Inside Writing PERSUASIVE ESSAYS

...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: **Persuasive Essays**

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

- Persuasive Warm-Up: How convincing are you? (page 4)
- Reacting to the Reading (page 7)

**PREWRITING: Planning Your Writing**

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- Writing a Strong Ending (pages 20-21)
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- Using a Checklist (page 37)
- Writing the Final Copy (pages 38-40)

**Extension Activities**

- Reading Editorials (page 44)
- Reflecting on Your Writing (page 45)
- Preparing for a Writing Test (page 46)
"It is not best that we should all think alike; it is difference of opinion which makes horse races."

—Mark Twain

Persuasive Essays

You may not think about it often, but you are bombarded every day with persuasive messages. Billboards, newspaper advertisements, editorials, and television commercials are all forms of persuasion. Some persuasive messages sell a product or promote a worthy cause. Others express an opinion or argue a point.

In this unit, you will be asked to write an editorial suitable for a school newspaper. An editorial is a brief persuasive essay (usually 500 words or less) expressing an opinion about an important topic. Effective editorials come to the point quickly and speak with confidence. Many editorials also call for something to be done about the topic (a call to action).

Writing persuasively requires careful thinking and planning. You must understand your topic's strengths and weaknesses, you must form a reasonable opinion about your topic, and finally, you must convince your readers to agree with you.
Persuasive Warm-Up: How convincing are you?

Write a convincing letter explaining one of the following: (1) why you should be allowed to do something (written to a parent or guardian), (2) why you shouldn’t have to do a certain assignment (written to a teacher), or (3) why you deserve a raise (written to an employer).

Next Step: Review your letter by answering the questions below. Write your answers on your own paper. (Keep your paper in the pocket at the back of this folder.)

- Is my letter convincing? Why or why not?
- What reasons do I give to support my argument?
- Is my argument based on solid facts and evidence?
- How could I strengthen my argument?
Reading a Sample Editorial

In the sample editorial that follows, the writer expresses her opinion on an important topic for the students in her school district. She provides specific reasons to support her opinion that the Upland School District should build soccer fields. In her closing paragraph, the writer proposes a solution and a logical call to action.

Build Fields for Teams

Soccer is the world's most popular team sport, and soccer programs have become popular in the United States in the last two decades. Unfortunately, the young people in the Upland School District have no official soccer fields. You may wonder if the Upland community should be concerned about this. The simple answer is yes. Upland should build quality soccer fields to benefit all of the students in the school district.

Soccer is one of the best sports for children, from kindergartners through high school seniors. First of all, it is very inexpensive, so anyone can participate. Secondly, it is wonderful exercise. Soccer programs encourage gender equality because girls and boys can play together for many years. Youth soccer is often a family activity, with parents, brothers, sisters, and other relatives coming to watch and even helping to coach the teams. Finally, soccer is a sport that strengthens group skills by requiring both headwork and teamwork. Having good fields encourages young people to engage in this healthful physical activity.

Soccer programs should start for children in kindergarten, and their fields should be smaller. That means schools need fields of varying sizes. The fields must be graded properly, and good grass must be planted and maintained because well-prepared fields help to prevent injuries. Schools also need strips of land beside the fields for spectators to sit or stand on, but bleachers are not necessary. Blankets and folding chairs work just fine.

VOCABULARY

headwork Thinking
spectators Those who look on or watch
Some people may say this building project will cost too much money. However, a soccer field costs much less than a gymnasium, an indoor track, or a swimming pool. Some districts have saved on costs by finding some skilled volunteers to operate the earth-moving equipment. Community groups have also helped by holding fund-raisers. Creating a soccer field is a cause that people can get excited about. They see it as something they can do for the youth of their area.

Upland’s School District should form a committee to consider plans, land, and funding for soccer fields. The committee’s **motto** could be “Where there are soccer fields, there are strong, healthy kids.” The people’s goal should be to improve the quality of life for our youth by establishing soccer fields in the Upland School District. It’s the right thing to do.

**VOCABULARY**

*motto* A short statement about an ideal
Reacting to the Reading

Respond to the sample editorial by answering the following questions.

• What is the writer's opinion? In other words, what issue does the writer feel strongly about?

• What are three reasons that the author gives to support her opinion?

• What plan of action does the writer suggest?

• How does the writer show that she has thought through her counterarguments (opposing viewpoints)? List one good example from paragraph four.

• How would you describe the writer's line of thinking? Was she reasonable, logical, convincing, and so on? Explain.
Evaluating: **Understanding the Traits of Effective Persuasive Writing**

The rubric (checklist) below will help you understand the traits found in effective persuasive writing. Use this rubric to help you develop your editorial and as a final checklist for your completed writing. You can also use this rubric to evaluate your classmates' editorials. (Your teacher may give you a point scale to use for final evaluations.)

**Assessment Rubric**

___ STIMULATING IDEAS

*The persuasive writing...*

- focuses on an opinion about a timely subject.
- contains specific reasons and details to support the opinion.

___ LOGICAL ORGANIZATION

- includes a clear beginning, convincing middle, and strong ending.
- presents reasonable, logical arguments.

___ ENGAGING VOICE

- speaks in a convincing, positive voice.
- shows that the writer feels strongly about his or her opinion.

___ ORIGINAL WORD CHOICE

- uses clear, persuasive language.
- explains unfamiliar terms.

___ EFFECTIVE SENTENCE STYLE

- flows smoothly from sentence to sentence.
- uses a variety of sentence lengths and beginnings.

___ CORRECT, ACCURATE COPY

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

*Comments:*
Prewriting
Planning Your Writing
The subject of your editorial should be a timely school-related issue that you feel strongly about. With a partner, list on the chart below topics that you have an opinion about. Brainstorm as many ideas as you can. (Example topics are given to help you get started.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Life</th>
<th>School Sports</th>
<th>After-School Jobs</th>
<th>School Policies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>study hall</td>
<td>athletic banquets</td>
<td>late shifts on school nights</td>
<td>dress code</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Working alone, circle one idea you would like to write about. Consider your main feelings about this topic. Then write your opinion about it on the lines below.

Example opinion: **Athletic banquets are fine, but banquets for honor students and for those who help in the school or in the community should also be held.**

Opinion about my topic: 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Prewriting Gathering Details Through Freewriting

To gather more information about your subject, write rapidly about everything that comes to mind. You may begin your freewriting by thinking about the following questions:

- Why do I care about this subject?
- What do I know about it? (personal experience, history, problems)
- What are the main facts, reasons, feelings, or opinions about this issue?
- What might others who disagree say? (opposing viewpoints)
- What do I want readers to think or do? (call to action)

My opinion (from page 10):

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My freewriting:

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The sample web below is based on the editorial, “Build Fields for Teams,” on pages 5 and 6. Review the web before you complete your own web on page 13.

- Soccer is one of the world's most popular sports.
- Soccer serves boys and girls, and often is a family activity.
- Soccer is a great sport for children from K-12.
- Playing on well-prepared fields prevents injuries.
- Upland School District should create quality soccer fields to benefit the area youth.
- Good fields encourage young people to be active and healthy.
- Soccer strengthens group skills.
- Volunteer labor can keep costs down.
- Soccer is an inexpensive sport.
Prewriting Thinking Through an Argument

An opinion should be supported with good reasons. Write your opinion in the center of the web below. Then use the ideas from your freewriting (page 11) to write reasons in the other boxes. These will be the main points that you must prove to support your opinion. Fill in as many boxes as necessary.

Planning Web

(Opinion)
All forms of persuasive writing try to convince readers to think or act in a certain way. In your editorial, you want to convince readers to agree with your opinion and support your call to action. You should include three or more main reasons plus supporting details to back up your opinion. The graphic below shows the basic parts of an editorial.

- The **beginning** gets readers interested in the subject and states your opinion about it. (See page 16.)
- The **middle** includes the main reasons and details that support your opinion. (See page 18.)
- The **ending** restates your opinion and makes a proposal or call to action. (See page 20.)

**Transition Words and Phrases**

Here are some words that you can use to link reasons and supporting details in persuasive writing.

- again
- finally
- in conclusion
- likewise
- along with
- for instance
- in fact
- most importantly
- also
- for this reason
- in the same way
- next
- another
- in addition
- lastly
- similarly
Writing Starting Your Editorial

Before you begin developing the main points of your editorial, spend some time working on the opening lines. Beginnings are important and should do two things: (1) get your reader's attention and (2) clearly state your opinion.

Ideas for Gaining the Reader's Attention

- Share important background information.
- Ask a challenging question.
- Begin with an informative quotation.
- Provide a dramatic, eye-opening statement.
- Open with some interesting dialogue or an engaging story.

Sample Beginning Paragraph

Welcome to the wonderful world of block scheduling. On our tour today, you will see a decline in the dropout rate and an increase in the number of students on the honor roll. Later on, be sure not to miss the increase in attendance and library usage and the decrease in overall violence. As we begin our tour, you can see the rise in average GPA and SAT scores on the left. A little farther along, you will notice that the average amount of stress for students, teachers, and administrators has declined. You see, block scheduling isn't only about 85-minute classes. It's about improving attitudes and learning opportunities throughout the school.

In the space below and on the next page, write the beginning of your editorial. Use the sample above as a guide. Make sure that you get the reader's attention and clearly state your opinion.
Next Step: If you don’t like how your first beginning sounds, try writing one or two other versions on your own paper.
Whenever you state an opinion, you must support it with clear reasons. This is a basic principle for all types of persuasive writing. The middle paragraphs of your editorial should contain the main reasons from your planning web (page 13). Make sure to include specific details to develop or support each reason. One of the middle paragraphs should also address a major opposing viewpoint (see the first paragraph on page 6).

Always base your opinion on facts and objective judgments. An objective judgment says something specific and can be tested. A subjective judgment is based purely on your feelings or emotions. For example, a student who says, “Cafeteria food is disgusting” is making a subjective judgment. A student who states, “The pasta is undercooked” is making an objective judgment.

**Sample Middle Paragraph**

This sample middle paragraph develops one of the main reasons that supports the writer's opinion.

*In a block schedule, there is more intense learning and understanding going on than in traditional scheduling. For example, in a block schedule, the teacher cannot possibly lecture for the entire 85 minutes. This means that the students who are hands-on learners and the students who need to read to learn can do just as well as the students who learn by listening to a lecture. The block schedule also gives teachers more time to work with students one-on-one. This means that problem areas can be identified earlier and corrected. So in short, everybody learns more!*
Writing Writing a Strong Ending

Having a strong ending is equally as important as having an interesting beginning. The ending of your editorial should remind readers about the importance of your opinion and make a clear call to action. You want your readers to agree with your plan and know how to act on it.

Sample Ending Paragraph

The bottom line when it comes to block scheduling is that there are lots of reasons why it's going to be a great change. So be open and don't fight it. Let go of your fears and be positive. If you walk into your first class feeling negative about block scheduling, how can you take advantage of all the benefits that block scheduling brings to the table? So calm down, sit back, relax, and make sure all body parts are safely in the vehicle as we begin our journey into the wonderful world of block scheduling.

In the space below and on the next page, write your ending paragraph. Remind readers about the importance of your opinion and make a call to action.
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 and on only one side of your paper. Having plenty of space will make revising much easier. (If you use a computer, be sure to double-space.)

2. Keep your writing as neat as possible, but don't stop to recopy just to make your draft look better. Concentrate on ideas, not neatness.

3. Keep your purpose and audience in mind. You're trying to convince your readers to agree with your opinion.

4. Feel free to add new ideas that come to mind as you write your draft. After all, writing is a process of discovery.

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

6. Remember: A first draft is your first look at a piece of writing. You may rewrite parts of your draft three or four times before they sound just right.
Revising
Improving
Your Writing
Revising | Avoiding False Arguments

Your editorial will be strong only if your thinking or reasoning is strong and logical. Recognizing false arguments will help you to avoid them in your own writing.

Read the explanations and examples of false arguments below. Then rewrite the arguments so that the reasoning is more logical and makes better sense.

**Bandwagon:** This type of thinking claims that if everyone else is doing it, you should, too. This thinking avoids the real question: “Is this idea or claim a good one?”

*Example:* Everyone on the team wears Air Jets, so Air Jets are clearly your best choice.

More logical: Everyone on the team wears Air Jets, but you should try Air Jets for yourself. You know what’s best for you.

**Broad Generalization:** Generalizing is thinking that looks at everything or everyone in a group in exactly the same way. It makes no exceptions.

*Example:* All teenagers spend too much time watching television.

More logical: .................................................................................................................................

**Either-Or Thinking:** This thinking considers all issues or arguments as two possible extremes—it’s *either* this *or* that. It eliminates all the options in between.

*Example:* Either this community votes to build a new school, or the dropout rate will skyrocket.

More logical: .................................................................................................................................

**Half-Truths:** A half-truth is only part of the truth. It is misleading because it leaves out “the rest of the story.”

*Example:* The new recycling law is bad because it will cost more money than it saves. (This statement ignores the possible benefits of recycling.)

More logical: .................................................................................................................................

**Next Step:** Check your editorial for any false arguments or illogical thinking. Then exchange papers with a classmate and check each other’s thinking.
You can support your opinion in two ways—by appealing to reason or by appealing to emotion. You appeal to reason by providing facts, statistics, and expert opinions that support your opinion. The best persuasive essays rely primarily on appeals to reason.

**Appeals to Reason . . .**

Appeals to reason ask readers to use their intelligence. Read the following example of an appeal to reason:

> According to the Association of Science Educators, nearly half of all school science labs are not sufficiently equipped. (The claim that “nearly half of all school science labs are not sufficiently equipped” is supported by a reliable source—the Association of Science Educators. Therefore, this example appeals to reason.)

**Appeals to Emotion . . .**

Emotional appeals speak to readers' feelings. Emotional appeals may be strong, but they seldom hold up over time. Read the following example of an appeal to emotion:

> The science labs in our schools are in such bad shape, they are a disaster waiting to happen. (The claim that the school science labs are “a disaster waiting to happen” is not supported by any statistics or expert opinions. Therefore, this example appeals to emotion, not reason.)

Review your editorial. In the chart below, write the main points you give to support your opinion. Then identify the type of appeal—to reason or to emotion—used in each case. Your editorial should rely primarily on appeals to reason.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Supporting Points</th>
<th>Type of Appeal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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**Next Step:** Change the appeals in your editorial if they rely too heavily on emotion.
Peer Responding

Your teacher may want you to react to a classmate’s editorial by completing the response sheet below. Be sure to look carefully at the beginning and ending. Also look for false arguments (generalizations, either-or-thinking, half-truths) and appeals to emotion.

Response Sheet

Writer’s name: ........................................... Responder’s name: ...........................................

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

I like . . . ....................................................................................................................................... 

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

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Revising Using a Checklist

Use the following checklist or the assessment rubric (page 8) to help you review and revise your first draft. Make as many changes in your draft as needed so that your editorial contains a strong opinion statement, clearly supported reasons, and a logical call to action.

Revising Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Does the beginning paragraph gain the reader's attention and include an opinion statement?

Do the middle paragraphs support the opinion with clear reasons and carefully considered arguments?

Is the information in the middle paragraphs presented in a logical order?

Does the ending call for the reader to do something (call for action)?

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 example changes below.

An unneeded idea is cut. Last year, one of our classes went to a museum. It was a great trip. We saw all kinds of cool things and even got to do some hands-on learning. But this year, our school decided that there is no money for field trips, so we’re not going anywhere. My question is, how do they expect students to have a good feeling about school if they cut that class trips should be a regular part of school out the best part? I think somebody should change it so that students can learn things in real places, not just classrooms.

A sentence is cut and wording is added.

An unclear idea is rewritten.
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 as you complete the revised copy.

Revising Tips

1. Write on every other line and on only 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 stop to rewrite just to make your draft look better. Concentrate on ideas, not neatness.

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

4. Take your time. You can’t make the best changes all at once.

5. Pay special attention to peer responses. Your peers are your audience, and your goal is to convince them to agree with you.

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

Adding a Title

At some point in the process, you need to write a title for your editorial. A title for persuasive writing reads almost like an advertising slogan or a bumper sticker. You are “selling” your opinion. The title should hook your reader and introduce your opinion. Here are three guidelines to follow:

- Use strong, colorful words.
  We’re a School, Not an Airport, not Rolling Backpacks Are a Real Problem

- Give the words rhythm.
  Avoid Rush Hour at Harrison High, not Crowded Hallways Are a Problem

- Be imaginative.
Editing
Checking for Style and Correctness
Checking Your Word Choice

In a persuasive essay, or editorial, it is important to use words that add to the meaning and tone of your writing. However, it’s just as important to resist the temptation to “pad” your writing with words and phrases that add nothing to your point. Can you spot the unnecessary words or phrases in the following sentence?

The difficult math problem, which was not easy to understand, caused me to fail the math test with an F.

(If you say a problem is difficult, you don’t need to say that it’s not easy to understand. If you say you failed a test, you don’t need to say you got an F.)

Make the following sentences clearer by crossing out any unnecessary words or repeated ideas. See the editing and proofreading symbols on page 34. The first one has been done for you.

1. Ms. Li’s overcrowded algebra class, which is always full of math students, should move to a bigger classroom that has more room.

2. A field trip to Caterpillars R Us was cancelled due to lack of interest because it didn’t appeal to enough students.

3. On most days, Cal usually spends about an hour of his time studying.

4. The music teacher gives private music lessons to advanced students who are further ahead than others.

5. After this school year is over, Juan and Bob will be getting jobs working for pay.

6. Taking a foreign language class in which we learn to communicate in a nonnative tongue helps us to comprehend and understand another language.

7. Darnel takes the bus and rides it both to and from school every morning and every afternoon.
The following sentences contain trite expressions, euphemisms, cliches, and slang. Rewrite them so their tone is more formal but natural and clear. The first one has been done for you.

1. I should not have dissed the principal as I did; oh well—live and learn.
   I should not have talked back to the principal.

2. Prior to becoming a teacher, Mrs. Jones raised her children 24/7 and engaged in numerous enterprises using the family living quarters.

3. In terms of getting my research paper done, Rome wasn’t built in a day; it doesn’t take a rocket scientist to realize it’s going to take a while.

4. Because all the fish in Mr. Patrick’s aquarium mysteriously kicked the bucket, the lab is off-limits to all students for now until it is determined that students may return.

5. Chuck is indisposed and will not be in attendance at school today.

6. Because she hid Vanessa’s purse, Mi-Sun got into big-time trouble with the big guy in the school office.

Next Step: Now review your editorial for repetition and wordiness. Also rewrite any overused expressions or cliches.
Writing Complete Sentences

It is important to present your ideas in clear, complete sentences. Sentence errors such as fragments, comma splices, and run-ons make your writing hard to understand.

- A **fragment** is a group of words that is missing either a subject or a verb or doesn’t express a complete thought.
  
  *Sentence fragment:*  Next to that car over there.
  
  *Correct:*  I parked next to that car over there.

- A **comma splice** is an error made when you connect two simple sentences with a comma instead of a comma and a coordinating conjunction or a semicolon.
  
  *Comma splice:*  I’ve been driving to school, I use my parents’ car.
  
  *Correct:*  I’ve *been* driving to school, and I use my parents’ car.
  
  *Correct:*  I’ve been driving to school; I use my parents’ car.

- A **run-on sentence** occurs when two simple sentences are joined without punctuation or a comma and a coordinating conjunction.
  
  *Run-on sentence:*  My parents allow me to drive every day I must maintain a B average.
  
  *Correct:*  My parents allow me to drive every day, *but* I must maintain a B average.
  
  *Correct:*  My parents allow me to drive every day; I must maintain a B average.

Write “C” in front of each sentence, or pair of sentences, that is correct. Write “CS” in front of each comma splice, “RO” in front of each run-on sentence, and “F” in front of each fragment. Then fix the sentence errors. The first one has been done for you.

---

1. Many students have very poor driving habits. Treat stop signs like yield signs and speed limits like suggestions.  

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2. This kind of driving endangers everyone, police need to get tougher about enforcing traffic laws.  

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3. Young drivers often misjudge weather conditions and stopping distance, and many accidents result from that kind of bad judgment.  

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4. Some people believe that all the new safety equipment guarantees their protection, still, no matter how much technology improves cars, people are the key component.
5. People fear being struck by lightning during a storm, but they think nothing of driving fast on wet pavement driving too fast for conditions is much more dangerous and causes more accidents than lightning ever could.

6. While risks to life are many, driving carelessly is one risk that can easily be eliminated.

7. Foolish risks and excessive speed rarely save more than a few seconds, everyone who drives should stop to think about that.

Review the following paragraph. Find the fragments, run-on sentences, and comma splices and correct them.

Those who pass the driver’s test need to remember that it’s their responsibility to drive carefully, driving carefully isn’t as easy as it sounds. The number of vehicles on the road means that drivers must be alert at all times. Must always watch the road ahead to deal with potentially dangerous situations. For example, a driver may have to drive slower than the posted speed due to weather, traffic congestion, or children near the road. Good drivers are patient and polite, they avoid eating, daydreaming, or getting caught up in cell-phone conversations while driving. Careless behavior behind the wheel may cause property damage, lead to serious injury, or even result in death. Although stricter law enforcement will help, there are not enough police to watch everyone so drivers must use their cars or trucks in ways that respect others. Responsible drivers are considerate of other people.

Next Step: Review your corrections with a classmate. Then check your editorial for fragments, comma splices, and run-on sentences.
Your main job when editing is to check your revised writing for word choice, style, and sentence errors. See the examples below.

A comma splice is corrected.

My opinion is that the principal or the school board should look a little harder for ways to pay for field trips. For example, they should talk to some of the local business places located here in our town. Instead of whaling on students for skipping school and not learning enough, they could make learning more interesting so students would come to school and learn.

Also, they could have a raffle and sell tickets. There are lots of ways to raise money, they just have to choose the best ones.

A run-on is corrected.

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></td>
<td>Capitalize a letter.</td>
<td>Lorraine Hansberry wrote <em>A Raisin in the Sun</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lowercase a letter.</td>
<td>Her play tells the story of the Younger Family.</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>Correct spelling.</td>
<td>Lena Younger, the family leader, is very <em>religious</em>.</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 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 <em>possible</em> 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 listed on page 34 to mark your changes.) See the examples below.

Spelling errors are marked.

The important thing to remember is that [field] trips are interesting not just for fun. They are interesting and educational and give students a reason to go to school. Instead of cutting trips, the school should be trying to add trips and other learning experiences. If teachers want students to attend their classes and learn something worthwhile, having field trips is one way to do it. And when you think about what is real spent on other things, field trips are a real bargain.

Making Editing and Proofreading Changes

Edit and proofread the following editorial to improve its style and correctness. Use the editing and proofreading symbols listed on page 34. The first correction has been done for you. Check off the errors as you correct them.

☐ spelling errors (4)  ☐ capitalization errors (1)  ☐ run-on sentences (2)
☐ usage errors (5)  ☐ comma splices (3)  ☐ errors in punctuation (4)

Cell Phones—Don’t Go to School Without One

1 Should high school students have access to the Internet while at school? Should students be able to drive cars to school. As long as students use the Internet and cars responsibly, few people would argue against these conveniences for high school students. However, when it comes to another modern convenience—the cell phone—our school says no.
School rules should reflect the changes in society, cell phones are part of today's adult world just like the Internet and automobiles.

The main objection our school has to students having cell phones at school is that they disrupt classroom learning, however, if some simple rules are established—such as cell phones must be turned off during class—classroom learning wouldn't be disrupted. Students know that they have to follow the rules. they know that if they do not, their privileges get took away. Most students can be trusted with this reponsibility.

One important reason to allow students to have cell phones at school is that their scheudles and activities require communication with parents and employers. Things are complicated enough, cell phones can help make scheduling a little easier. Another reason si that in case of school violence or disasters, cell phones can help students communicate with they're families or emergency personal. Although it is unfortunate that this reason must be argued problems are a reality.

High schools exist not only to teach students reading, writing, and arithmetic but also to teach students to be thoughtful, dependable adults. In order to learn responsibility, students need to have some authority over there own lives if they show that they can make the right decisions I feel students should be aloud access to their cell phones during nonclass time at school.

Next Step: Carefully read and mark your revised editorial for any editing and proof-reading 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 first draft.

🌟 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, complete sentences? (pages 32-33)
- Did I vary my sentence lengths and beginnings?

**Punctuation**
- Did I end each sentence with the correct punctuation mark?
- Did I use commas correctly?
- Did I punctuate dialogue or quotations correctly?

**Capitalization**
- Did I start my sentences with capital letters?
- Did I capitalize the specific names of people and places?

**Grammar**
- Did I use the correct verb tenses?
- Did I use subjects and verbs that agree in number? *(Musicians perform; Lucia dances.)*

**Usage**
- Did I use the correct word (like *their*, *there*, or *they're*)?
- Did I drop all unnecessary words and phrases and avoid cliches? (pages 30-31)

**Spelling**
- Did I check for spelling errors?
- Did I use a dictionary or the spell checker on my computer?
After you complete pages 30-37, write a neat final copy of your editorial on pages 39-40. Then proofread your final copy for errors. Keep the following tips in mind as you complete this copy.

**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.
- Leave 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

Prewriting

Writing

Revising

Editing

Publishing
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 Editorials

Your teacher will either provide you with an editorial to respond to or ask you to find one in your local newspaper or on the Internet. In either case, read the editorial and answer the questions below.

Response Questions

• What is the writer's main point or opinion?

• What reasons does the writer give in support of his or her opinion?

• What plan of action does the writer suggest?

• Has the writer convinced you to accept his or her opinion? Explain.

Next Step: Share the editorial with a classmate and discuss your evaluation.
Extension Activity: Reflecting on Your Writing

Set your editorial aside for a day or two. Then read it to yourself, and, if possible read it to someone else. Afterward, reflect on your writing by completing each open-ended sentence below.

• The thing I like best about my editorial is . . .

• The part that I would like to change is . . .

• As a writer, I still need to work on . . .

• While completing my editorial, the main thing I learned about writing is . . .
Extension Activity: **Preparing for a Writing Test**

When you take a writing test, you sometimes feel rushed. That means you need to have the things you have learned about writing clearly in your mind. Answering the questions below will help you prepare for any persuasive writing you find on a test.

1. To write persuasively, you must understand your topic's strengths and weaknesses. What two other things must you remember about persuasive writing? (See page 3.)

2. To write an effective persuasive essay, is it more important to have strong feelings about your subject or to be objective about it? (See page 10.)

3. What graphic organizer can you use to gather support for your opinion? (See page 12.)

4. What two things should you do in the beginning paragraph? (See page 16.)

5. What should your middle paragraphs contain? (See page 18.)

6. What should you accomplish in the ending paragraph? (See page 20.)