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GRADE



# Focused Practice for Writing Mastery

- Writing a story
- Writing to inform
  - Writing an argument
    - Using the writing process
      - Writer's Handbook

#### NAME.

#### Introduction

## **Lesson I** The Writing Process

Writers follow a plan when they write. The steps they take make up the writing process. Following these five steps leads to better writing.

#### Step 1: Prewrite

Think of prewriting as the "getting your act together" stage. Writers might choose a topic, or they might list everything they know about a topic already chosen. They might conduct research and take notes. Then, writers may organize their ideas by making a chart or diagram.

#### Step 2: Draft

Writers put their ideas on paper. This first draft should contain sentences and paragraphs. Good writers keep their prewriting ideas nearby. There will be mistakes in this draft, but there is time to fix them later.

#### Step 3: Revise

Writers change or fix their first draft. They move ideas around, put them in a different order, or add information. They make sure they used clear words and that the sentences sound good together. This is also the time to take out ideas that are not on topic.

#### Step 4: Proofread

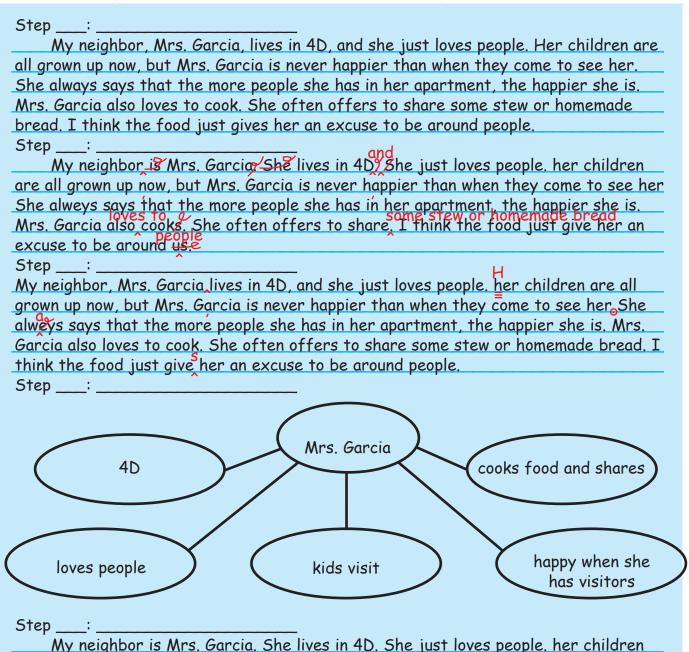
Writers usually write or type a neat, new copy. Then, they look again to make sure everything is correct. They look especially for errors in capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.

#### Step 5: Publish

Finally, writers make a final copy that has no mistakes. They are now ready to share their writing. That might mean turning in an assignment, sending a letter, or posting your work on a Web site for others to read.

## **Lesson I** The Writing Process

What does the writing process look like? Abby used the writing process to write a paragraph about her next-door neighbor. Her writing steps below are out of order. Label each step with a number and the name of the step.



are all grown up now, but Mrs. Garcia is never happier than when they come to see her She alweys says that the more people she has in her apartment, the happier she is. Mrs. Garcia also cooks. She often offers to share. I think the food just give her an

excuse to be around us.

#### **Lesson 2** Audience

Imagine that you are in an Introduction to Technology class. The teacher stands up and says this:

PC CPU input/output transits via bus systems to peripheral devices.

The teacher has forgotten to think about her audience. Her statement doesn't belong in an introductory course. It would be better suited for experienced computer technicians.



Here is the statement she should have made to her eighth-grade students in an introductory class:

In a personal computer, information and instructions go between the central processing unit and components, such as a hard disk, by means of internal cables.

Speakers and writers both must think about their audience. If they do not, they will not communicate effectively.

Writers need to consider these questions every time they write:

What will my audience enjoy?

What are they interested in?

What will make them want to keep on reading?

What do they already know?

What will they understand?

Here is part of an article from the foods section of a newspaper. Anyone who picks up the paper might read this article.

Shirring is an old-fashioned technique for preparing eggs. Shirred eggs are perfect with a little salt and pepper for those who like things simple. Others prefer a few breadcrumbs, grated cheese, or chopped herbs sprinkled over their shirred eggs.

What did the writer fail to provide for the audience?

## **Lesson 2** Audience

Imagine the local school principals want everyone in the whole school district to participate in a School Spirit Day. Everyone is supposed to wear school colors, and some prizes will be given for outfits that show the most spirit. Write an explanation for first-grade teachers to read out loud so their students can understand what School Spirit Day is all about. Remember to ask yourself the five questions on page 7.
Now, write another version of the explanation that will go to the high school students. What will they want or need to know that is different from what the first-graders needed to know?

### **Lesson 3** Write a Paragraph

Here is what you know about paragraphs.

- A paragraph is a group of sentences about the same topic.
- The first line of a paragraph is indented.
- The main idea of a paragraph is what the paragraph is all about.
- A paragraph's main idea is usually stated in a topic sentence.
- The topic sentence may fall anywhere in the paragraph.
- Each sentence in a paragraph supports the topic.
- The sentences appeal to the audience.

Review your list. Think about the order in which you want to present your details in a paragraph. If you wish, number them. Then, use the lines on this page to draft a paragraph about your idea for a great movie.

What is your idea of a great movie? List some details that would be part of your perfect

movie.

#### **Lesson 3** Write a Paragraph

Read through your paragraph. Ask yourself these questions. If necessary, make changes to your paragraph.

#### Questions to Ask About a Paragraph

Is the first line indented?

Does the topic sentence express the main idea?

Does each sentence support the topic sentence?

Does each sentence express a complete thought?

Are the ideas in the paragraph appropriate for the audience?

Now that you have thought about the content, or meaning, of your paragraph, proofread it for errors. Look through several times, looking for a certain kind of error each time. Use this checklist.

spelling	end marks
capitalization	punctuation
Now, rewrite your paragrap errors in the final copy.	h. Use your neatest handwriting and make sure there are no

#### **Lesson 4** Staying on Topic

In a picture, the details normally fit the main idea. In a paragraph, all of the details should also fit the main idea. That's another way of saying that each sentence must stay on topic.

The following paragraph contains a sentence that is not on topic. Read the paragraph, and underline the topic sentence. Then, draw a line through the sentence that does not support the topic sentence.

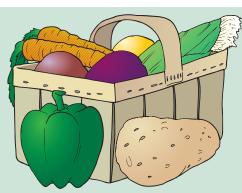
I think city life is great. I know all my neighbors in the apartment building, and they know me. I walk only a block to get to school. All the things we need, such as a grocery store, the bank, the library, and the train station, are within easy walking distance. We usually ride the 9:15 express when we go across town to visit my grandma. I can't imagine living anywhere else.

List two details from the paragraph above that support the main idea.
Now, write your own paragraph about city, suburban, or country life. Remember to stay on topic. Stick to one main idea, and make sure that all of your detail sentences support that main idea. When you are finished, underline your topic sentence.

## Chapter I

## **Lesson I** Sensory Details

The new restaurant in the century-old Capital City Hotel is open for business, and it is well worth the trip. While you wait for a table, the colorful fish in the wall-sized aquarium will entertain you. Once you step into the dining room, you will feel as though you have stepped back in time. The gleaming, golden oak tables and chairs, and the red-flocked wallpaper will pull you back to the stately hotel's earliest days. Once seated, guard against smacking your lips at the perfectly prepared meats, interestingly seasoned potatoes, and crisp-tender fresh vegetables.



In a description, a writer's goal is to help readers see, hear, smell, feel, or taste what is being described. Writers use **sensory details**, or details that appeal to readers' senses, in their descriptions. For example, in the paragraph above, "red-flocked wallpaper" helps you see and feel the walls. What other sensory details does the paragraph contain? List them here according to whether the detail helps you see, hear, smell, feel, or taste what is being described. Some details might fit into more than one category.

see:			
Hear:			
Smell:	_		
Feel:			
Taste:			
The room you are in right now kind of walls does it have? Glesensory details about the roon	probably does reaming white? Do	not have red ull tan? Clutt	-flocked wallpaper. Wha
See:			
Hear:			
Smell:			
Feel:			

## **Lesson I** Sensory Details

Think of a restaurant in which you have eaten. Was it a "fine dining experience," or were you in a fast-food chain? Imagine yourself in the restaurant. Can you describe the experience so that a reader feels as if he or she is right there?

First, write the sights, sounds, smells, textures, and flavors you experienced. Sights:\_\_\_\_\_\_ Sounds: \_\_\_\_\_ Smells: \_\_\_\_\_\_ Textures: \_\_\_\_\_ Flavors: Now, put your words to work. Describe what it was like to be in this restaurant. Appeal to all five of your readers' senses.

## **Lesson 2** Describing Objects

When a writer describes an object, readers should be able to see, hear, smell, feel, and perhaps taste it. Think of a familiar food item. Perhaps it's a piece of fruit or an ice cream bar. Consider it as if you are seeing it for the first time. Record its details here. Feel free to consult a thesaurus to find fresh words to describe the item.

Color:
Shape:
Size:
Texture:
Smell:
Other details:
Now, write a paragraph in which you describe the item. Describe it to someone who is not familiar with this food. Remember to appeal to as many of your readers' senses as you can.