WRITE SOURCE

Inside Writing NARRATIVES

... a self-contained student writing unit, complete with instruction, guidelines, activities, and writing space

WRITE SOURCE®

GREAT SOURCE EDUCATION GROUP
a division of Houghton Mifflin Company
Wilmington, Massachusetts
Consulting Educators

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Checklist: **Narrative Writing**

This checklist will help you keep track of the assignments in this unit. Check the box next to each unit assignment as you complete it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th></th>
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</table>

- Narrative Warm-Up: Jogging Your Memory (page 4)
- Reacting to the Reading (page 7)

**PREWRITING: Planning Your Writing**

- Selecting a Subject (pages 10-11)
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- Reading Narratives (page 44)
- Reflecting on Your Writing (page 45)
- Preparing for a Writing Test (page 46)
"Most of the basic material a writer works with is acquired before the age of fifteen."

—Willa Cather

Narratives

What happens when you hang out with your friends, family members, classmates, or teammates? On most days, probably nothing unusual takes place, but sometimes you may have a problem to solve or a challenge to face together. For example, you and your friends may run for student council, or your basketball team may have to face the reigning champions. In those situations, you and your friends or teammates have to work together.

In this unit, you will be asked to write about an event you have experienced with a group, such as family, friends, classmates, teammates, or even total strangers. When you write about a group, you have two tasks. First, you must identify yourself and the group members as distinct characters. Second, you need to choose key events and details to make the experience interesting to your readers. This will result in an effective personal narrative that offers enjoyment and a learning opportunity to your readers.
Narrative Warm-Up: Jogging Your Memory

Look at the two lists below. Choose at least one group and one event, or think of your own examples. Then think about an experience you had with that group of people at that event. Recall your impressions, feelings, actions, and anything you associate with the experience.

Groups
- classmates
- family members
- teammates
- friends
- strangers

Events
- holiday
- school day
- subway or bus ride
- concert
- field trip

Start to form a story, or narrative, by completing the sentence starters below. You may use a sentence starter more than once.

- I was with ................................................. at (or on) a ..............................................................
  doing ........................................................................................................

- The first thing that happened was ..............................................................
  ...................................................................................................................
  ...................................................................................................................

- I felt (or thought) ......................................................................................
  ...................................................................................................................
  ...................................................................................................................

- Things really got interesting when ............................................................
  ...................................................................................................................
  ...................................................................................................................

- What I remember most about the experience is ........................................
  ...................................................................................................................
  ...................................................................................................................

Next Step: Meet with a classmate and take turns telling each story. Be prepared to share your story with the class.
Reading a Sample Narrative

In this narrative, former governor, senator, and naval officer Bob Kerrey recalls his participation in an underwater demolition training session in 1967. The training is intense, and the graduates are sent on some of the most dangerous assignments of the Vietnam War. During training, Kerrey learns both to lead and to serve in a group.

Excerpt from *When I Was a Young Man*

Each seven-man column [group] became a boat crew that was expected to carry or paddle a small inflatable rubber boat (IBS) everywhere we went for the next eighteen weeks. Our training would begin on this same street at 6 a.m. Monday. [Chief Petty Officer] Olivera told us to be there in formation with our boots spit-shined, our uniforms starched, our *insignia* sewn on our collars or shirtsleeves, and our names *stenciled* in black over our left shirt pockets. When our senior officer protested that this would be impossible because the laundry services were closed, Olivera took a step closer, spit on the ground, and said, “I expect you bananas to be standing tall at 0600 with everything done as I have asked. That means every one of you. If even one man is not ready, I’ll march all of you into the bay. Dismissed.” . . .

All the boundaries disappeared as we scrambled to do what Olivera ordered us to do. We organized ourselves into teams. We found self-employed contractors who were willing to do the weekend of washing, ironing, printing, and sewing that we needed. Most important, we made certain that no man failed. Had each of us gone off on our own we most certainly would not have gotten the job done. Working together we managed with time to spare.

On Monday . . . we arrived early and stood tall in the dark waiting for Olivera to appear. We felt proud and were ready to begin. Olivera appeared on schedule. He gave our senior officer

**VOCABULARY**

*insignia* Badges or other marks that show rank or membership in a group

*stenciled* Marked by applying ink to spaces on a stencil (heavy paper with letters or other shapes cut out)
another half-hearted salute and inspected our ranks with a quick glance left and right. Then he told our senior officer to bring the men to attention, ordered them to execute an about-face and a forward march. Following these orders would put us into the cold, black water. Our senior officer objected, “But, Olivera, we did everything you told us to do.” Olivera answered, “Mister, it’s time for a little suffering. To succeed in this program you must be willing to die before you can go to heaven.” We began our day soaking wet. . . .

Hell Week was a series of competitions between boat crews. . . . According to a rumor that our instructors would neither confirm nor deny, the winner of the week’s competition would be excused from the week’s final event: an all-night ten-mile ocean race in our boats down the coast to Tijuana and back.

My boat crew was ahead on points at the end of the week. Even if we lost the next-to-last event before we set off on the ten-mile IBS trip, our lead was big enough to win. That event was a quarter-mile foot race from the calisthenics field to our boats. . . .

At the sound of the whistle the run began. When we neared our boat, we saw an oval shadow lying on the ground. While the other crews were heading for the water, we stood and stared at a sad and deflated boat. . . . Olivera asked me what I intended to do. I said I would find the pump, repair the damage, and join the others who were now long gone. He spat on the ground once and said, “No, I think you bananas should secure for the night. You won that right.”

We whooped and laughed for joy like children who have received the most special gift we could ever have imagined. I saluted and said “Thank you, Olivera.” We showered and went to our barracks to sleep and dream the dreams of champions.

**VOCABULARY**

*calisthenics* Physical exercises designed to increase strength

*secure* In this context, a naval term meaning “stop work”

Excerpt from WHEN I WAS A YOUNG MAN, copyright © 2002 by J. Robert Kerrey, reprinted by permission of Harcourt, Inc.
Reacting to the Reading

Answer the following questions about the sample narrative on pages 5-6.

• What group is the subject of the narrative?

• What experience does the writer recall in the narrative?

• What do the teams do during the experience recalled in the narrative? How do team members feel?

• Which characters stand out most in the narrative? What makes them memorable?

• What lesson does the writer learn from the experience of being in a group?
Evaluating: **Understanding the Traits of an Effective Narrative**

This rubric (checklist) will help you understand the traits found in effective narratives. Use this rubric to help you develop your narrative and as a final checklist for your completed writing. You can also use this rubric to evaluate your classmates’ narratives. (Your teacher will give you a point scale to use for final evaluations.)

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**Assessment Rubric**

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**STIMULATING IDEAS**

*The narrative...*

- focuses on a specific event or experience.
- contains specific details and dialogue.
- makes readers want to know what happens next.

**LOGICAL ORGANIZATION**

- begins by identifying the experience and giving background information.
- presents actions and ideas chronologically (according to time).

**ENGAGING VOICE**

- shows that the writer is truly interested in the subject.
- is written in an appropriate tone.

**ORIGINAL WORD CHOICE**

- contains specific verbs.

**EFFECTIVE SENTENCE STYLE**

- flows smoothly from one idea to the next.

**CORRECT, ACCURATE COPY**

- follows the basic rules of writing.
- uses the form suggested by the teacher.

*Comments:*
Prewriting
Planning
Your Writing
The subject of your narrative should be an event in your life that you have experienced with a group. You may already have found a possible subject from your work on page 4. However, if you still need help selecting a subject, complete the activity below.

Use the space below to freewrite about at least two experiences in your life that involved a group of people. Consider friends, family members, classmates or teammates, or people you had never met before. Then answer the questions on the following page.

Experience 1: .........................................................................................................................
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Experience 2: .........................................................................................................................
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Before you decide which experience you would like to use as a subject, answer these questions.

- What did I learn from each experience?

Experience 1: ........................................................................................................................................
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Experience 2: ........................................................................................................................................
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- What is most interesting about each experience? Why?

Experience 1: ........................................................................................................................................
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Experience 2: ........................................................................................................................................
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Next Step: Meet with a classmate to discuss your possible topics and your answers to the questions. Work with your partner to decide which experience you should write about. Then complete the sentence below:

My narrative will be about ........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
Prewriting  Using a Flowchart to Gather Details

In the sample narrative on pages 5-6, the writer tells how he and his crewmates work together successfully to complete an intense military training session. The narrative has two strengths. The writer tells about key events in a clear, chronological order. The writer also tells what he and the crew think or learn at key moments during the experience.

This flowchart is filled with key events and details that Bob Kerrey includes in the sample narrative on pages 5-6. Read the chart to discover how to gather details and organize them in your own narrative.

Event 1:
The crew meets the chief petty officer, and he gives orders that seem impossible.

Event 2:
The members of the crew work together to carry out the orders. They are proud of themselves.

Event 3:
The chief petty officer sends the crew into the water. They learn that training involves suffering.

Event 4:
The crew is winning in a week of competitions.

Event 5:
In the last race, the crew discovers that their boat is deflated. They know they will lose the race.

Event 6:
The chief petty officer dismisses the crew members because they have won the competition. They are happy.
Use the flowchart below to gather details for your narrative. Fill in each box with the events or actions you want to share. Also include details, feelings, or things you learned during each event.

Next Step: Ask yourself “What did I learn from this experience?” and “Why is this experience important to me?” Use your answers to develop a focus statement or main point for your narrative. Here is a sample focus statement based on Bob Kerrey’s narrative: *By working as a team, everyone wins.* Write your focus statement below.
Prewriting Learning About the Narrative Structure

Your narrative is the story of an important experience in your life. It focuses on events that have happened to you (and a group) and that have taught you something. The graphic below shows how the parts of a narrative fit together.

- The **beginning** identifies the event you are writing about and the group that shared the experience with you. It also gives background information. (See page 16.)

- The **middle** tells about the important events and actions that have taken place during the experience, usually in the order that they have happened. It may include feelings you have had or lessons you have learned along the way. (See page 18.)

- The **ending** reveals the importance of the experience—what you have learned about yourself, others, or the world. (See page 21.)

### Transition Words and Phrases
Narratives are often organized *chronologically* (by time). Words and phrases like *first, next, and as soon as* connect related actions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>about</th>
<th>during</th>
<th>yesterday</th>
<th>until</th>
<th>finally</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>after</td>
<td>first</td>
<td>meanwhile</td>
<td>next</td>
<td>then</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at</td>
<td>second</td>
<td>today</td>
<td>soon</td>
<td>as soon as</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>before</td>
<td>third</td>
<td>tomorrow</td>
<td>later</td>
<td>when</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Writing
Connecting
Your Ideas
Starting Your Narrative

The beginning of your narrative should get the reader’s attention and give necessary background information. You can use one of the following strategies:

- **Start in the middle of the action.**
- **Ask readers a question.**
- **Begin with someone speaking.**
- **Start with a surprising statement or an interesting fact.**

In the following sample, the writer begins with someone speaking.

**Sample Beginning Paragraph**

“Summer camp will be awesome! We’ll be the ones to watch out for—just like on that TV show about people surviving on desert islands.” That was the first thing my best friend Jerry said when he learned that both of us, along with our two buddies Alex and Mahoney, had been accepted at the same summer camp for city kids. We thought we knew exactly what we were getting into. We spent weeks making plans to deal with any situation or challenge we might face. The problem was that we really had no idea what we were up against.

Use the space below to write the beginning of your narrative. If you don’t like how it turns out, write a second or third version on the next page. (Try using a different strategy in each beginning.)

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Next Step: After you have written your beginnings, meet with a classmate. Talk about the different versions. Which one grabs the reader's attention? Which one gives the best background information? Place a star next to the version you like best.
Developing the Middle Part

Remember, a narrative tells a story. Even though you are telling about true events, you must still hold the reader’s interest with action, dialogue, details, and feelings.

Study the sample middle paragraphs below and in the narrative on pages 5-6.

Sample Middle Paragraphs

At camp, my buddies and I were split up and assigned to different cabins. “This ruins everything!” I thought. I started to panic because now I had to deal with a whole new bunch of guys. I was in a cabin with 11 other people. One kid said, “I thought we were going to rough it. I’ve got four brothers and two sisters, so this is like a vacation.” The kid who said this was really big. I found out later that his name was Anthony, and he actually knew my cousin, so I figured I could trust him.

At that point, though, I still really missed my own friends. The camp counselor, Jake, came by and told us to elect two co-leaders who would be responsible for having the cabin crew get its chores done and get to activities on time. How could we elect a leader when we didn’t even know one another? I was getting upset.

I said, “Look, on TV, the teams sit in a circle and figure out who everybody is and what everybody’s strengths are. We could try that.” Nobody moved until Anthony, the big guy, said, “Good idea.” So we sat down and introduced ourselves, told where we were from, what our families and neighborhoods were like, and what we liked to do. Then I said people should nominate themselves or someone else to lead the cabin. I nominated Anthony. He surprised me by nominating me back. I couldn’t believe it when we both won.
Writing Ending Your Narrative

The ending of your narrative should share the importance of your experience as a member of a group. Tell readers what you learned from your experience.

Read the sample ending paragraph below.

Sample Ending Paragraph

I worked hard to be a good co-leader. As it turned out, I needed everybody's help. I couldn't just order everybody around. So I figured out which kids needed reminding and which ones I could count on. I discovered I could always count on Anthony to back me up. In the end, I learned that I am a good leader. I also learned that one of the best parts of camp was making new friends. I am going to apply to the camp in a couple of years when I am old enough to be a counselor. Anthony said he would, too.

Use the space below to write the ending of your narrative. If you don't like the first ending, try another version on your own paper.

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________________________________________________________________________
Forming a Complete First Draft

After you finish pages 16-21, write a complete copy of your first draft. Do your writing on your own paper, and store your work in the back pocket of this booklet. Keep the following tips in mind as you complete this copy.

Drafting Tips

1. Write on every other line on only one side of your paper. This will make revising much easier. (If you use a computer, make sure to double-space.)

2. Keep your writing as neat as possible, but don’t worry if you cross out a few words.

3. Feel free to add new ideas that come to mind. After all, writing is a process of discovery.

4. Notice any parts you may want to change. You can make these changes when you revise.

5. Keep your purpose and audience in mind. You’re trying to tell your readers about an important experience that you shared with a group.

6. Remember: A first draft is your first look at a piece of writing. You may rewrite some parts three or four times before they sound just right.
Revising
Improving Your Writing
Revising Writing with an Appropriate Tone

Tone is conveyed through a writer's choice of words. The tone of your writing helps make your narrative engaging by communicating your attitude or feelings about your subject. Tone allows readers to share your feelings. Your tone might be humorous, serious, enthusiastic, sad, or neutral.

Neutral tone:
The school choir performed a song written by their music teacher, Derek Jones. (The writer gives information only. The sentence does not reveal what the writer feels about the subject.)

Enthusiastic tone:
Wow! We couldn’t believe our ears when we heard the awesome way the choir performed Mr. Jones’s terrific new song.

Sad tone:
The chorus, their faces somber, looked out over the hushed audience and closed the concert with a song by the late Mr. Jones.

Read the passages below. Then match the letter of each tone to the appropriate passage.
a. angry  b. sad  c. happy  d. sarcastic  e. neutral

1. When Morris and I helped score the winning goal, it was as if the sun had burst through the rain clouds. We were heroes!

2. My farewell to my dearest, oldest friends was a tearful occasion. They begged me not to go, but what could I do? The situation was hopeless.

3. I told Julio that I knew I’d win the contest. “Right,” he said with a doubtful half-smile. “And then you’re going to win the lottery!”

4. The new art teacher suggested that I send in some of my sketches for the art contest. I’ll choose the best ones and mail them on Thursday.

5. My fellow skateboarders and I are really sick and tired of being treated like garbage. People who don’t think skateboarding is a real sport are only showing how ignorant they really are.
Choose a tone. On the lines below, write two or three sentences on a topic that fits that tone. After the last sentence, write the name of the tone that you used.

Next Step: Review your draft to determine what tone you have used in your writing. What feeling or attitude do you have toward your subject? What feeling or attitude do you want to communicate to your readers? Rewrite any passages that need to have a different or stronger tone. Be prepared to share your work with the class.
Peer Responding

Your teacher may want you and a classmate to react to each other's writing by completing the response sheet below.

Response Sheet

Writer's name: ........................................ Responder's name: ........................................

Title: ........................................................................................................................................

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Strong words, phrases, and ideas in the writing: ........................................................................

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Using a Checklist

Use the following checklist or the assessment rubric on page 8 as a guide to review and revise your first draft. Make changes as needed so that your narrative contains the best ideas and details.

**Revising Checklist**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does my beginning grab the reader’s attention and give necessary background information?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do the middle paragraphs share the key events and actions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do the middle paragraphs include details, dialogue, and personal feelings?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do I use an appropriate tone in my writing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does the ending tell why the experience was important to me?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Revising in Action**

When you revise, you improve the ideas and organization in your first draft. You can make improvements by adding new ideas, crossing out unnecessary ideas, rewriting unclear ideas, and reordering out-of-place ideas. See the examples below.

"Remember what Lincoln said about government for the people, of the people, by the people, or something like that?" Lynda and Maria, Jessie was trying to convince me and two other friends that the four of us should run for student council. So far, it wasn’t working. “Tell me again why we should run for student council,” I requested. "We are perfectly average—just like the majority of students. We represent them perfectly. It makes perfect sense to run for student council." I reminded her that we were not exactly popular, and we weren’t the smartest kids either. She replied that that was her point exactly.
Revising Writing a Complete Revised Draft

After you finish pages 24-27, write a complete copy of your revised first draft. Do your writing on your own paper, and store your work in the back pocket of this booklet. Keep the following tips in mind when you complete the revised copy.

Revising Tips

1. Write on every other line on one side of your paper. This will make editing much easier. (If you use a computer, make sure to double-space.)

2. Keep your writing as neat as possible, but don’t worry if you cross out a few words.

3. Focus on ideas that need to be changed. Add, reorder, cut, and rewrite different parts as needed.

4. Take your time. You can’t make all your changes in one revision.

5. Pay special attention to peer responses. Your peers are your audience, and your goal is to tell them a good story.

6. Save your first draft and your revision so that you have a record of the changes you have made.

Adding a Title

At some point in the process, you need to form a title. A title should hook your reader and help introduce your subject. Here are three guidelines to follow:

- Use strong, colorful words.
  Facing the Challenge Together, not My Failed Election Campaign

- Give the words rhythm.
  Surviving Summer Camp, not My Great Summer at Camp

- Be imaginative.
  People Power, not Saving the Community Garden
Editing
Checking for Style and Correctness
Using Active Voice

Active voice and passive voice are terms used to describe how action is presented in your writing. In active voice, the subject of the sentence is the person or thing that is doing the action. In passive voice, the subject names who or what receives the action. Passive voice emphasizes what is done rather than who or what did it. Sentences that use passive voice are also wordier than those that use active voice. Study the following examples.

Active voice:
The crew members inflated the rubber boat before the race.
(Who does the action? “Members” is the subject of the sentence. What do they do? They inflated the rubber boat.)

Passive voice:
The rubber boat was inflated by the crew members before the race.
(“Boat” is the subject of the sentence. It receives the action (the inflating) by the crew members.)

Active voice is clearer and stronger than passive voice. Nevertheless, passive voice has its uses. Sometimes you do not know who or what has acted. (Mistakes were made. The crew was dismissed.) In general, though, use active voice for effective writing.

On the lines, identify whether the sentences below use active voice (A) or passive voice (P).

___ 1. Ten members of the skateboarding club met in the park.

___ 2. Club meetings were held regularly by the members.

___ 3. Updates about the new skateboard park were shared.

___ 4. A new indoor skateboarding park was being built.

___ 5. Devon and Manny demonstrated some new moves they had developed.

___ 6. Everyone stopped to watch the demonstration.

___ 7. Manny was approached by a young skateboarder named Alyssa.

___ 8. Alyssa asked Manny why he wasn’t wearing his helmet.

___ 9. Manny was annoyed by helmets.

___ 10. Alyssa reminded him about the helmet law.
Rewrite the passive sentences below using active voice. (Remember, you have to change the order of the words, and you may have to change some of the words in the new sentences.)

1. Helmet laws for skateboarders have been passed in many metropolitan areas by city council members.

2. The laws are often ignored by skaters who think that nothing will ever happen to them.

3. Serious injuries can easily be avoided by skaters who wear pads and helmets.

4. Unnecessary chances are taken by skaters every day.

5. The attitudes of these skaters should be changed.

6. Thrilling airborne maneuvers are executed by skaters who take safety seriously.

Next Step: Look again at your own writing. Highlight or underline examples of passive voice in your narrative. Whenever possible, change passive voice to active voice. Ask a classmate for suggestions if you need help.
Using Personal Pronouns Correctly

When a personal pronoun is the subject of a sentence (or a clause), use the subject form. On the other hand, if a personal pronoun is the direct object, indirect object, or object of a preposition, use the object form. Study the chart below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Pronouns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Singular</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Person</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**They promoted us!** (*They* is the subject, and *us* is the direct object.)

**She gave him a book.** (*She* is the subject, and *him* is the indirect object.)

**I stepped between him and her.**
(*I* is the subject, and *him* and *her* are objects of the preposition *between.*)

If any personal pronoun in the sentences below is used incorrectly, cross it out and write the correct personal pronoun above it. Use the rules and examples above as a guide. The first one has been done for you.

1. Jessica and Paul told *I* they wouldn’t be late.

2. You and *me* were waiting for them at the museum.

3. Maybe something happened to *them*.

4. I called *they* with my cell phone.

5. Jessica answered, “Where are you?” I asked *she*.

6. Before handing the phone to Paul, her said, “It is not my fault.”

7. “Us just missed the bus by a minute,” he said.

8. “Jessica and *me* saw the bus and ran after it, but it would not stop.”

9. “But Alex and I have been waiting for you for an hour,” I said.

10. “Her and me will make it up to you,” Paul replied. “Lunch is on *us!***

**Next Step:** Review your corrected sentences with a classmate. Then check your revised draft for any incorrect pronouns. Correct any mistakes that you find.
Your main job when editing is to check your revised writing for word choice, style, and sentence errors. See the examples below.

Lynda and Maria agreed with Jessie, and they convinced me I to add my name to the ballot. Then came the next problem. Jessie wanted me to run for student council president, which meant a speech would have to be given in front of the entire student body. "Why do I have to be president if the whole thing is your idea?" I asked. Jessie assured me that I was the person for the job. The others promised to help me write the speech.

Editing and Proofreading Symbols

Use the following marks to show where and how your writing needs to be changed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ or ☑</td>
<td>Correct spelling.</td>
<td>Lena Younger, the family leader, is very religious.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>√</td>
<td>Delete or replace.</td>
<td>Lena she makes a down payment on a nice house.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>Insert a comma.</td>
<td>Her son, Walter Lee, Jr., wants to buy a business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>❌</td>
<td>Insert a period.</td>
<td>This play focuses on racial attitudes. It also . . .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☼</td>
<td>Insert an apostrophe or quotation marks.</td>
<td>Walter Lee's wife hopes for a larger apartment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?</td>
<td>Insert a question mark or an exclamation point.</td>
<td>What would Beneatha do with the money?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>❏</td>
<td>Start a new paragraph.</td>
<td>The play takes a surprising turn when . . .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▼</td>
<td>Switch words or letters.</td>
<td>Walter gets the worst news.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Proofreading Checking for Correctness

When you proofread, you check the final copy of your writing for errors in usage, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, and spelling. (Use the editing and proofreading symbols on page 33 to mark your changes.) See the examples below.

A tense problem is corrected.
Spelling is corrected.
A series is punctuated with commas.

were A week before the speeches are to be given, we all met
met at my apartment. Jessie brought cardboard and markers to
make posters. Lynda brought a button-making machine.

enthusiasm
Maria just brought her enthusiasm. We sat around the
kitchen table, drank soda, ate cookies, and laughed a lot.

Making Editing and Proofreading Changes

Edit and proofread the following narrative to improve the style and correctness. (Use the editing and proofreading symbols listed on page 33.) The first correction has been done for you. Check off the errors as you correct them.

☐ personal pronoun errors (3) ☐ usage errors (2) ☐ spelling errors (4)
☐ run-on sentences (1) ☐ punctuation errors (3) ☐ capitalization errors (3)
☐ passive sentences—change to active sentences (2)

Crossing in the Storm

1 We were fishing at Marion Reservoir in central kansas when the ≡
2 storm blew in. The boat was tied off in a stand of dead trees about
3 four miles from our camp. Dad and my little brother, Steve, were tying
4 on white feather jigs because I'd just caught two fish on mine. Mom
5 was helping Steve's friend Darryl with a snaged line. She saw the
6 storm coming, a dark purple band on the horizon
7 We were overtaken by the storm. The temperature dropped about 20
degrees, and wind churned the lake. The storm headed toward camp, and Dad must've thought that we could outrun it. The boat was backed out of the trees and was driven at full throttle. The rein came hard. Dad had to sit atop the back of his seat to see over the windshield. In no time, us were crashing through four-foot waves.

In the bow, steve was holding tight to the rail and giving me a comical terrified look. Darryl was up there grinning and hanging on while the boat jolted from one wave to the next.

Mom shrieked “Where's your lifejacket, you crazy kid”? Quickly, Darryl grabbed a lifejacket and got an arm hooked through it. Seeing Mom's fear wiped the grin off his face.

Ahead of us, a waterspout coiled up like a giant gray snake. Dad gritted his teeth and veered out of it's path. For one long second, we all felt a tug as the wind tryed to pull us into the air. Lightning bolts fried the water all around us.

dad rounded the corner into our cove and never let off the throttel. Him picked a spot that had more mud than rocks and told us to hang on. “Pull up the outboard!” he hollered at me.

I heaved, barely getting the prop out of the water as the boat hit shore. The impact knocked me into a rear seat, and the boat vaulted out of the lake onto rocks and mud.

To this day, we argue about the wisdom of crossing the lake in that storm, but Dad got we off the lake alive sure tore up the boat, though.

**Next Step:** Carefully read and mark the revised copy of your narrative for any editing and proofreading changes before making your final copy.
Editing and Proofreading: **Using a Checklist**

Use the checklist that follows to check your revised writing for style and correctness. Remember that this step is important only after you have revised the ideas in your narrative.

* It's very easy to miss errors when you edit and proofread, so make sure to ask a teacher, a classmate, or a family member for help.

**Sentence Structure**

- Did I write clear and complete sentences?
- Do my sentences use active rather than passive voice? (pages 30-31)

**Punctuation**

- Do all my sentences have end punctuation?
- Did I use commas correctly?

**Capitalization**

- Did I start all of my sentences with capital letters?
- Did I capitalize all names of people and places?

**Grammar**

- Did I use the correct form of verbs (break, broke, broken)?
- Did I use subjects and verbs that agree in number? *(Musicians perform; Lucia dances.)*

**Usage**

- Did I choose the correct word (there, their, or they’re)?
- Did I use personal pronouns correctly? (page 32)

**Spelling**

- Did I check for spelling errors?
- Did I use a dictionary or the spell checker on my computer?
After you have completed pages 30-36, write a neat final copy of your narrative on pages 38-40. Then proofread your final copy for errors. Keep the following tips in mind.

**Tips for Handwritten Final Copies**

- Use your best penmanship.
- Write in blue or black ink.
- Write your name, your teacher's name, the class, and the date in the upper left-hand corner of page 1.
- Skip a line, and center the title on the next line.
- Skip a line, and start your writing.
- Indent the first line of each new paragraph.
- Write your last name and the page number in the upper right-hand corner of every page after page 1.
- Keep a one-inch margin around each page.

**Tips for Computer-Generated Final Copies**

- Use an easy-to-read font.
- Use a 10- or 12-point type size.
- Double-space throughout your writing.
- Maintain a one-inch margin around each page.
Publishing
Sharing the Final Copy
Sending Your Writing Out

What types of writing can I submit to publishers?

Newspapers are interested in essays, editorials, and articles. Some magazines publish stories, essays, and poetry; others publish essays and articles only.

Where should I send my writing?

First consider local newspapers, magazines, and other community publications. For national publications, turn to the *Writer's Market* (Cincinnati: Writer's Digest Books) for ideas. Your school or local library will have a copy of this book.

How should I send my writing?

*Writer's Market* will explain that it is wise to write the publishers to request specific guidelines for submitting writing for their publications. Often, you will be asked to include a letter naming the title and the form of your writing (story, essay, article, and so on), a neat copy of your writing, and a self-addressed stamped envelope large enough for returning your writing after it has been read.

What should I expect?

Expect to wait awhile for a reply. Also realize that your writing may not be accepted for publication. In most cases, publishers choose only a few pieces of writing to publish. You may get a rejection letter. Though that sounds disappointing, even a rejection letter can prove helpful because publishers often explain why they did not select your writing for publication.

Submitting Your Writing On-Line

Where do I start my search for on-line publishing?

Start locally. See if your school has its own Web site for student writing. Also ask your teachers if they know of other Web sites that accept student work.

How do I search for these sites?

Use a search engine to find places to publish. Begin your search by entering a keyword phrase such as “submitting writing” or “student writing.” Then check out sites from the list of results.

Does Write Source have a Web site?

Yes. You can visit our Web site at <thewritesource.com>. We suggest places where students can publish on the Net and invite students to submit for publication on our site as well.
Extension Activities
Extension Activity: **Reading Narratives**

Find an effective personal narrative in a book, newspaper, magazine, or on the Internet. Then answer the questions below.

**Response Questions**

- Who is the subject of the narrative?

- What experience is the focus of the narrative?

- What happens to the person or group of people at the center of the narrative?

- What does the main person or group in the narrative learn from the experience?

- What insights did you gain from reading the narrative?
Extension Activity: Reflecting on Your Writing

Reread your own narrative a day or two after you have finished it. If possible, read it to another person and ask for his or her opinion. Then reflect on your writing by completing each open-ended sentence below.

- My favorite part of my narrative is . . .

- I would like to change the part where . . .

- On a scale of 1 to 5 (with 5 being the highest), I would give my narrative a score of _____ because . . .

- While developing my narrative, the main thing I learned about writing is . . .
Extension Activity: **Preparation for a Writing Test**

When you take a writing test, you may feel rushed. It is helpful to keep clearly in mind the things you learned about writing. Answering the questions below will help you prepare for any narrative writing that may appear on a test.

1. What two tasks do you have when you write a personal narrative about a group experience? (See page 3.)

2. What is an effective way to gather and organize details about the events in your narrative? (See pages 12-13.)

3. Identify four ways you might start an effective narrative. (See page 16.)

4. How can you hold the reader's attention in the middle part of your narrative? (See page 18.)

5. What two kinds of information should you share in the ending or conclusion of a narrative? (See page 21.)