

Grade 9 ▶

Unit Three

PRE-INSTRUCTION CHECKLIST

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

PATTERN STATEMENT

What is “just right” (or sufficient) often depends on balance.

NOTES

Related questions often provide direction for additional information that may strengthen a writer’s message. Revising for “telling details” often engages a writer in editing descriptive terms and phrases. In both of these revisions, the writer must balance seemingly competing interests. The writing needs to be thorough enough to communicate all important information, but free of unnecessary descriptors to avoid losing energy. This balance is essential for formal letter writing. The length should be as short as possible while presenting all critical information.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

The pattern, *What is “just right” (or sufficient) often depends on balance*, can be illustrated by reminding students of the folk tale “Goldilocks and the Three Bears,” by reading a version of the folk tale to the students (e.g., *Goldilocks Returns* by Lisa Campbell Ernst), or by having students rewrite the story with different elements than the original (e.g., different setting, time period, animals). Even though the folk tale is commonly shared with much younger children, students will likely find revisiting it in some form engaging and entertaining (EX-ex).

Then engage the students in discussing the following (EX-co):

- What was the same about each item Goldilocks chose?
- How did her chosen items differ from the two she rejected?
- Summarize her thinking and form a statement of the “Goldilocks principle.”

Continue to use questioning, building on students’ responses to the third discussion item, to guide students to recognize the pattern: *What is “just right” (or sufficient) often depends on balance* (EX-el). Then ask the students to identify other examples (or non-examples) of the pattern from their own experience—e.g., frosting on a cake (not too thick or thin), weather (not sweltering or freezing), box for some item (not too big or too small) (EX-ap).

In moving to the COmprehension strand, emphasize the pattern as related to writing, especially to formal letters. The writer needs to share sufficient information to convey the request or message, but keep the letter succinct. Related questions can help identify additional, helpful information to include, but the writer must choose carefully to maintain the balance of being informative and succinct. Likewise, enough “telling” details need to be included to communicate clearly but not so many that they weaken the message. Applying the “Goldilocks principle” to formal letter writing requires judgements on what is and is not essential to communicate.

REVISION SKILLS

RELATED QUESTIONS			
Objective		Checklist	
<p>With teacher prompting and support, student identifies additional related questions/issues not addressed in a draft and uses sound reasoning to decide whether or not to add such information.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Read the draft and list the significant topics it addresses. Identify the details related to those topics. <input type="checkbox"/> Consider the topics and their associated details. Is there a question that, if answered, would address to those topics and associated details? Phrase any questions that come to mind. <input type="checkbox"/> Consider each topic more broadly. Is there a questions that, if answered, would address the topic and clarify or strengthen your intended message? Phrase any questions that come to mind. <input type="checkbox"/> Examine your potential questions. Which one(s) if addressed, if any, would fit into and improve the draft? Find the answers and try adding these to the draft. If the addition improves the draft, keep it. 	
Rubric			
EXEMPLARY	PROFICIENT	ADEQUATE	NOT YET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Writing suggests good attention to related questions. The writing's major ideas are well developed and no obvious questions are left unanswered. ▶ Writing maintains its focus. Related questions and their answers have been seamlessly incorporated into the writing. ▶ Additional revision may improve other aspects of the writing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Writing suggests good attention to related questions. The writing's major ideas are well developed and no obvious questions are left unanswered. ▶ In a few places, the writing loses focus, as if some related questions and their answers were included without regard for the central message or the ideas expressed in surrounding text. ▶ Additional revision could strengthen writing by editing related but distracting or misplaced material. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Writing suggests some attention given to related questions. The writer's ideas are adequately expressed; however, additional attention to related questions and the material their answers could provide would strengthen the writing by further developing the key ideas. ▶ Additional revision could strengthen the writing by further developing the major topics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Writing suggests little attention given to related questions. The writing lacks development of significant ideas, the very element careful consideration of related questions could improve. ▶ Additional revision could significantly improve the writing by better developing its important ideas.

unit
THREEREVISION
SKILLSRelated
Questions

Telling Details



GENRE

Communicative:
Formal Letter

TELLING DETAILS			
Objective		Checklist	
<p>With teacher prompting, student 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>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Read the draft to identify details (adjectives, adverbs, metaphors, similes). <input type="checkbox"/> For each detail, ask, "Does this provide the reader with a new image—one that deepens understanding?" If not, consider deleting the detail. <input type="checkbox"/> For each target, identify the three most significant details. If you have included more than three, consider scaling back the description. If you have fewer than three, be sure you've provided adequate description for the reader to be able to envision what you're describing. 	
Rubric			
EXEMPLARY	PROFICIENT	ADEQUATE	NOT YET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Writing suggests revision of details. It includes "telling details" and limits unnecessary details (adjectives, adverbs, metaphors, similes). ▶ Writing flows with no awkward sentence structures. Including "telling" and interesting details does not affect the text's flow. ▶ Additional revision may improve other aspects of the writing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Writing suggests revision of details. It includes "telling details" and limits unnecessary details (adjectives, adverbs, metaphors, similes). ▶ While the details selected are either "telling" or add interest for the reader, some sentences featuring details are awkwardly structured and affect the text's flow. ▶ Additional revision could strengthen the writing by maintaining a smooth flow through sentences featuring details. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Writing suggests revision of details. It includes "telling details" and limits unnecessary details (adjectives, adverbs, metaphors, similes); however, the writing has been overly edited and lacks details that would make it more interesting for the reader. ▶ Additional revision could improve the writing by carefully selecting details to include that would be of interest to the reader. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Writing either lacks editing of details (adjectives, adverbs, metaphors, similes) or fails to include details critical for the reader's understanding. It suggests the writer gave little attention to revising the text's details. ▶ Additional revision could significantly limit unnecessary or add necessary details.

GENRE

COMMUNICATIVE: Formal Letter			
Definition		Objective	
<p>Letter written to an individual or organization, characterized by clarity, conciseness, formality, and a block format, and generally written to make an inquiry, a request, or a complaint. Common components and format include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Return address in upper right hand corner 2. Date on right, aligned with return address, beneath recipient address 3. Address of recipient on left side, beneath the return address 4. Salutation, should be formal: Dear Dr. _____, Dear Ms. _____, 5. Dear Mr. _____, etc. 6. Body: an introduction that explains who the writer is and the reason for writing; a middle section that provides details that support the requested action; a closing that requests action from the recipient 7. Valediction: line before signature: Faithfully yours or Sincerely 8. Signature and printed name 9. Enclosures: number and description—e.g., Enclosures (2): resume and business card 		<p>Student writes a formal letter, such as letter to the editor of a periodical, presenting a point of view or opinion and reasoned, supporting argument(s), and an understanding of an alternate point of view.</p>	
Rubric			
EXEMPLARY	PROFICIENT	ADEQUATE	NOT YET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Writing presents a complete formal letter that presents a point of view or opinion with reasoned, supporting argument(s), and an understanding of an alternate point of view. ▶ Letter clearly conveys the writer's intended message. Ideas are connected and the writing is mostly strong. The receiver will know what the writer is expressing and/or requesting. ▶ The letter is appropriately forceful. The receiver will likely reconsider his point of view and/or reply to the writer. ▶ Additional revisions may minimally improve the text. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Writing presents a complete formal letter that presents a point of view or opinion with reasoned, supporting argument(s), and an understanding of an alternate point of view. ▶ Letter clearly conveys the writer's intended message. Ideas are connected and the writing is mostly strong. The receiver will know what the writer is expressing and/or requesting. ▶ Additional development or revision may add appropriate force to the writing, making a response from the receiver more likely. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Writing presents a complete formal letter that presents a point of view or opinion with reasoned, supporting argument(s), and an understanding of an alternate point of view. ▶ While complete, the letter occasionally loses the author's intended message. Ideas may not be clearly connected or aspects of the writing, such as passive verbs, weaken or confuse the message. ▶ Additional development or revision could improve the writing's clarity and/or flow. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Writing fails to present a complete (i.e., having all necessary elements) formal letter that presents a point of view or opinion with reasoned, supporting argument(s), and an understanding of an alternate point of view. ▶ Additional development or revision could significantly improve the retelling's unity and/or coherence.

PRACTICE TEXT

860 N. 24th Street
Neuten, PA 39423
October 15, 2011

Mayor Robert Henshaw
357 N Broad St.
Neuten, PA 39423

Dear Mayor Henshaw:

The city's strategic plans unveiled and presented at the last council meeting reflect the months and months of thought, reflection, and decision-making you and the city council have devoted to our hometown's future. Our city benefits from such visionary and forward-thinking leadership.

Since the city is growing and expanding rapidly and quickly, the proposed use of the land between the middle and high schools seems wise, like a wheel connected to a wagon. Many families with children are moving into the city, and the addition of several baseball and soccer fields will enable our youth leagues to continue providing healthy and good-for-you activity for young people. I also appreciate the plan to separate the athletic fields into different and separate parks by leaving some forested areas intact.

A recent study found that soccer causes significant cardiovascular, metabolic and musculoskeletal benefits. It also positively affects players' social interactions and helps reduce worry for those who play the sport.

I request you and the city council consider connecting these different parks with a series of trails. Such trails would provide a means of walking from one park to another and enable residents to get from the middle school to the high school without driving.

The proposed and suggested trails would also provide a safe, non-dangerous environment for our school's cross country teams to practice. Currently student athletes do much of their running on the city's side streets. While the streets provide a place and spot to run long and extended distances, the threat of traffic is a constant, ongoing concern. Also, the streets do not provide the type of environment our teams encounter during actual competitions. Trails through the forested areas between the parks would provide a safer and more authentic practice site.

Additionally, trails through the wooded areas would provide opportunities for residents, young and old, little and large, to experience nature. First-hand encounters with plant and wildlife could augment what students learn in the classroom. Adults could enjoy nature's beauty and prettiness and find quiet, silent spots to relax.

Adult softball leagues would also benefit from trails connecting the parks. These leagues often run "round robin" tournaments with several teams playing multiple games on the same day. Connecting the various fields would enable such a tournament to be hosted by these new facilities. That could bring income and money to businesses located near the parks.

I realize that some residents have suggested changing the plan so that the athletic fields are all included in one large, gigantic park. This would clear all forested areas and enable a few more fields and additional parking to be included in the plan. It may also make maintenance

9
grade

unit
THREE

REVISION
SKILLS

Related
Questions



Telling Details



GENRE

Communicative:
Formal Letter

of the fields easier and less strenuous as equipment would not need to be moved from park to park.

While these are good considerations, I believe the trail approach provides greater benefits. As you probably know, our city recently ranked near the top of cities in our state for adult obesity and overweight-ness. This is a major health concern that influences residents' quality of life. By including trails in the strategic plan we can create a place for walking, running, and other fitness activities.

The trails would benefit nearly each and every segment of our city's population. Please give this request serious, in-depth consideration.

Sincerely,

Michael C. Arkwright

A POSSIBLE REVISION

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

860 N. 24th Street
Neuten, PA 39423
October 15, 2011

Mayor Robert Henshaw
357 N Broad St.
Neuten, PA 39423

Dear Mayor Henshaw:

The city's strategic plans unveiled at the last council meeting reflect the months of thought and decision-making you and the city council have devoted to our hometown's future. Our city benefits from such visionary leadership.

Since the city is growing rapidly, the proposed use of the land between the middle and high schools seems wise. Many families with children are moving into the city, and the addition of several baseball and soccer fields will enable our youth leagues to continue providing healthy activity for young people. I also appreciate the plan to separate the athletic fields into different parks by leaving some forested areas intact.

I request you and the city council consider connecting these different parks with a series of trails. Such trails would provide a means of walking from one park to another and enable residents to get from the middle school to the high school without driving.

unit
THREEREVISION
SKILLSRelated
Questions

Telling Details



GENRE

Communicative:
Formal Letter

The proposed trails would also provide a safe environment for our school's cross country teams to practice. Currently student athletes do much of their running on the city's side streets. While the streets provide a place to run long distances, the threat of traffic is a constant concern. Also, the streets do not provide the type of environment our teams encounter during actual competitions. Trails through the forested areas between the parks would provide a safer and more authentic practice site.

Additionally, trails through the wooded areas would provide opportunities for residents, young and old, to experience nature. First-hand encounters with plant and wildlife could augment what students learn in the classroom. Adults could enjoy nature's beauty and find quiet spots to relax.

Adult softball leagues would also benefit from trails connecting the parks. These leagues often run "round robin" tournaments with several teams playing multiple games on the same day. Connecting the various fields would enable such a tournament to be hosted by these new facilities. That could bring income to businesses located near the parks.

I realize that some residents have suggested changing the plan so that the athletic fields are all included in one large park. This would clear all forested areas and enable a few more fields and additional parking to be included in the plan. It may also make maintenance of the fields easier as equipment would not need to be moved from park to park.

While these are good considerations, I believe the trail approach provides greater benefits. As you probably know, our city recently ranked near the top of cities in our state for adult obesity. This is a major health concern that influences residents' quality of life. By including trails in the strategic plan we can create a place for walking, running, and other fitness activities.

The trails would benefit nearly every segment of our city's population. Please give this request serious consideration.

Sincerely,

Michael C. Arkwright

9
grade