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

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Planning Notes: Responses to Literature

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Unit Overview:

Responses to Literature

As with other Inside Writing units, this response-to-literature unit is ready to put in the hands of your students. Everything students need to complete their work is included in this booklet.

In this unit, students are asked to write a book review that states their opinion about the book's value. They are asked to share background information about the author and summarize the plot of the story. Finally, the students' goal should be to provide the readers with enough information to decide whether they would like to read the book themselves.

Rationale

- In the "Universe of Discourse," responding to literature is one of the more challenging forms of writing for students to develop. In this type of response—the book review—students express their thoughts and feelings about their reading.
- Writing responses can help students think about and evaluate literature.
- Students can learn to shape effective responses to literature with a clearly developed beginning, middle, and ending.
- Responding to literature is often included on district and state assessment tests.

Strategies and Skills That Students Will Practice

- Using a survey and freewriting to select a subject
- Reflecting on the strengths in a piece of literature
- Writing the beginning, middle, and ending parts of a response to literature
- Expressing feelings in writing
- Peer responding
- Writing with an active voice
- Checking for correct treatment of titles
- Evaluating responses to literature using an assessment rubric

Performance Standards

Students are expected to . . .

- use prewriting strategies to generate and organize ideas.
- develop a response that exhibits a careful reading and understanding of a piece of literature.
- revise and edit their writing, striving for completeness, authentic voice, specific word choice, smooth-reading sentences, and correctness.

Major Concepts

- Responses to literature can focus on the author, the plot, and personal reactions to the writing.
- A response to literature must go through a series of steps—prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing and proofreading—before it is ready to be published.
- Assessment is an important part of the writing process.

Reinforcing Skills

- Students can use either the Writers INC handbook or Write Ahead for additional instructions related to writing responses to literature. (See page 16TE for handbook correlations.)
- Editing and proofreading skills can be reinforced and expanded by implementing exercises from Inside Writing Skills available for each level. (See page 7TE for suggestions.)
## Weekly Planning Chart

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Daily Lesson Plans: Week One

**DAY 1**

**Understanding the Unit**

**Reviewing the Unit Basics**
- Discuss “About the Unit” (inside front cover). Note that the intended audience is the students’ classmates. Explain the purpose for writing a review: to share information and feelings about a selection (book, story, or article) that interests them.
- Review the table of contents (page 1) and the assignment checklist (page 2). Students can use the checklist to keep track of their assignments. (Consider establishing due dates for each assignment.)

**Completing a Review Warm-Up Activity**
- Implement “Interest Survey” (page 4). In this activity, students are asked to write down their favorite or least favorite television shows, movies, restaurants, and so on. The purpose of this activity is to put students in a response mode and allow them to share their feelings and voice.
- Follow up with “Freewriting” on page 5 for practice in generating ideas to support opinions for a review.
- Discuss “Evaluating: Understanding the Traits of an Effective Book Review” (page 8), so that students understand how their reviews will be evaluated.
- Ask students to read “Book Review Sample” (page 6), or read the sample out loud to the class. See “About the Sample Book Review” (page 9TE) for background information and a prereading activity.

**ESL Tip** Before reading “Timeline,” preview the questions for “Reacting to the Reading” (page 7). Then students will have a purpose in mind when they begin reading and will understand their own task better.

**DAY 2**

**Working with a Sample**

**Reading a Sample Review**
- Establish the tone for a book review by reading out loud the opening paragraph of the writing sample (page 6). In addition, consider the optional activities below.
  - Optional: Implement “Prereading Activity” (page 9TE), which deals with responding to literature. Also consider sharing the “Author Bio” (page 9TE).
  - Optional: Implement “Extension Activity: Responding to Book Reviews” (page 44).
  - Students can work on this activity throughout the unit, whenever they have free time.

**Reacting to the Review**
- Have students complete “Reacting to the Reading” (page 7). Point out that each part of the review has a different focus. The beginning discusses the author. The middle paragraphs tell about the story itself. The ending summarizes the reviewer’s opinions. Emphasize that the reviewer’s feelings are clearly stated. You may want students to work on this activity on their own, in small groups, or as a class.
• Review and assess the sample (page 6) using the rubric on page 8. For example, analyze the sample for stimulating ideas, organization, and/or engaging voice. Share how the reviewer writes in a convincing manner. Then discuss the original word choice, effective sentence style, and/or correctness of the copy. Inform students that their own reviews will be assessed with the same rubric.

ESL TIP
Do “Extension Activity: Responding to Book Reviews” on page 44. The more background information nonnative speakers have, the easier it is for them to understand concepts and complete assignments.

DAY 3
Prewriting
Choosing a Selection
• As a class, go over “Reviewing a Completed Collection Sheet” (pages 10-11). Remind students that they will be selecting a piece of literature that they have strong feelings about; otherwise, they will find it difficult to develop a meaningful review.

Gathering Details
• After students review pages 10-11, have them fill in the “Collection Sheet,” pages 12-13, gathering the details they will use in their reviews.
• If necessary, model the collecting process, using a familiar piece of literature. Fill in Part 1 of the “Collection Sheet” on an overhead or the chalkboard.
• Discuss “Learning About the Parts of a Book Review” (page 14). Remind students that their reviews should include some background on the author or reference to other titles by the same author. They may need to do some research by reading the book jacket, going on-line, or asking a librarian for assistance.

DAY 4
Writing
Writing the Beginning
• Implement “Starting the Review” (pages 16-17). Before students begin, discuss the sample beginning on the top of the page. After students finish, ask for volunteers to share their paragraphs for a class discussion.

Developing the Middle Part
• Implement “Developing the Middle Part” (pages 18-19). Before students begin, discuss the sample at the top of the page. Remind students that in this part of the review, the main parts of the selection should be discussed (the basic plot, main characters, and setting) without telling the whole story.
• Provide enough class time for students to write the middle part of their reviews. Refer them to Part 2 of their collection sheets (page 13) for information.

ESL TIP
Discuss words students will need to understand and use in their reviews (plot, author, character, setting, and conflict).
DAY 5

Writing

Writing the Ending

- Implement "Ending the Review" (pages 20-21). Remind students that the ending of a review should state their feelings about the selection and tell why it is or is not worth reading.
- Before students begin their work, review the sample closing paragraph on page 20. Ask for their opinions about it.

Forming a Complete First Draft

- Review the drafting tips on page 22 before students complete their first drafts. Remind them that they are writing rough, not finished, drafts.

ESL TIP
Examine the format of paragraphs and point out how all of them are indented. Explicitly teach skipping spaces and writing on one side of the paper. Some students are unfamiliar with the format of handwritten work in this country.

Daily Lesson Plans: Week Two

DAY 1

Revising

Skills Activity

- Implement "Expressing and Supporting Your Opinions" (page 24). Before students begin, remind them that in a book review you express your opinion about the value of a book. Emphasize to the students that simply stating that the book was "good" or "bad," or that they "did" or "did not" like it, is not enough.
- Review the difference between a weak opinion and a supported opinion (page 24).
- Allow students to write a thoughtful opinion (two or three sentences) about their favorite television show or about a certain sporting event (page 25).
- Have students search their reviews for an opinion statement that needs improvement. Ask them to write a more thoughtful version of the statement.

Sharing Assessed Models

Optional: Share the "excellent" and "fair" assessed samples (pages 10TE-13TE) to help students determine how much revising they may still need to do. (Make copies of the reviews or display them on an overhead projector.)

ESL TIP
Guide students in identifying opinion statements that may need improvement in their own reviews. Students may need many examples before they can judge their own work.
DAY 2

Revising

Peer Responding
• Have pairs of students react to each other's writing using “Peer Responding” (page 26) as a guide.

Using a Checklist
• Before students begin revising, review “Revising in Action” (bottom, page 27) to make sure that they understand the revising process. Then have students revise their first drafts, following “Using a Checklist” (top, page 27). Emphasize that revising is the process of improving the ideas, organization, and voice in writing. (Checking for spelling, punctuation, and grammar should wait.)

Writing a Complete Revised Draft
• Provide time for students to complete their revising. Review with students the revising tips and the information about titles on page 28 before they write their revised drafts.

ESL TIP
Students may be reluctant to cut any ideas or sentences from their writing because they often struggle to do the initial writing. Remind them that what they write down is never permanent and can always be modified and improved.

DAY 3

Editing and Proofreading

Skills Activity: Editing for Style
• Implement “Writing with an Active Voice” (page 30). Point out that in active voice, the subject clearly is doing the action. This makes writing interesting and easy to read.
• Point out that in passive voice the subject is not doing the action. This makes the writing slow-moving and hard to follow. Remind students that they should avoid passive voice as much as possible.

For Example:
Passive: Many injuries result from rolling backpacks.
Active: Rolling backpacks cause many injuries.

• Allow students to work in pairs to discuss the rewrites of their sentences from passive into active voice (page 30).

Skills Activity: Editing for Correctness
• Implement “Punctuating and Capitalizing Titles” (page 31).
DAY 4

Editing and Proofreading

Reviewing Editing in Action
• Discuss the sample edited paragraph at the top of page 32.

Skills Activity: Checking for Correctness
• Discuss the sample proofread paragraph at the top of page 33. Then implement “Making Editing and Proofreading Changes” (pages 33-34). This activity could be done by individuals, with partners, or as a class, depending on students’ abilities. Note that students may solve editing issues in different ways.

Using a Checklist to Edit and Proofread
• Have students edit their revised writing, following “Using a Checklist” (page 35). Students may work in pairs to edit their essays.

Writing the Final Copy
• Review the writing tips on page 36. Then provide time for students to write and proofread their final copies (pages 37-40).

DAY 5

Publishing

Sharing Final Copies
• Arrange students into small groups to share their final drafts. Provide copies of the rubric (page 8) for students to use to evaluate their classmates’ reviews. Each student should label his or her name (Evaluator:) and the name of the writer (Writer:) at the top of the rubric. After rating each review, students should write at least one positive comment at the bottom or on the back of the rubric. (Each writer should have an opportunity to review the ratings.)

Assessment Note: We use a 5-point scale to evaluate the writing samples on pages 10TE-14TE, but the rubric can be used with any point scale.

ESL TIP When ESL students are the evaluators, have them evaluate for only content (ideas, organization) and any explicitly taught rules.

Understanding the Publishing Process
• Discuss the variety of ways writing can be published (page 42).

Daily Lesson Plans: Week Three (Optional)

Extension Activities

Reflecting on Your Writing
• Have students complete “Reflecting on Your Writing” (page 45). This activity will help them think about their writing experiences in this unit.

Preparing for a Writing Test
• Also consider implementing “Preparing for a Writing Test” (page 46). Students may review their responses on this sheet before taking a district or state assessment test.
About the Sample Book Review

The sample book review is based on the novel *Timeline* by Michael Crichton. *Timeline* opens on the threshold of the twenty-first century, and explores a new world of technology. Information moves instantly between two points, without wires or networks. The past is brought to life by a group of historians who can enter the world of fourteenth-century France. It’s a fantastic journey. Michael Crichton has once again provided the level of excitement he created with *Jurassic Park*. In *Timeline*, he combines the science of technology with the historic realities of the medieval past. In this exhilarating story, readers experience unforeseen and unimaginable danger.

Vocabulary

**prestige** Being highly respected by others

**Author Bio**

Michael Crichton was born in Chicago on October 23, 1942. He was a star basketball player in high school, reaching 6'7" by the 10th grade. After graduation, Crichton decided to attend Harvard to become a writer. When he got C’s for his writing, he switched to the field of anthropology and graduated with honors. Later, he returned to Harvard for medical school. To pay his way, he wrote spy thrillers using the pen name John Lange. He even won an Edgar (Allan Poe) Award for Best Mystery of the Year for *A Case of Need*.

During his final year in medical school, *The Andromeda Strain* was published. Crichton graduated with his M.D.; however, he never practiced medicine. Instead, he continued to write novels and screenplays. He was the creator and executive producer of *ER*, and he and his wife co-wrote the film *Twister*. He has directed numerous movies and won an Oscar for scientific and technical achievement in 1994.

Crichton has written about his life and adventures around the world in his book *Travels*.

**Important Stylistic Features**

**PERSONAL VOICE:** Because the student who wrote the sample review (page 6) was so moved by the novel, her personal writing voice is strong, sincere, and compelling. Personal voice is characterized by the use of the first-person pronoun (I) and the expression of honest thoughts and feelings. These two aspects of voice help express a student’s enthusiasm and genuine interest in a piece of literature. Encourage students to select a book or story that they thoroughly enjoy and have strong feelings about; otherwise, they will find it difficult to write with a strong, convincing voice.
Assessed Writing Samples

Pages 10TE-14TE include three sample book reviews assessed according to the rubric on page 8 in the unit. Use these samples to help students with their writing and revising. (See Week Two, DAY 1 in “Daily Lesson Plans,” page 6TE.) You may also use these samples to guide your own evaluation of students’ reviews. A 5-point scale was used to evaluate these samples, but the rubric will work with any point scale.

Responses to Literature Assessment

Rocket Boys: A Memoir

Homer Hickam, Jr., wrote Rocket Boys: A Memoir. He has also written Torpedo Junction and many articles for various science publications. Hickam was born in 1943 in the coal country of West Virginia. Most of the young men in that area grew up and worked in the mines. Hickam’s dad, who was a foreman and later in charge of operations, loved coal mining. However, Homer did not; he wanted to launch rockets. He worked to reach that goal and eventually made his dream of becoming a NASA engineer a reality.

Coal mining was a dangerous, dirty, and uncertain job in Coalwood, West Virginia, during the 1950s. The mine in Coalwood had just recently changed owners, putting an even greater burden on Homer’s father because the new owner’s policies often ignored the miners’ needs. At times local boys would beat up Homer to get revenge. His mother, who wanted something better for Homer, kept encouraging him to seek a life outside of the coal mines. His father disagreed. He expected his son to grow up and work in the mine. Like most young people, Homer just wanted to fit in, but even his brother called him a joke.

Then, in the middle of the Cold War, the Russians sent Sputnik into orbit. It was 1957, and many people feared that the Russians would take over the world. The race to space changed the lives of Homer and his friends. Now they vowed to work together to launch a rocket. Homer’s mother supported them, but told Homer again and again, “Don’t blow yourself up!” Several times the rockets exploded before
getting off the ground, sending jagged pieces of steel everywhere, but Homer never did blow himself up.

I really enjoyed reading this book because I know how important it is to be liked and how good it feels to finish a project that no one thinks you can do. Even though he grew up in the 1950’s, Hickam’s hopes and dreams were much like those of teens today. It’s encouraging to read stories about people who beat the troubles thrown their way. If you like to read about people your own age and are interested in the early days of the space program, be sure to read *Rocket Boys*. You’ll like this exciting true story.

**Assessment Rubric**

5. **STIMULATING IDEAS**
   - The writing . . .
   - focuses on one book or short story.
   - expresses a consistent opinion about the literature.
   - contains supporting details and examples.

5. **LOGICAL ORGANIZATION**
   - includes an effective beginning, middle, and ending.
   - presents ideas in an organized manner.

4. **ENGAGING VOICE**
   - speaks in a sincere way.
   - shows that the writer really understands the book or story.

4. **ORIGINAL WORD CHOICE**
   - explains or defines new terms.
   - includes specific nouns, verbs, and adjectives.

5. **EFFECTIVE SENTENCE STYLE**
   - contains complete, correct sentences.
   - flows smoothly from one idea to the next.

5. **CORRECT, ACCURATE COPY**
   - observes the basic rules of grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
   - follows the form suggested by the teacher.

**COMMENTS:**

Your enthusiasm for this book is evident. Your review is clearly written and follows the assignment instructions. All of the details you included from the book are interesting, and you don’t give away too much of the story.

Your writing is error free.

*Good job!*

Responses to Literature: Planning Notes 11TE
Anne of Green Gables

Lucy Maud Montgomery wrote Anne of Green Gables. She also wrote other books like Pat of Silver Bush and Emily of New Moon. Most people know about Anne of Green Gables. There's even a movie that was made of this book. The author was born on Prince Edward Island in Canada way back in 1874! She lived with her grandparents when she was young. In Anne of Green Gables, she writes about a girl named Anne Shirley. She is a young girl who gets adopted by Matthew and Marilla Cuthbert.

The Cuthberts are not a husband and wife. There a brother and sister. They are old enough to be Anne's grandparents. That's kind of like how Lucy Montgomery grew up. The Cuthberts live on a beautiful farm. It is called Green Gables. It is on Prince Edward Island.

Matthew Cuthbert is shy. He likes the way Anne talks all the time about everything. Marilla loves Anne. But she gets upset because Anne never seems to calm down.

Anne is always getting excited about everything. She tries to be good. Usually it doesn't work out that way. She is so curious and she keeps getting carried away and she gets in trouble all the time. Anne never tries to make trouble and she is always very sorry whenever she gets people upset.

I liked reading about Anne's adventures in the country. It is very different than life in the city. I liked the characters in the book. Anne and her friends use their imagination to have fun. After I read this
book, I felt like Anne was a friend of mine. If you ever wished you could visit a farm and make some new friends, you would enjoy meeting Anne Shirley and the Cuthberts. Now I’m gonna read the next book in the series *Anne of Avonlea*!
Responses to Literature
Assessment

Rules of the Road

I actually liked this book, and you probably will too.
Joan Bauer wrote Rules of the Road and a few other great books like Backwater and Hope was Here. This book even makes you laugh sometimes, even if Jenna Boller has plenty of problems in her family life. It made me happy for my own life even though it seems boring sometimes. At least I have a safe life.

Jenna works for a shoe store in Chicago and gets to take a cool road trip with the lady president of Gladstone shoe stores. She drive this lady to Texas and back in a cadillac. Lots of interesting things happen along the way.

Assessment Rubric

2. Stimulating Ideas
The writing...
- focuses on one book or short story.
- expresses a consistent opinion about the literature.
- contains supporting details and examples

2. Logical Organization
- includes an effective beginning, middle, and ending.
- presents ideas in an organized manner.

2. Engaging Voice
- speaks in a sincere way.
- shows that the writer really understands the book or story.

2. Original Word Choice
- explains or defines new terms.
- includes specific nouns, verbs, and adjectives.

3. Effective Sentence Style
- contains complete, correct sentences.
- flows smoothly from one idea to the next.

3. Correct, Accurate Copy
- observes the basic rules of grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
- follows the form suggested by the teacher.

Comments:
You need to convince us that you liked this book by putting more enthusiasm into your words. Also take another look at what each part of the review is supposed to do.

Add more information—facts about the author, details that show why this trip was “cool,” the name of the “lady president,” and so on.

Finally, check your writing for capitalization, spelling, and punctuation errors before preparing a final copy.
Optional Activities for Multiple Intelligences

Consider implementing one or more of the following activities during the unit. (The intelligences addressed in each activity are listed in italics.)

★ Warm-Up (pages 4-5)
Share your interest survey with a classmate. On a scale of 1-5 (with 5 being the highest), rate your partner's choice of television shows, movies, restaurants, and personal-choice category. Discuss how your ratings vary and explain your responses.

*Interpersonal Intelligence*

★ Choosing a Selection (pages 12-13)
After choosing a book or other selection to review, your teacher will give you five minutes to list as many reasons as possible for making the choice you made. How many reasons did you list? Discuss your results as a class.

*Logical/Mathematical Intelligence*

★ Writing (page 16)
Design a Web page or create a piece of art that reflects your literature selection. The artwork should also indicate your feelings about the book or short story. Share your work with the class.

*Visual-Spatial Intelligence*

★ Revising (page 27)
Choose a passage that you do not like from the novel or other selection you are reviewing. Revise the passage. Then read both the original and your revised version for the class. Explain your changes.

*Intrapersonal Intelligence*

★ Publishing (page 42)
Write a song or a poem that reflects your feelings about the novel or other selection you reviewed. Share your work.

*Musical Intelligence*

★ Reflecting on Your Writing (page 45)
Choose a favorite part from your selection and create a script for it. Write out the roles of each character involved and act out the scene with a classmate (or two).

*Bodily/Kinesthetic Intelligence*

Additional Responding Writing Prompts

For additional writing practice, assign one or more of the following writing prompts.

- Write an e-mail message or a letter to a friend explaining why he or she should read a particular novel.
- Assume the role of one of the characters in a novel or short story, and write a journal entry exploring an important part of the plot, or story line.
- Carry on a written conversation with the main character in a story or a novel. Keep the conversation going as long as you can. To get started, talk about something that happened in the story or in your own life.
- Write a free-verse poem or a rap in response to a piece of literature.
- Write a paragraph that thoroughly explains what you believe to be the main message of your literary selection.
## Correlations to Write Source Handbooks

### RESPONSES TO LITERATURE

| 3  | Introduction | Writers INC ©2001: 215, 221, 227 | Write Ahead ©2003: 181, 331 |
| 8  | Understanding Traits | Writers INC ©2001: 21-25 | Write Ahead ©2003: 19-23 |

### PREWRITING: Planning Your Writing

| 12 | Choosing a Selection and Gathering Details | Writers INC ©2001: 43-47, 216, 222, 228, 365 | Write Ahead ©2003: 42-58, 183, 185, 331-335 |
| 14 | Learning About the Parts of a Book Review | Writers INC ©2001: 223, 224, 232 | Write Ahead ©2003: 182, 183, 185 |

### WRITING: Connecting Your Ideas


### REVISING: Improving Your Writing

| 24 | Expressing and Supporting Your Opinions | Writers INC ©2001: 228, 232 | Write Ahead ©2003: 183, 188 |
| 26 | Peer Responding | Writers INC ©2001: 69-74 | Write Ahead ©2003: 73-76 |
| 27 | Using a Checklist | Writers INC ©2001: 26, 68 | Write Ahead ©2003: 24, 72 |

### EDITING: Checking for Style and Correctness

| 32 | Reviewing Editing in Action | Writers INC ©2001: 16-17, 29, 222, 228 | Write Ahead ©2003: 16-17, 77-80, 184 |
| 33 | Checking for Correctness | Writers INC ©2001: 18-19, 75-78, 222, 228 | Write Ahead ©2003: 17, 80, 184 |
| 35 | Using a Checklist | Writers INC ©2001: 79, 226 | Write Ahead ©2003: 24, 81, 189 |
| 36 | Writing the Final Copy | Writers INC ©2001: 30-32, 222, 228 | Write Ahead ©2003: 26-27 |

### PUBLISHING: Sharing the Final Copy


### Extension Activities

| 45 | Reflecting on Your Writing | Writers INC ©2001: 35 | Write Ahead ©2003: 10, 33-34 |
Inside Writing RESPONSES TO LITERATURE

Getting Started: Learning About Responses to Literature
3 Introduction: Responses to Literature
4 Review Warm-Up
5 Freewriting
6 Reading and Reacting to a Sample Book Review
8 Evaluating: Understanding the Traits of an Effective Review

PREWRITING: Planning Your Writing
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WRITING: Connecting Your Ideas
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REVISING: Improving Your Writing
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EDITING: Checking for Style and Correctness
30 Writing with an Active Voice
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PUBLISHING: Sharing the Final Copy
42 Understanding the Publishing Process

Extension Activities
44 Responding to Book Reviews
45 Reflecting on Your Writing
46 Preparing for a Writing Test
Checklist: **Book Review**

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

**Due Date**

- □ Review Warm-Up: Interest Survey (page 4)
- □ Freewriting (page 5)
- □ Reacting to the Reading (page 7)

**PREWRITING: Planning Your Writing**

- □ Reviewing a Completed Collection Sheet (pages 10-11)
- □ Choosing a Selection and Gathering Details (pages 12-13)

**WRITING: Connecting Your Ideas**

- □ Starting the Review (pages 16-17)
- □ Developing the Middle Part (pages 18-19)
- □ Ending the Review (pages 20-21)
- □ Forming a Complete First Draft (page 22)

**REVISING: Improving Your Writing**

- □ Expressing and Supporting Your Opinions (pages 24-25)
- □ Peer Responding (page 26)
- □ Using a Checklist (page 27)
- □ Writing a Complete Revised Draft (page 28)

**EDITING: Checking for Style and Correctness**

- □ Writing with an Active Voice (page 30)
- □ Punctuating and Capitalizing Titles (page 31)
- □ Making Editing and Proofreading Changes (pages 33-34)
- □ Using a Checklist (page 35)
- □ Writing the Final Copy (pages 36-40)

**Extension Activities**

- □ Responding to Book Reviews (page 44)
- □ Reflecting on Your Writing (page 45)
- □ Preparing for a Writing Test (page 46)
"My advice to young people who want to write is to read everything that fascinates you."

—Joyce Carol Thomas

Responses to Literature

People write book reviews for Internet booksellers, for magazines and newspapers, for newsletters, and for other publications. In their reviews, they share their reactions—thoughts, feelings, and judgments about what they’ve read. People often read book reviews because there are so many books to choose from. They hope a well-written review will help them decide whether a particular book is one they would enjoy reading.

In this unit, you will be asked to write a book review—a brief essay that states your opinion about a book’s value. An effective book review doesn’t say everything about the book, but just enough to help readers decide if they would like to read it themselves.

What book should you review? Choose a book or story that is still fresh in your mind, perhaps one that was too good to put down. You’ll have plenty to say about a book that you really enjoyed.
Review Warm-Up: **Interest Survey**

Complete the survey below. As you explore your answers in each category, you may discover that you have strong opinions about some of your choices.

1. **Television Shows**
   - Favorite: .................................................................
   - Why? ...........................................................................
   - Least Favorite: ..........................................................
   - Why? ...........................................................................

2. **Movies**
   - Favorite: .................................................................
   - Why? ...........................................................................
   - Least Favorite: ..........................................................
   - Why? ...........................................................................

3. **Restaurants**
   - Favorite: .................................................................
   - Why? ...........................................................................
   - Least Favorite: ..........................................................
   - Why? ...........................................................................

4. **Your Choice:** *(underline one)* clothing stores/vehicles/sports/foods/music
   - Favorite: .................................................................
   - Why? ...........................................................................
   - Least Favorite: ..........................................................
   - Why? ...........................................................................

**Next Step:** Break into small groups and take turns sharing your responses. How similar or different are your tastes? Group members may share their findings in a discussion with the whole class.

Responses to Literature
Freewriting

Select one of the subjects covered in the survey on page 4. Write freely about that subject. Try to connect your feelings with specific reasons and examples that show why you feel the way you do. Continue writing on your own paper if you need more room.
Book Review Sample

In the following book review, student writer Gretchen Carlin reviews *Timeline* by Michael Crichton. The side notes explain the purpose of each paragraph.

*Timeline*

Michael Crichton is one of the best-known science-fiction writers of our time. He is famous for *Jurassic Park*, *The Andromeda Strain*, and *Congo*. His last work, *Timeline*, is my favorite. It combines history and science and deals with a special kind of time travel, all of which leads to much excitement.

An inventor, Robert Doniger, wants to make money selling trips into the past. He's not concerned with anything other than his power and his company's prestige. News of his secret work on time travel is just about to be revealed to the public. Before this happens, Doniger shows a history professor what he is working on. He sends this man, Edward Johnston, to fourteenth-century France. But Johnston gets lost in the past and is unable to find his way back. His coworkers, who have a great knowledge of medieval history, are sent to bring him back, but they face many very difficult problems along the way.

*Timeline* is one of the most exciting books I have ever read. Crichton makes the details of his story extremely believable, which is typical of his books. *Timeline* never becomes boring because you never know what will happen next. It is easy to become hooked on this novel, so it is a perfect weekend or vacation book. I wouldn't recommend it during the school week because it is likely to make the reader forget his or her homework. I kept saying, “One more chapter.” This is a great book for those who enjoy reading; it's pure entertainment.

**VOCABULARY**

prestige  Being highly respected by others
Reacting to the Reading
Answer the following questions about the sample review.

• In the first paragraph, what information does the reviewer give about the author?

She says he is one of the best-known science-fiction writers today. Crichton is famous for Jurassic Park, The Andromeda Strain, and Congo. Timeline is his latest book.

• Which sentence in the first paragraph tells you what Timeline is about? Write that sentence below.

It combines history and science and deals with a special kind of time travel, all of which leads to much excitement.

• In the second paragraph, which sentence tells you that there is much more to the story than the reviewer has told you? Write that sentence below.

His coworkers, who have a great knowledge of medieval history, are sent to bring him back, but they face many very difficult problems along the way.

• Which sentences in the third paragraph express the reviewer's feelings about the book? Write those sentences below.

Timeline is one of the most exciting books I have ever read. Timeline never becomes boring because you never know... This is a great book for those who enjoy reading; it's pure entertainment.
Evaluating: **Understanding the Traits of an Effective Review**

This rubric will help you understand the traits found in an effective review. Use the rubric to help you write your review and then to check your completed writing. You can also use this rubric to evaluate your classmates’ finished reviews. (Your teacher will give you a point scale to use for final evaluations.)

### Assessment Rubric

**STIMULATING IDEAS**

*The writing...*

- focuses on one book or short story.
- expresses a consistent opinion about the literature.
- contains supporting details and examples.

**LOGICAL ORGANIZATION**

- includes an effective beginning, middle, and ending.
- presents ideas in an organized manner.

**ENGAGING VOICE**

- speaks in a sincere way.
- shows that the writer really understands the book or story.

**ORIGINAL WORD CHOICE**

- explains or defines new terms.
- includes specific nouns, verbs, and adjectives.

**EFFECTIVE SENTENCE STYLE**

- contains complete, correct sentences.
- flows smoothly from one idea to the next.

**CORRECT, ACCURATE COPY**

- observes the basic rules of grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
- follows the form suggested by the teacher.

*Comments:*
Prewriting
Planning Your Writing
Prewriting: Reviewing a Completed Collection Sheet

Study the completed collection sheet below and on the next page to learn how to gather details for your review. The collection sheet is based on the book review on page 6.

Title: Timeline

Author: Michael Crichton

Collection Sheet

Part 1—Beginning

1. What do you know about this author?
   Crichton is one of the best-known science-fiction writers of our time.

2. What other books, if any, have you read by this author?
   How does this book compare to other books by this author?
   He wrote Jurassic Park, The Andromeda Strain, and Congo. For me, Timeline is Crichton’s best book.

3. What does this book deal with, or what is the author’s purpose?
   It deals with a special kind of time travel and combines ideas from history and science.
Part 2—Middle

4. Who is the main character in the book?
   The main character, Edward Johnston, is a history professor.

5. What happens to this person? (List just the main events.)
   He is sent on a time-travel adventure. He gets lost and can't find his way back. His coworkers are sent to help him.

6. Where does the story take place?
   The story takes place mainly in fourteenth-century France.

Part 3—Ending

7. How do you feel about this book and why?
   It is one of the most exciting books I have ever read. The author makes the story seem real.

8. Would you recommend this book to other readers? Why or why not?
   Yes, the story was never boring, and I never knew what would happen next.
Prewriting Choosing a Selection and Gathering Details

Finding a selection to write about should be easy. Choose a book or short story that you have strong feelings about—one you've read recently or one you remember well from the past.

Write the title and author of your selection on the following lines. Then complete the collection sheet with details for your review. (Refer to the sample collection sheet on pages 10-11 for helpful examples.)

Title: ________________________________________________________________

Author: ______________________________________________________________

Collection Sheet

Part 1—Beginning

1. What do you know about this author?

   Answers will vary.

2. What other books, if any, have you read by this author?
   How does this book compare to other books by this author?

3. What does this book deal with, or what is the author's purpose?
Part 2—Middle

4. Who is the main character in the book?

5. What happens to this person? (List just the main events.)

6. Where does the story take place?

Part 3—Ending

7. How do you feel about this book and why?

8. Would you recommend this book to other readers? Why or why not?
A book review is a brief essay that expresses a personal opinion about a book. An effective review generally starts by introducing the book and its author. Such a review then highlights key parts of the book without giving the whole story away and includes interesting examples to support the writer's opinions. Most importantly, an effective review helps readers decide if they want to read the book themselves.

**Book Review Structure**

- **Beginning**: The beginning names the title and author of the book or short story. The beginning may also list other titles by the same author and include general comments about the author's life and writing. (See page 16.)

- **Middle**: The middle summarizes the basic plot and discusses the main characters in the story without telling too much. (See page 18.)

- **Ending**: The ending expresses the writer's overall feelings about the selection and explains why others may want to read it. (See page 20.)

**Transition Words and Phrases**

A book review often summarizes a story and shares a writer's opinions and conclusions. Here are some linking words that can be used to summarize or conclude.

- all in all
- as a result
- finally
- last
- therefore
- to sum up
- in summary
- in conclusion
Writing Starting the Review

The opening paragraph of your review should do three things. It should . . .

1. Name the title and author of your selection (a book or short story).
2. Tell something about the author.
3. Tell what the selection is about (the author's purpose or main idea).

In addition to the opening paragraph below, see the sample on page 6.

Title and author: "Hamadi" is a short story by Naomi Shibab Nye, a well-known poet who has published several books of poems. Ms. Nye was born to a Palestinian father and an American mother and lived in Jerusalem with her family when she was a young girl. She now lives in San Antonio, Texas. "Hamadi" is her story about a wise old gentleman named Saleh Hamadi and a teenage girl named Susan. It focuses on the unique friendship these two share.

In the space below, write the beginning paragraph for your review. If you don't like how your first beginning turns out, try another version on the next page. (Refer to your notes on page 12 for details to include in your opening.)

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________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
The middle paragraphs of your review should talk about the main parts of the selection (the basic plot, main characters, and setting) without telling the whole story. For help, refer to the middle paragraphs on page 6 and to the sample below.

The story takes place in Texas. Susan, a Palestinian American, and her good friend Tracy go to high school together. They both work on the school’s student writing magazine. They talk about everything together. Like typical teenage girls, they talk about boy troubles. They also talk about Tracy’s problems.

Meanwhile, Susan has become friends with an old man named Saleh Hamadi, who lives in a small apartment nearby. He is from Lebanon. Long ago, Saleh “married books” and claims to have met Kahlil Gibran, author of The Prophet. Saleh answers many questions for Susan. One time Susan and Tracy invite Saleh to go Christmas caroling and something heartbreaking happens. How could Saleh Hamadi have known what to say?

Write the middle paragraphs of your review below and on the following page. (Refer to your notes on page 13, “Part 2,” for information to include here.)
The closing paragraph of your review should state your feelings about the selection and tell why it is, or is not, worth reading. For help, refer to the closing paragraph on page 6 and to the one below.

"Hamadi" is a story told with just the right words, perhaps because the writer is a poet. Poets always seem to find the "perfect" words to describe everything. The message is so real it will make you shiver. And today, after the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center, this story about ordinary people of Middle Eastern descent takes on a new importance. When you've read the last line, you'll want to read more stories from Naomi Shihab Nye.

Use the space below and on the next page to write your closing paragraph. (Refer to your notes on page 13, "Part 3," for information to include here.)

_____________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________

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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 and 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 stop to recopy just to make your draft look better. Concentrate on ideas, not neatness.

3. Keep your purpose and audience in mind. Your purpose is to share your thoughts about a book or short story with your classmates.

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 when you revise.

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

In a book review, you express your opinion about the value of a book. But simply saying that a book was good or bad, or that you did or didn’t like it, is not enough. You need to support your feelings with clear explanations and appropriate references to the book. Study the difference between the two opinions that follow.

Weak Opinion

Louis Sachar’s *Holes* is the best book I’ve ever read because it was a totally cool story.

Supported Opinion

Louis Sachar’s *Holes* is one of the best books I have ever read. It is an adventure about an overweight boy named Stanley who goes to a weird camp. I couldn’t put the book down. I had to see what would happen next.

Put a check in the blank if the passage expresses a thoughtful, supported opinion.

1. *The Giver* by Lois Lowry deals with people’s right to make their own choices. The plot shows clearly the price everyone would have to pay to have a truly peaceful society.

2. *The Chocolate War* is very different. I don’t know what the author was thinking about when he wrote it.

3. The story “I Thought My Soul Would Rise and Fly: The Diary of Patsy Freed Girl” made a strong impression on me. Patsy, the main character, is a free slave girl who is living on a plantation and learning to read. She sees reading as a gift.

4. Maya Angelou’s book *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* is go great. I think she is a wonderful writer. The book is a must-read for anyone.

5. *The Outsiders* by S. E. Hinton deals with the challenges facing teenagers growing up on the streets. The Curtis boys and their friends support each other, but their friendship can’t solve all of the problems they face. It made me feel grateful for my home.
Creating Thoughtful Opinions

Using the supported opinions on the previous page as examples, express a thoughtful opinion (two or three sentences) about each of the following subjects. When you finish, share your work with a classmate.

Responses will vary.

A Favorite Television Show or Movie: .................................................................

My Well-Supported Opinion: .................................................................

........................................................................................................

........................................................................................................

........................................................................................................

........................................................................................................

........................................................................................................

A Certain Sporting or Musical Event: .................................................................

My Well-Supported Opinion: .................................................................

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Next, find an opinion statement from the first draft of the review you have written. Then, in the space below, write a more thoughtful version of that statement.

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........................................................................................................

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........................................................................................................

Questions for Critical Thinking:

........................................................................................................
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:  

I liked . . .

- the beginning. It really got me interested in your book.
- the clear way you described the plot.
- the way you made the story sound interesting.
- how you described the characters.
- your ending. You obviously really enjoyed the book.

I would change . . .

- your opening. You don't mention the author.
- the middle. You tell too much of the story.
- the _______ sentence. It isn't clear.
- the ending. You don't make a recommendation.

I noticed a number of strong words, phrases, and ideas in your writing:
Revising Using a Checklist

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

Revising Checklist

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

Does the beginning name the book and author, tell something about the author, and share what your review is about?

Do the middle paragraphs tell about the plot, characters, and setting without giving the whole story away?

Do you include specific details from the book or from your own experience to support your feelings?

Is your voice honest and personal?

Revising in Action

When you revise, you improve the ideas and organization in your first draft. You can make improvements in four basic ways: (1) adding new ideas, (2) crossing out unnecessary ideas, (3) rewriting unclear ideas, and (4) reordering out-of-place ideas. See the example below.

Cynthia Voigt was born in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1942. I visited that city once, and I think it must have been great to grow up there. One of four children, she and eventually became a high school English teacher. She grew up liking to read, went to college, Ms. Voigt's real desire was to write, however, and she has published more than 20 books for teens and young adults. Homecoming is her first book. Voigt has won several awards for her fiction. It is the story of four children, the Tillermans, who . . .

Responses to Literature 27
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 worry if you cross out a few words.

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 all your changes at once.

5. Pay special attention to peer responses. Your peers may notice ideas that need to be clearer—especially if your peers are not as familiar with the book or story as you are.

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

**Adding a Title**

At some point, you need to add a title. For a response to literature, you might just use the name of the work you wrote about. A catchier title, though, will draw more readers into your response. Here are three guidelines to follow:

- **Use strong, colorful words.**
  Running for Home, not The Tillermans

- **Give the words rhythm.**
  Give Your Dog a Hug, not Dog Stories

- **Be imaginative.**
  A World Away From Palestine, not Sometimes It’s Tough to Fit In
Editing
Checking for Style and Correctness
Writing with an Active Voice

A verb is active (in the active voice) if the subject is doing the action. You can make your writing more vivid and interesting if you use active verbs. A verb is passive (in the passive voice) if the subject is not doing the action. Using the passive voice makes your writing slow-moving and should be avoided as much as possible. Note the difference between the following sentences:

**Passive Voice:**

One of the greatest games ever was played by our team last night.
(In this sentence, “one” is a passive subject. It receives the action.)

**Active Voice:**

Our team played one of its greatest games ever last night.
(In this sentence, “team” is an active subject. It is doing the action.)

In each of the sentences below, change the passive voice to the active voice. The first one has been done for you.

1. The Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco was seen by my sister.
   
   **My sister saw the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco.**

2. Our high school science department was awarded a grant by the state.

   **The state awarded our high school science department a grant.**

3. The snow was swept into huge drifts by the howling wind.

   **The howling wind swept the snow into huge drifts.**

4. The humorous picture on the blackboard was drawn by my brother.

   **My brother drew the humorous picture on the blackboard.**

5. Refreshments were served by the band members after the concert.

   **The band members served refreshments after the concert.**
Punctuating and Capitalizing Titles

In a review, you must include the title of the selection. Use italics or underlining to punctuate titles of magazines, newspapers, plays, films, television programs, and books. Use quotation marks to punctuate titles of songs, poems, short stories, articles, episodes of radio or television programs, and titles of book chapters.

Capitalize the first word of a title, the last word, and every word in between except articles (a, an, the), short prepositions (by, with, at, of, and so on), and coordinating conjunctions (and, but, or, and so on).

Examples: The Children of Men (book title)
“A Company of Laughing Faces” (short story)
Romeo and Juliet (play)
“Mother to Son” (poem)
“My Journal Saved My Life” (news article)

Punctuate and capitalize the titles in the following sentences. (See page 32 for editing and proofreading symbols to use in this activity. The first sentence has been done for you.

1. Tomorrow’s test will cover the article politics in dixie, which was published in harper’s magazine.

2. Last weekend we saw the film remember the titans.

3. by the water of babylon is my favorite short story by Stephen Vincent Benét.

4. Dad reads national newspapers like usa today. I prefer local news.

5. respect, by Aretha Franklin, was voted one of the top American songs of the last century.

6. dream boogie and juke box love song, two poems by Langston Hughes, have a strong musical rhythm.

7. Lorraine Hansberry is the playwright who wrote a raisin in the sun.

Next Step: Check the titles in your book review to make sure that they are correctly punctuated and capitalized.
Your main job when editing is to check your revised writing for word choice, style, and sentence errors. See the examples below.

Dicey Tillerman is the main character in Homecoming. One day when Dicey is sitting in a car with her younger brother and sister, she is hit by the fact that her momma is not coming back to get them. Dicey is only 13. She must take care of her family now. She must keep them together and she must somehow find a home where they can be loved and grow up.

### 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>⊗ or ⊕</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 <em>she</em> 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>�ﱃ ❔ ❣</td>
<td>Insert a question mark or an exclamation point.</td>
<td>What would Beneatha do with the money? The play takes a surprising turn when . . .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>❃</td>
<td>Start a new paragraph.</td>
<td>Walter gets the <em>possible</em> worst news.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>❄ ❄ ❄</td>
<td>Switch words or letters.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Proofreading** Checking for Correctness

When you proofread, you check the final copy of your writing for errors in punctuation, capitalization, grammar, usage, and spelling. (Use the editing and proofreading symbols listed on page 32 to mark your changes.) See the examples below.

A comma is added.

If you enjoy getting to know the characters in a book, this book is for you. By watching and listening to the Tillermans as they face their problems, you will grow close to the strong-willed Dicey, the book-smart James, the stubborn little quiet Sammy, and the quiet Maybeth. You will cheer for them and hope that they will find the home they need so desperately.

A name is capitalized.

Cynthia Voight's book Homecoming will keep your interest and make you think.

A usage error is corrected.

A book title is capitalized and underlined.

**Making Editing and Proofreading Changes**

Edit and proofread the following response to literature to improve the style and correctness. (Use the editing and proofreading symbols listed on page 32.) The first correction has been done for you. Check off the errors as you correct them.

- comma splices (2)
- usage errors (2)
- punctuation errors (5)
- sentence fragments (2)
- spelling errors (2)
- errors in treating titles (3)
- run-on sentences (2)
- capitalization errors (3)

Some answers may vary.

1. Gary Blackwood was born in 1945. He has written many books, stories, and plays. When he grew up in rural Pennsylvania, he went to a one-room school, and there was only one bookcase in his one-room country school.

2. He thought books were like rare treasures, maybe that's why he chose to write about Shakespeare—one of the most famous writers who ever lived.
Shakespeare lived in England in the 1500s and he wrote great plays that are still being performed today. Blackwood wrote *The Shakespeare Stealer*, a book about a boy named Widge who was sent to the Globe Theatre in London to steal Shakespeare's play *Hamlet*.

Widge is an orphan who can write in a special shorthand code that can later be translated into regular words. Widge's demanding master (a playwright in a small English city) learns of his ability and sends him to steal Shakespeare's play. Back in the 1500s, there were no tape recorders or videos, so no one could write down the words as fast as the actors on stage were speaking them.

When the actors discover Widge hiding in the theater, they don't know what he is doing. The actors invite him to join them on stage, and he soon begins memorizing lines and practicing sword fighting. The people at the Globe accept Widge. In a short time, this orphan feels like he is part of a family.

Can he betray these people?

As I read this book, I felt like I was living in England. Back in the days of the Globe Theatre, Shakespeare, and Queen Elizabeth. Widge had to make hard choices just like most people do today. He learned the value of being excepted and the challenges of being free to make decisions about his life and future. If you like history and adventure, you'll like this book. If you wonder how you will find your place in the world and learn to make big decisions, Widge can be an inspiring companion. I'm already looking forward to joining him on his next adventure in *Shakespeare’s Scribe*.

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

Use the checklist that follows as an editing and proofreading guide. Remember that this step in the process becomes important only after you have revised the ideas in your review.

*It's very easy to miss errors when you edit and proofread; so make sure to ask a teacher or a classmate if you're unsure of something.*

**Sentence Structure**

- Did I write clear and complete sentences?
- Did I vary the length of my sentences?
- Did I use a variety of sentence beginnings?

**Punctuation**

- Did I end each sentence with the correct punctuation mark?
- Did I punctuate titles and quotations correctly?
- Did I use commas correctly?

**Capitalization**

- Did I capitalize all proper nouns?
- Did I capitalize titles correctly? (page 31)

**Grammar**

- Did I use correct verb tense and forms (*give, gave, or given*)?
- Did I write my sentences using the active voice? (page 30)
- Did I use subjects and verbs that agree in number? (*Musicians perform; Lucia dances.*)

**Usage**

- Did I use specific nouns, verbs, and adjectives?
- Did I choose the correct word (*you're, your; bring, take*)?
- Did I use words and phrases my reader will understand?

**Spelling**

- Did I check for spelling errors?
- Did I use a handbook, a dictionary, or a computer spell checker?
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 page number in the upper right-hand corner of every page after page 1.

Tips for Computer 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.

After you complete pages 30-35, write a neat final copy of your review on pages 37-40. Then proofread your final copy for errors. Keep the following tips in mind as you complete this copy.
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 Activity: **Responding to Book Reviews**

Read the following book review. Then react to it by following the directions below.

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**Give Your Dog a Hug**

Gary Paulsen has written some fiction books. I read *Hatchet*, a story about a boy surviving a plane crash in the wilderness. *My Life in Dog Years* is a collection of true stories about dogs that the author has known. Paulsen was born in Minnesota in 1939 and did not have an easy life. He grew up mostly with relatives because his parents had problems with alcohol. So it makes sense that he found trusted friends in dogs who were there for him. One even saved his life!

The stories in *My Life in Dog Years* are told in the order they happened in Paulsen's life. He introduces eight dogs he has loved. Each one is described as someone might describe a best friend. There's Snowball, who was Paulsen's little friend while he lived in the Philippines as a young boy. Then there's an adopted dog, a hilariously Great Dane named Caesar. Josh, a Border collie, is so smart that he not only listens but also seems to talk back. Ike, a mysterious hunting dog, makes Paulsen go hunting just to find him. Each story not only shares the personalities of these amazing dogs but also reveals the good times and bad times in the life of the author. (Some stories are so funny, you might laugh out loud. Other stories could make you cry.)

If you love animals, you'll love these stories. Whether it's Fred who tangles with an electric fence, or Quincy who defends Paulsen's wife from a bear attack, this book offers as much adventure as any fiction book. More than that, I like the way the author writes from his heart. It's easy to see why Paulsen has won many awards for his books and stories.

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**Directions for Responding**

- Underline any background information about the author and other books he has written.
- Put parentheses around sentences that express the reviewer's personal feelings about the book.
- Draw a dashed line under sentences that highlight the book's basic plot.

Explain what you like best about the review: ____________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________
Extension Activity: Reflecting on Your Writing

Set your review aside for a day or two after you have finished your writing. Then reread it. If possible, read it to someone else, too. Finally, think about your writing by completing each open-ended sentence below.

* I think the strongest part of my review is . . .

* If I could change one thing in my review, it would be . . .

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

* The next time I write a review, I will . . .
Extension Activity: **Preparing for a Writing Test**

When you take a writing test, you sometimes feel rushed. That means you need to have your thoughts well organized and your ideas for writing clearly in your mind. Answering the questions below will help you prepare for any responding to literature you find on a test.

1. What is the purpose of a book review? (See page 3.)
   - The purpose of a book review is to state an opinion about a book’s value.

2. What should you include in the three different parts of a book review? (See pages 16-20.)
   - Starting the Review: You should include the title of the book, the author’s name, information about the author, and something about what the book deals with (the author’s purpose).
   - Developing the Middle Part: You should tell where the story takes place, who the main character is, and what happens to this person (a plot summary).
   - Ending the Review: You should explain how you felt about the book and recommend why others should or should not read it.

3. What should you check for whenever you express a feeling or an opinion? (See page 24.)
   - You should check to see that you supported your feelings with clear explanations and appropriate references to the book.