

Editing Across Grade Levels

Teaching the Editing TEKS First Grade

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How many of you would say that editing is your favorite part of writing? Few of you probably. How many of you have an editing horror story from either your childhood or classroom where the editing process killed the love of writing? A lot of us. Why? I think it is partially because we have not learned enough about what editing actually IS.

What does it mean to edit writing?

Ask teachers to offer their definitions.

Editing refers to the process of making sure our writing is clear to the reader.

Editing is not the same as revision. Revision is the process of improving the content of our writing.

Editing is also not correcting mistakes.

Think of times where you have found "mistakes" in a published work. Often, those are legitimate mistakes that were missed by the editor. However, very often those mistakes are actually done on purpose by the author. In addition, it is culturally offensive to label legitimate language usage as a mistake. Who decides that? For example, words like aint are acceptable to certain audiences.

Capitalization
Usage
Punctuation
Spelling

The acronym CUPS can help students remember the different areas of writing that writers look at to try to make sure their writing is clear to others. Before I teach editing, I always teach the importance of knowing your audience first. What is considered correct form for one audience, may not be for others. You can access my [audience lesson here](#). We often edit for unknown audiences, in which case standard English can help ensure our meaning is clear to others.

How do you edit your own writing?

Ask teachers to share their process.

Most of us edit small pieces of writing at one time, often during the drafting process. If this is how we edit, why do we ask students to edit entire drafts? Instead, consider teaching students to edit small portions carefully.

With first grade students, these small units would be no bigger than one sentence at a time, beginning with sentence usage and working down to the level of spelling.

You do not need to edit every mistake in something a student has written. Pick a sentence and analyze just that one sentence. Also, this does not have to be every assignment. Make it a goal to edit one sentence of each student's writing each week. Do not just fix it. Talk out loud to them modeling the process and involving them as much as possible.

Consider modeling how to edit a sentence daily during your writing time. The most important thing you can do for your editors is model the **THINKING** behind editing.

Ideally, you would introduce concepts gradually. Then continually review older concepts as the year goes along. Some teachers think they will just address this in student writing as it comes up (based on Lucy Calkins training.) This does not work long term. Students need to see these skills modeled and reviewed consistently. As the year goes on, you would want more and more help from students when editing the daily sentence.

What should first graders be editing for exactly?
List as many editing TEKS as you can remember. No cheating!

Do not worry. This is for you only. Just put as many down on your sheet of paper as you can remember. Next, I will show you the list of actual editing TEKS for comparison. As I go over each one, add any you forgot in a different color on your list.

The Editing TEKS Heading:

1.11(D) edit drafts using standard English conventions

1: First graders are expected to work towards editing on their own. Unless editing was consistently taught in kindergarten, most of your students will not be ready for this, perhaps not until the second half of the year.

2: We are working towards standard conventions--meaning for a more formal audience. I always remind students that their way is not WRONG--it is just may not be clear for a formal audience.

C Capitalization

First word in a sentence

Pronoun I

Names--In the TEKS, these are referred to as common/proper nouns.

1. Names are words we use to identify a specific person, place, or thing. I love to use fairy tales to show this. Farmer is usually not capitalized because it is just a job someone has. However, we do capitalize it when Farmer is a specific character in a story.
2. You need to specifically model to students that the word I is capitalized even in the middle of sentences. This is a new idea to first graders.

Usage

Complete Sentences

Singular, Plural, **Common, Proper Nouns**

Verbs--**Past and Present Tense**

Adjectives (including articles)

Adverbs that convey time

Prepositions

Pronouns (subjective, objective, possessive)

The majority of editing TEKS for first grade are usage TEKS, meaning how the words are used in a sentence. Remember that these are not wrong. It is fine to say at home, "Him gived me cookies." However, when speaking to a grown up they do not know well (audience), this might be confusing.

Punctuation

Punctuation at the end of declarative sentences, **exclamatory, and interrogative sentences**

This means periods, exclamation marks, and question marks. Stop and discuss: Does your district want to teach the sentence type terms? Are they necessary? Personally, I think not.

Spelling

correct spelling of words with grade appropriate orthographic patterns and rules and high-frequency words

Initial and final blends, all syllable types (silent e, r-controlled, open/closed), sight words, and anything else they can sound out

This is a massive task. Basically, if they should be able to read it, they should be able to spell it. Yeah, I know. But hey, we just do our best, right?? My rule is to correct no more than one spelling mistake per sentence with a student. Otherwise, you are just making them feel terrible. If you want to edit so the parent can read something, be sure and explain to the student that they are not ready to spell these words yet because they have not learned enough. I also always ask students if they want me to do that. Respect their answer. Often it is so insulting to them to have so many correction marks on their best work.

How did you do?

If you could not remember most of the editing TEKS, it could be a sign you have not spent enough time teaching them. If you do not remember them, your students likely will not either. This was my classroom for years because I just did not think it was that important. I had so much pressure to teach other things. This was easy to let slide.

My Definition	Presenter Definition	Our Definition for Kids

Flip your paper over. On the back, make a large chart like this. You may need to use most of the page.

Usage

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Pronouns (subjective, objective, possessive)

We are going to focus in on the usage TEKS because I think they are the ones that are most misunderstood, as well as the bulk of the TEKS taught at this level. Using your chart, write YOUR definition for each of these on your chart. Do not google. What do you think they are? You will not have to share.

What is a complete sentence? Presenter Version

It can't be a sentence unless it passes the test:

It has a subject--It is important to say subject and not noun because as sentences advance a subject can actually be an entire phrase. Simply put, the subject is what the sentence is about.

It has a predicate. Again, this is not always just a verb. Later on, it may be a large verbal phrase.

It is a complete thought.

Now, I am going to give you the upper level definitions of each one. This one is a long one, so just be prepared to listen for a bit. I will let you know when I am done so you can put this into your own words on the presenter definition part of your chart.

More on the Subject

Subject--In English the sentence type can help the reader find the subject. This is why you probably learned the sentence types as a child:

Declarative (statement--subject at the beginning)

Interrogative (question--subject at the middle or end)

Exclamatory (statement said with excitement--subject at the beginning)

Imperative (a command--subject is only implied)

Complete Thought

It is so important that even young students begin to evaluate where to put punctuation based on two things:

1--Where do I want the reader to stop as they read? This is important to note because we often use punctuation in places for emphasis.

2--Where do my thoughts end?

3--Is this a complete thought?

Did You Know That Test

This helps kids identify a dependent clause without even knowing what that is. Clauses have a subject and predicate, but they are NOT complete thoughts. This test does NOT work with question/imperative sentences.

If I went to work today. (not a sentence...Did you know that if I went to work today?)

I went to work today. (sentence....Did you know that I went to work today?)

A Sentence is NOT

A sentence is not something that starts with a capital letter and ends with a period. This is something kids come up with sometimes on their own, but it is very detrimental to them down the road. It is important to say that a capital letter at the beginning and the end punctuation are reading signals. They alert the reader to slow down and pay attention. A period tells the reader to stop and take a breath. A capital letters says start again.

Show students in text examples of when authors use punctuation to add emphasis to things that are not complete sentences.

Okay, not take a little bit and write down how you think I would define a complete sentence. My personal definition is that a sentence is a complete thought with a subject and predicate.

How Do We Agree to Define This Moving Forward?

Will our district require students to learn sentence type names?

Click to add text

Work together to make a correct definition that everyone will agree to use at this level. **The main thing is consistency and that students are told there is more to this they will learn as they grow. Otherwise, they will be confused when they move to the next grade level. We can always add more later if the students understand we do that for their benefit. This must be communicated.**

What does this mean for class?

1. Ask students to read punctuation marks by taking a breath in their own writing and during guided reading.
2. Ask students to use the complete sentence tests to help determine if punctuation is in the right place.
3. Reinforce the definition of a sentence when speaking about sentences.

Singular/Plural Nouns/Verbs--Presenter Definition

A noun is a person, place, thing, or idea.

Singular--means one

Plural--means more than one

Verb--a word that describes the action or state of being

Common noun--not a name

Proper noun--a name

We are going to talk about these terms together because they really must work together in first grade editing for subject/verb agreement.

How Do We Agree to Define This Moving Forward?

Do we agree to teach the terms common/proper or do we want to just teach students to capitalize names?

Work together to make a correct definition that everyone will agree to use at this level.

What does this mean for the classroom?

1. Remember the TEKS do not ask students to identify singular/plural nouns/verbs. They should only edit.
2. This basically means students should be editing for subject/verb agreement. For example:

The boys runs to town.

The boys run to town

Students should learn that singular/plural nouns go with different verb forms.

3. Remember that talking about how to use past and present tense verbs is new to them. It will take a lot of practice. Students pick up on regular tenses easily, but they need a lot of practice with irregular tenses.
- 4.

Adjectives and Articles--Presenter Definition

Adjectives--words that describe a noun

Articles--an article is technically a special form of adjective because it is used to describe a noun. However, articles have a very unique job. An article only describes if a noun is specific or general.

English articles: a, an, the

How Do We Agree to Define This Moving Forward?

Work together to make a correct definition that everyone will agree to use at this level.

What does this mean for the classroom?

1. Remember the TEKS do not ask students to identify adjectives and articles. They should only edit.

2. Teach when to use a versus the

Proper placement in the sentence of adjectives

Big, bigger, biggest (not specified in the TEKS, but good to introduce)

Adverbs--Presenter Definition

Adverbs-words that modify or qualify adjectives, verbs, or other adverbs.

Remember that in first grade adverbs are limited to those that show time. [Here is a good list of those.](#)

How Do We Agree to Define This Moving Forward?

Work together to make a correct definition that everyone will agree to use at this level.

What does this mean for the classroom?

1. Remember the TEKS do not ask students to identify adverbs.. They should only edit.
2. Students need to know what how these time words mean.
3. They need to know how to avoid double negatives with the words ever and never.

Preposition--Presenter Definition

A preposition is a word that shows time, space, direction, and location. To be a preposition, the word must always be used in relation to a noun or noun phrase. We call that noun the object of a prepositional phrase. I do not like that the TEKS do not say prepositional phrase because it does not make clear what they do not mean to include. They do NOT mean:

Introductory Phrases: After I go to class, I will sleep.

Infinitives: (prepositions with verbs) I like to go.

Prepositional Phrase: He goes to the baseball field.

You can look up lists of prepositions to use in class. Just make sure you avoid teaching them as part of introductory phrases or infinitives.

How Do We Agree to Define This Moving Forward?

Work together to make a correct definition that everyone will agree to use at this level.

What does this mean for the classroom?

1. Remember the TEKS do not ask students to identify prepositions. They should only edit.
2. Kids really get when to use which preposition all mixed up. Give them lots and lots of practice with this. They need to see sentences with correctly used prepositions. They also need to correct them when the wrong preposition is used.

Just a small P.S. here. I LOVE using the old Sesame Street Grover videos on Youtube to reinforce prepositions. Grover was notorious for using the wrong preposition, and kids love how funny he is, even big kids!

Pronouns--Presenter Definition

A pronoun is a word that takes the place of a noun. This helps us avoid repetition in our writing if they are used correctly.

Subjective: (used typically before the verb) I, We, They, He, She

Objective: (typically after the verb) Me, Us, Them, Him, Her

Possessive: mine, ours, theirs, his, hers

How Do We Agree to Define This Moving Forward?

Work together to make a correct definition that everyone will agree to use at this level.

What does this mean for the classroom?

1. Remember the TEKS do not ask students to identify pronouns. They should only edit.
2. It would be very helpful to upper level teachers if students at this age began to hear frequently that subjective GENERALLY go before the verb and objective pronouns GENERALLY go after.

Putting it Together--One Sentence A Day

Can we commit to modeling editing one sentence a day??

We would need to show either one correct sentence or one incorrect sentence each day.

If you show mistakes every day, students are not really learning to edit.

If you show correct sentences a day, students are not really learning to edit.

We need to do both because that is REAL LIFE.

I know writing often gets pushed to the side because you just do not have time. I totally get it, but if we can commit to doing this just once a day for a few minutes at each grade level, we can make a drastic difference for the writing futures of our students.

Putting it Together--SPIRAL REVIEW

Step One:

Identify Skills and Definitions

Step Two: Decide the order you want to introduce skills for the year.

Step Three: Plot out your year, leaving plenty of review time in between new skills.

Step Four: Write your model editing sentence for each day.

[Link to sentence creator](#)

It does no good to look at random sentences with random skills. Students need to continually review the skills all year. By the end of the year, both you and your students should have the editing TEKS memorized because you have practiced them so much. But how do you make this work? The answer is to create a daily, short spiral review of editing.

Putting it Together--SPIRAL REVIEW

Everyday: complete sentence test

Beginning capitalization, end punctuation

Capitalize names and the word I

One spelling word

Monday: adjectives Thurs.: prepositions

articles, adverbs

Tuesday: pronouns Friday: catch up/buffer day

Wednesday: subject/verb agreement, verb tense

Once you have introduced the skills, you should get your class into the habit of focusing on specific skills daily.

Monday: Adjectives, Articles, Adverbs

She gave a girl with a red dress a yellow pencil.

[Sample of how you might talk about this sentence](#) You will hear me use the term correct in the video. I try not to say correct when speaking about editing. I challenge my students at the beginning of the year to catch me saying "correct" instead of "appropriate for any audience." I give them all a reward if they catch me. They will because this is how I began my teaching career. They LOVE to catch me, and it reminds us all that editing is not about mistakes. It is also a good reminder that mistakes of any kind are not the end of the world.

Tuesday: Pronouns

I always eat breakfast

[Sample of how you might talk about this sentence](#)

Wednesday/Subject/Verb Agreement

The girls run.

As a group, talk about how to model editing this sentence with the class.

Thursday: Prepositions

The students sat in their chairs.

Discuss this sentence as a group. P.S. The students are not IN their chairs...they are ON their chairs. This is a great example of audience. We all know what is meant if a teacher says, "Sit in your chair." There is no need to correct the teacher. However, if we are writing for a formal audience, we should be more clear in case that person gets confused.

How do we agree to teach, model, and review editing?

There are a billion ways to do this. It really does not matter which you pick. What matters is that everyone is on board and consistent.