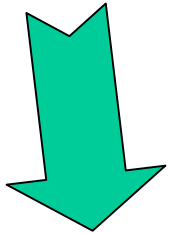


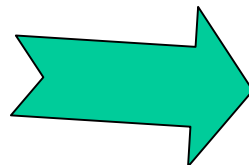
# Curriculum: Writing Instruction

## Stages of Writing

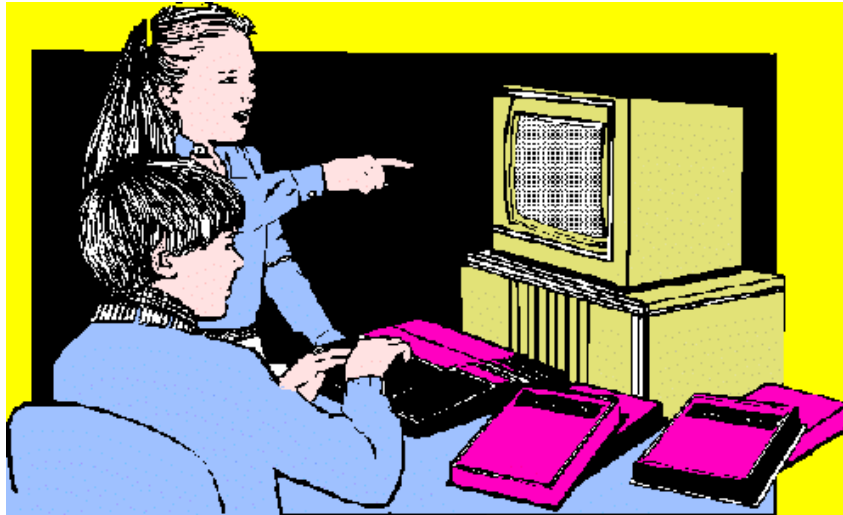
Planning



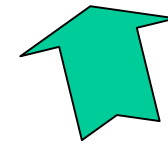
Drafting



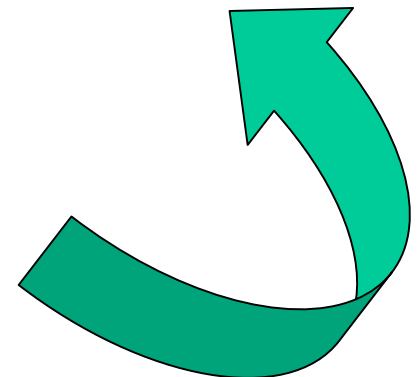
Revising



Editing



Cleaning Up



## Suggested Steps in Revision

1. Read each paragraph. At the end of each paragraph, use purpose, audience, content, and form questions to locate problems.
2. Use related knowledge and skills to improve the paragraph. Make choices about adding, deleting, substituting, and rearranging.
3. Make changes or mark areas for possible changes.
4. Continue reading and evaluating the next paragraph. Once all the paragraphs have been reviewed, students can reconsider each sentence. They should ask themselves the following:
  - Does this sentence make sense standing alone?
  - Is this sentence connected to my main idea in this paragraph?
  - Should I add more?

Effective teachers model and scaffold this process for students.

*(Adapted from UTCRLA, 2003)*

## Revision Guidelines

### Revising for Purpose

These four questions help students revise for purpose:

- Does my paper answer the question “So what?”
- Is my purpose clear? If not, how can I make it clearer?
- Is there any part of my paper that does not help achieve my purpose?
- What are the main words that make my purpose clear?

Review your students’ answers to these questions. Students can also highlight parts of their paper that answer the questions.

Before students can meaningfully evaluate their purpose or revise for purpose, they must possess relevant background knowledge and skills. You can use these exercises with your students to reinforce those abilities:

- Identify writers’ purposes in a variety of examples;
- Highlight sentences or words that clearly state the writer’s purpose;
- Display a sample paragraph that fails to contribute to a paper’s intended purpose; and
- Provide modeling, scaffolding, and practice before asking students to revise their own paragraphs independently for purpose.

Remember to model ways to add, delete, substitute, and rearrange in order to revise for purpose.

### Revising for Audience

To question their papers’ success in reaching the intended audience, students can ask:

- Is my choice of words appropriate for my audience?
- Is the degree of formality appropriate for my audience?
- Is there anything my audience might not understand?
- Have I answered all of my reader’s questions?

Review your students’ answers to these questions to assess their ability to revise for audience.

You can increase students’ ability to answer these questions by:

- Using examples and modeling to teach students to identify writing that fails to reach its intended audience;
- Demonstrating adding, deleting, substituting, and rearranging during revision for audience; and
- Using mini-lessons on style and diction to demonstrate and teach revision for audience.

### Revising for Content

Suggest these questions for your students to use while revising for content:

- Where have I stated my main idea?
- Have I included all the ideas from my plan?

- Have I given enough information?
- Have I explained my ideas so clearly that my reader will know exactly what I mean?
- Where can I elaborate to make my meaning clearer?
- Does my elaboration support the main idea?
- What parts aren't really related to my main idea? Can I delete them?
- What parts don't make sense?
- Have I said the same thing over and over?
- Have I communicated my ideas effectively?

These questions target frequent weaknesses in student writing that are difficult for struggling writers to recognize.

Help students develop skills and knowledge for revising for content through the following activities:

- Identifying and evaluating main ideas and elaboration in writing samples
- Locating common content problems, including:
  - unclear main ideas
  - unrelated or ineffective elaboration
  - insufficient elaboration
- Revising by adding, deleting, substituting, or rearranging information
- Making elaboration specific and avoiding useless generalizations.

Be sure to scaffold these skills.

### **Revising for Form**

Students benefit from thinking through specific questions related to the form of their papers. The following are some sample questions:

- Have I organized my ideas into paragraphs according to my plan?
- Does each section support my meaning?
- Does the order make sense?
- Does each point lead to the next?
- Are my ideas connected by transitions?
- Should I rearrange any of the parts?
- Do I have an introduction, body, and conclusion?
- Does the structure of the draft support my purpose?

Guiding students through these questions and reviewing their answers will help students understand the procedure for, and value of, revising for form.

Teachers can further reinforce revision knowledge and skills through these exercises on form:

- Teach strategies for rethinking organization after drafting by rearranging words, sentences, and paragraphs; and
- Provide techniques for sentence-level revision.

The handout “Strategies for Revising Sentence Structure” will give you ideas for the second exercise.

*(Adapted from UTCRLA, 2003)*

## Strategies for Revising Sentence Structure

### 1. Sentence Beginnings

Provide a mini-lesson on a variety of sentence patterns, integrating lessons on phrases and clauses. Then, model a technique in which students evaluate their own writing for a variety of sentence structures and beginnings. Have students underline the first four or five words of each sentence to determine if the same pattern has been used in most sentences. Provide mini-lessons and scaffolding, selecting sentences to revise to improve variety and meaning.

Another version of this activity is to have students list just the first word of each sentence. If more than one sentence in a row begins with the same word, the student should revise one of the sentences. Students will need related mini-lessons on ways to begin sentences, as well as punctuation of common sentence structures.

### 2. Model Sentences

Display examples of sentences by professional writers as models for proper structure based on content. Then, model how to integrate these patterns into the student's own writing.

### 3. Sentence Combining

List simple sentences that make up a paragraph on the board, transparency, or chart tablet. Have students practice combining the sentences in different ways. These skills should be modeled and practiced collaboratively with an appropriate amount of coaching before students can be expected to combine sentences in their own writing. Emphasize that sentence structure often affects meaning. Sentence combining also offers an appropriate opportunity for teaching punctuation with sentence structure or patterns.

### 4. Transitions

Model passages written for different purposes and modes, pointing out the use and effectiveness of transitional words and phrases. Present examples of passages with poor transitions in order to emphasize their importance. Then, model and scaffold revision of the passage through the addition of transitions. Have students practice this revision skill collaboratively on a prepared passage before being asked to apply this revision skill to their own writing.

### 5. Fragments and Run-ons

Show examples of student writing containing run-ons and fragments. Model a strategy of reading from period to period, asking if it is a complete thought or if it is several thoughts strung together with a conjunction. Suggest that students read their papers sentence by sentence. Model identification of fragments and run-ons as well as how to fix the problems. Have students practice during whole class and small group instruction before asking them to apply the strategy to their own work.

*(Adapted from UTCRLA, 2003)*

## **Revision for Struggling Writers: Stages of Expansion**

### **First Draft**

I saved my money to buy a car. I saved for a long time and really wanted it. I thought about it a lot. When I was sixteen, I got the money from the bank and I bought it.

### **Working Draft**

For the last three years, I saved every penny I could get my hands on so that I could buy a car. I saved for a long time and really wanted it. I thought about it a lot. Then my sixteenth birthday arrived. I was thrilled to go to the bank, withdraw all my savings, and go to the dealership with my father to make my down payment on this incredible purchase.

### **Final Draft**

For the last three years I saved every penny I could get my hands on so that I could buy a car. Since I have been five years old, I have dreamed of owning my very own beautiful automobile. I considered the color, the cost, the make, and the model. I changed my mind about each of these at least twice every month. Finally, I made my decision. Then, my sixteenth birthday arrived. I was thrilled to go to the bank, withdraw all my savings, and go with my father to place my down payment on this incredible purchase.

*(Adapted from UTCRLA, 2003)*

## Peer Revision Guide

### Step 1:

Listen as the writer reads the draft aloud, and praise something.

*In your paper, you had a good transition between the second and third paragraphs.*

### Step 2:

Reread your partner's paper silently. At the end of each paragraph, ask yourself questions related to purpose, audience, content, and form. Make comments in the margin or on sticky notes.

### Step 3:

Write questions, comments, and suggestions for your partner.

#### Questions:

*What did you mean when you said . . . ?*

#### Comments:

*Your ideas . . .*

*Your organization . . .*

*Your introduction . . .*

*Your conclusion . . .*

*I had a hard time understanding . . .*

#### Suggestions:

*I suggest you add . . .*

*I suggest you go into more detail on . . .*

*I think it would help if you . . .*

*Add more elaboration . . . (where?)*

### Step 4:

Discuss your comments with your partner in a constructive fashion. The writer can ask questions of the peer.

### Step 5:

Writer's Plans for Revision—the writer identifies revisions that he or she will make to the draft.

*(Adapted from UTCRLA, 2003)*