

Grade 4 ▶

Unit Eight

PRE-INSTRUCTION CHECKLIST

MECHANICS	ACQUAINTANCE & ANALYSIS
<input type="checkbox"/> comma use: parenthetical expressions <input type="checkbox"/> grammar: pronoun and antecedent identification	<input type="checkbox"/> Expository—Persuasive
	WRITING ON DEMAND
	<input type="checkbox"/> ongoing, all disciplines

PATTERN STATEMENT

Connect or remove.

NOTES

This unit addresses two weaknesses common to young writers.

An antecedent is the noun referred to by a pronoun. Problems arise when antecedents are not clear. “Few things slow a reader down more than unclear pronoun references—signs of carelessness that quickly distract the reader from your meaning,” claims Bruce Ross-Larson (1996). “The reader can usually divine what you mean, but only at a cost that need not be incurred” (p. 13).

The most problematic pronouns tend to be *it, this, that, these, those, and they*.

Starting sentences with *There* or *It* is a bad habit: “It has been reported that..., There are some experts who..., It should be stated that..., There are some studies that suggest...” These sentence openings need to be banished: not *There are some experts who...*, but *Some experts...* And not *It has been claimed by medical researchers...* but *Medical researchers claim...* Eliminate the unnecessary opening terms.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

The pattern, *Connect or remove*, can be illustrated (EX-ex) by giving the students a pattern for something and materials to make it (e.g., a pattern and self-connecting blocks). The students, possibly working in small groups, should have more materials than they need. When students have completed the items constructed, the experience can be labeled and sorted through discussion (EX-co): What did we just do? How did we know what to do with the materials? Were any left over? Why? How can we tell the difference between those we used and those that are left over? The questioning and discussion can continue with the ideas of connecting materials and unnecessary materials emphasized by the teacher. The teacher then guides students to recognize that when it came to constructing the item, materials were either connected clearly to the results or unnecessary and eliminated (i.e., not used). The teacher can then guide students to recognize the pattern: *Connect or remove* (EX-el). Students can then identify other examples of the pattern (e.g., extension cords, toy blocks, light bulbs) (EX-ap). Throughout, the teacher emphasizes there either need to be clear connections between items used and unnecessary items get removed from the results.

Connections to the revision skills should be made in the COMprehension strand. Antecedents must be clearly connected to their pronouns. Unnecessary uses of *there* and *it* should be eliminated.

REVISION SKILLS

ANTECEDENTS			
Objective		Checklist	
<p>With teacher prompting and support, student identifies pronouns and their antecedents and revises any sentences in which the pronoun and antecedent are unclear (e.g., <i>Joan and John gave the dogs their sandwiches</i> revised to <i>Joan and John gave their sandwiches to the dogs</i>).</p>		<p><input type="checkbox"/> Read the draft to identify each pronoun. Then read the surrounding text to identify each antecedent.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> If the pronoun-antecedent is confusing or vague, revise by using a noun in place of the antecedent or by restructuring the text so that the pronoun-antecedent relationship is clear.</p>	
Rubric			
EXEMPLARY	PROFICIENT	ADEQUATE	NOT YET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Writing features no pronouns with unclear antecedents, <p>AND</p> <p>Writing uses pronouns effectively, helping the reader move smoothly through the text. No awkward nouns appear where a pronoun would work better and vice versa.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Additional revisions may improve some elements but pronoun use is exemplary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Writing features no pronouns with unclear antecedents. ▶ Additional revisions may strengthen other elements but all pronouns clearly reference their antecedents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Writing features few (two or fewer) pronouns with unclear antecedents. ▶ Additional revision could strengthen writing by reducing the number of unclear antecedents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Writing features several pronouns with unclear antecedents. ▶ Significant revision could strengthen writing by significantly reducing the number of unclear antecedents.

SENTENCE STARTERS: <i>There and It</i>			
Objective		Checklist	
<p>With teacher prompting and support, student identifies sentences beginning with <i>There are, There is, There was</i> or <i>It is, It was, It will be</i> and revises to eliminate the unnecessary adverb or pronoun and linking verb (e.g., <i>There are some people who believe...</i> revised to <i>Some people believe...</i>, <i>It was Juan who said...</i> revised to <i>Juan said...</i>).</p>		<input type="checkbox"/> Find each usage of <i>there</i> and <i>it</i> . If one opens a sentence and includes unnecessary phrasing, revise the sentence to eliminate <i>there</i> or <i>it</i> .	
Rubric			
EXEMPLARY	PROFICIENT	ADEQUATE	NOT YET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Writing features no sentences that uses <i>there</i> or <i>it</i> with unnecessary phrasing. <p>AND</p> <p>Writing is efficient. Few unnecessary phrases appear anywhere in the text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Additional revisions may improve some elements but unnecessary phrases have been effectively addressed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Writing features no sentences that uses <i>there</i> or <i>it</i> with unnecessary phrasing. ▶ Additional revisions could strengthen the writing by further reducing redundancy (repetition of ideas) within paragraphs or sections. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Writing features only one sentence that uses <i>there</i> or <i>it</i> with unnecessary phrasing. ▶ Additional revision could strengthen writing by reducing redundancy (repetition of ideas) within paragraphs or sections. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Writing features two or more sentences that use <i>there</i> or <i>it</i> with unnecessary phrasing. ▶ Significant revision could strengthen writing by eliminating uses of <i>there</i> and/or <i>it</i> with unnecessary phrasing.

GENRE

EXPOSITORY: Persuasive			
Definition		Objective	
<p>Presents an argument for the reader to accept the writer's premise or to take specific action. Examines an issue for the purpose of convincing the reader. While objective, persuasive writing is overtly biased; however, factual accuracy is still an important element.</p>		<p>With teacher prompting and support, student writes a cohesive and coherent paragraph attempting to persuade a reader to accept an opinion or position (e.g., Singer A is better than Singer B), detailing at least three reasonable rationale statements.</p>	
Rubric			
EXEMPLARY	PROFICIENT	ADEQUATE	NOT YET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Writing presents a cohesive (unified and complete) and coherent (clear and logical) informative report, at least five paragraphs long, based on content gathered from three or more resources. ▶ Report flows with all ideas connected so that the reader can easily and smoothly follow the writer's ideas from beginning to end. ▶ Additional revisions may minimally improve the report. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Writing presents a cohesive (unified and complete) and coherent (clear and logical) paragraph attempting to persuade a reader to accept an opinion or position (e.g., Singer A is better than Singer B), detailing at least three reasonable rationale statements. ▶ Report flows with ideas connected so that the reader can easily follow the writer's points from beginning to end, but the writing lacks either an introductory or concluding sentence. The writer jumps right into presenting a conclusion and its rationale or fails to close with something other than a rationale statement. ▶ Additional development or revision may improve the smoothness of the writing from beginning to end. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Writing presents a cohesive (unified and complete) and coherent (clear and logical) paragraph attempting to persuade a reader to accept an opinion or position (e.g., Singer A is better than Singer B), detailing at least three reasonable rationale statements. ▶ Report reads like a list of statements. Writing lacks flow and connection between ideas. ▶ Additional development or revision could significantly improve the report's flow. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Writing fails to present a cohesive (unified and complete) and coherent (clear and logical) paragraph attempting to persuade a reader to accept an opinion or position (e.g., Singer A is better than Singer B), <p>AND/OR</p> <p>Writing lacks at least three reasonable rationale statements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Additional development or revision could significantly improve the report's content.

**PRACTICE TEXT**

There are many people who believe American young people need to make some lifestyle changes. The Surgeon General states that over 30 percent of teenagers in the United States are overweight. They are at high risk for many health problems such as heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, some forms of cancer, and depression. They are life-threatening, chronic conditions. There are some who find multiple causes for this problem, but their unhealthy eating habits and the lack of physical activity are the top two. There are some simple strategies they need to follow to make changes that can improve the length and quality of their lives. First, there is eating right. It will be good to plan ahead for healthy meals and snacks. That includes a healthy breakfast to jump-start your day. It is best to eat slowly when you feel hungry. Eat at least five servings of fruit and vegetables. They should drink lots of water, not soda. Don't snack in front of the television. Second, there is a need to get moving. Do at least 60 minutes of physical activity most days. Reduce time you spend with television, video games, texting, etc. Limit television to less than two hours a day. These are simple changes that, over time, can mean the difference between life and death for them.

A POSSIBLE REVISION

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

American young people need to make some lifestyle changes! The Surgeon General states that over 30 percent of teenagers in the United States are overweight. That number is at high risk for many health problems such as heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, some forms of cancer, and depression. There are multiple causes for this problem, but unhealthy eating habits and lack of physical activity are the top two. Young people need to follow some simple strategies to make changes that can improve the length and quality of their lives. First, eat right. Plan ahead for healthy meals and snacks. That includes a healthy breakfast to jump-start the day. Eat slowly when hungry. Eat at least five servings of fruit and vegetables. Drink lots of water, not soda. Don't snack in front of the television. Second, get moving. Do at least 60 minutes of physical activity most days. Reduce time spent with television, video games, texting, etc. Limit television to less than two hours a day.

These are simple changes that, over time, can mean the difference between life and death for America's youth.

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