salutation: Casual, addressing the receiver in the name commonly used by the writer, e.g., Dear Mom, Dear Joe, Dear Aunt Frieda 3. Body: Casual communication, often recounting recent experiences, may comprise as many paragraphs as desired 4. Valediction: Closing line before signature, e.g., <i>Yours truly, Love, Sincerely</i> 5. Signature 		<p>With teacher prompting and support, student writes a friendly letter to a family member or friend (e.g., to a cousin who lives in another town), recounting and detailing recent experiences and making appropriate inquires regarding the reader's state of being and recent experiences.</p>	
Rubric			
EXEMPLARY	PROFICIENT	ADEQUATE	NOT YET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Writing presents a friendly letter to a family member or friend, recounting and detailing recent experiences and making appropriate inquires regarding the reader's state of being and recent experiences. ▶ Letter flows with sufficient detail to maintain the reader's interest. ▶ Letter uses elements of storytelling in recounting experiences; the letter is interesting to read even by individuals other than the recipient. ▶ Additional revisions may minimally improve the letter. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Writing presents a friendly letter to a family member or friend, recounting and detailing recent experiences and making appropriate inquires regarding the reader's state of being and recent experiences. ▶ Letter flows with sufficient detail to maintain the reader's interest. ▶ Additional development or revision may increase the letter's interest to participants other than the intended receiver 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Writing presents a friendly letter to a family member or friend, recounting and detailing recent experiences and making appropriate inquires regarding the reader's state of being and recent experiences. ▶ Letter reads like a list in sentence form OR lacks sufficient content/detail to maintain the reader's interest. ▶ Additional development or revision could significantly improve the letter's flow and/or interestingness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Writing fails to present a friendly letter to a family member or friend, recounting and detailing recent experiences and making appropriate inquires regarding the reader's state of being and recent experiences. ▶ Additional development or revision could significantly improve content and/or clarity of the essay.

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gradeunit
FIVEREVISION
SKILLSubject and
Verb Placement

GENRE

Communicative:
Friendly Letter

PRACTICE TEXT

Dear Brady,

Surprise, Cuz! Because there aren't many electronic devices at this camp—no TVs, video games or iPods or cell phones or even computers-- I am writing a letter you will find in your mailbox, not your email inbox or a text message. Since I'm having a blast here at camp in the mountains, that's okay.

With fun, challenging activities like rope climbing, rappelling, kayaking, swimming, and fishing, we are busy every minute. I caught a beautiful bass. It must have weighed in at seven pounds! At least, I think so. Since tomorrow we get to go whitewater rafting, that's when my favorite activity will be. Because I have never been in water more interesting than the Lazy River at Adventureland, I am so excited.

Although I miss beating you at arm wrestling, the boys here are pretty cool. You'd like our counselor. He's from Auburn University and plays as a backup quarterback. All ten of us are in awe of this guy. Because of his being 6'4" and weighing 220 pounds, he doesn't seem to have much trouble keeping us in line! Knowing I am living in it, you have probably guessed our cabin has not yet won the neatness award! If you can get past the huge bowls of oatmeal at breakfast, even the food isn't too bad. We've had the usual camp stuff like hamburgers and hot dogs, but following a huge bonfire Friday night they are promising a big barbeque bash. I guess the campers will be expected to share their best moments. It might be hard to choose this year, there are so many.

How has your week at the ranch been? Because you were the cowgirl wannabe, Brady, were the cowboys surprised to see you? Have you learned any rope tricks? Since you were probably busy mucking out stalls, did you even get to ride a bronco or brand anything? I can't wait to see you Saturday and compare stories!

Your best cousin,

Logan

A POSSIBLE REVISION

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

Dear Brady,

Surprise, Cuz! I am writing a letter you will find in your mailbox, not your email inbox or a text message because there aren't many electronic devices at this camp—no TVs, video games or iPods or cell phones or even computers! It's okay since I'm having a blast here at camp in the mountains.

We are busy every minute with fun, challenging activities like rope climbing, rappelling, kayaking, swimming, and fishing. I caught a beautiful bass. It must have weighed in at seven pounds! (At least, I think so.) My favorite activity will be tomorrow when we get to go whitewater rafting. I am so excited because I have never been in water as rough as the Lazy River at Adventureland,.

The boys here are pretty cool, although I miss beating you at arm wrestling. You'd like our counselor. He's from Auburn University and plays as a backup quarterback. All ten of us are in awe of this guy. He doesn't seem to have much trouble keeping us in line because he is 6'4" and weighs 220 pounds! Knowing I am living in it, you can probably guess that our cabin has not yet won the neatness award!

Even the food isn't too bad if you can get past the huge bowls of oatmeal at breakfast. We've had the usual camp stuff like hamburgers and hot dogs, but they are promising a big barbecue bash following a huge bonfire Friday night. I think the campers will be asked to share their favorite moments. There are so many that it might be hard to choose this year.

How has your week at the ranch been? Have you learned any rope tricks? Did you get to ride a bronco or brand anything, or were you too busy mucking out stalls? I can't wait to see you Saturday and compare stories!

Your best cousin,

Logan

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grade

unit
FIVE

REVISION
SKILL

Subject and
Verb Placement



GENRE

Communicative:
Friendly Letter

4
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