

## EDITING

The purpose of editing students' papers is to teach them to correct grammatical errors in their writing. There are many ways to edit a paper. Some teachers like to edit students' papers and have them rewrite the edited version to be error free. Some teachers like to edit papers and meet with the students individually to teach one or two grammatical skills, based on the recurring errors in the student's work. When meeting with students, teachers may ask them to keep a record of the skills being taught and then hold them accountable for those skills in their next piece of writing. Another method of editing is peer editing. Students edit the work of their peers. For the purposes of our curriculum, we will be focusing solely on peer editing, as it teaches students to look for errors in writing and correct them. Because students are working with other students' writing prior to turning it in for a grade, it teaches ownership and patience. Through guidance and mini-workshops by the teacher, it can be a stronger technical tool in the writing process.

1. Have students exchange their second draft with a partner.
2. Ask each student to use a pen or pencil that is not black.
3. Have them write the following at the top of the paper, "Edited by (insert their name)".
4. Next, turn on the overhead projector and move through each of the following skills one at a time. Show only the skill you are asking them to look for in the piece of writing. Remind them that the purpose of correct grammar is to ensure that the reader will understand what you have written when you cannot be there to clear up any misunderstandings. Therefore, writing must be as clear as possible. Tell students to write directly on the second draft. During this portion of the class, there should be no talking. If they need to ask the author a question, then there is something unclear in the paper and the editor should point that out directly on the paper in writing. Have students check to make sure each of the following editing skills is correct.

### Editing Skills

- a) Name, date, and draft number in the top right hand corner
- b) Title on the first line
- c) Capitalize the first letter of the first, last, and important words in the title
- d) Do not underline your own title
- e) Do not put quotation marks around your own title
- f) Skip one line between the title and the beginning of your piece
- g) Do not skip lines between paragraphs
- h) Indent at the beginning of each new paragraph
- i) Spelling – circle words you think may be incorrectly spelled. It is the author's job to look them up and correct them.
- j) Capitalize the first word in each sentence
- k) Periods or question marks must be placed at the end of sentences
- l) Homonyms:
  - To: preposition
  - Too: also
  - Two: the number

- There: a place or subject
- Their: belongs to someone
- They're: they are
- m) ~~Should of~~ – should have
- n) ~~Could of~~ – could have
- o) ~~Would of~~ – would have
- p) Do not write in all capitals
- q) Check to make sure there are no run-on sentences

(Remember this is the beginning of the year. Begin with these basic editing skills and add to them as the year progresses. Don't worry if their papers are not perfect; they will get better as students practice and you teach them more editing skills. Holding them accountable through peer editing will definitely increase their skills. If you want to challenge students who may have much higher skill levels, add more to your list of editing skills.)

5. When students have finished editing, have them hand the second draft back to the author.
6. Have students rewrite or type their final draft to include the corrections. When they are done, they should staple all three drafts together with the best draft on top, as they want the teacher to see their best work first.