PEER-EDITING PROCESSES OF SOME GRADE SIX STUDENTS USING A STANDARD TEXT

by

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ABSTRACT

Peer editing is one of a number of editing techniques used by experienced writers. In recent years, it has been introduced into some elementary classrooms as part of the writing process, but has not always resulted in either improved editing on the part of the editor nor improved writing on the part of the writer. This study deals with the peer editing behaviours of one class of Grade six public school students, as they edited and rewrote a standard text. Analysis of the results indicates the students in this group were much more concerned with the mechanics of writing than with the contents, and their peer-editing dealt almost entirely with error-correction. Some students attempted to give positive feedback to the writer, but their comments were vague and non-specific. Obvious deficiencies in the story were not pointed out to the writer. Further, when the student editors themselves rewrote the material, only one made use of any editorial suggestions given to the writer in the course of editing. The others ignored their own suggestions and simply wrote a corrected copy of the story. This study suggests that students need more direction in editing process to help them become more effective in both peer-editing and self-editing.

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INTRODUCTION

There is a popular mythology connected with writing. The myth suggests that some people have a natural 'way with words' or a 'knack for writing' which allows writing to happen effortlessly. Another part of the myth suggests that those who have this inborn ability need do little more than wait for inspiration and the paragraphs will flow (Flower, 1986; Young, 1980). Some of the hallmarks of good writing are a natural flow and seamlessness, but writers who produce this sort of writing generally do not produce it effortlessly, spending a great deal more time editing and revising than do less experienced writers who produce less polished writing (Tate, 1981).

Good writing often gives the impression of speech written down, and in the 1950s, Harvard students, among others, were taught that writing was simply an extension of speech (Mailer, 1981). Even today a notion persists that the acid test of good writing is whether it sounds good when read aloud. Good writing may well have the ring of speech, but that ring belies the precision of form and construction which underlie it.

The production of writing differs from the production of speech in many more ways than the obvious difference in medium:

speech is, of course, a linear process while writing offers recursive opportunities, but one seldom considered difference is the speed of production (1), which may influence the ability of a writer to capture thought. Further, variables of speech such as inflection, emphasis, tone, pace, volume, the addition of facial expression or body language which are commonly used to clarify or underscore a spoken message, are not available to writers. Writing can and does have subtleties of its own, such as graphics, format, and style of presentation, but these factors are rarely encountered in the literature on teaching written composition.

Definition of terms

One problem in discussing writing composition is the lack of unanimity in the use of writing terminology. For purposes of this discussion the following definitions are used:

'Editing' refers to reading text in search of those areas which can be improved by re-arranging or modifying the contents of the text. Editing may include making suggestions as to how those modifications may be made, may refer to strong points or well-written passages in the text, or may point out deficient or weak areas. Editing will not be used to refer to corrections in

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(1) Hand writing averages 25 wpm, keyboarding between 60 - 120 wpm. Speech averages 160 - 180 wpm. The fastest recorded human speaker listed in the Guinness book of records achieved 560 wpm.

the mechanics or conventions of the writing, such as paragraph indentation, spelling, etc.

'Proofreading' refers to examining text for errors and accuracy: spelling mistakes, uniformity in numerical and other references, following a format correctly, and so on.

'Revising' refers to alterating existing text content by either expanding on the material, clarifying the meaning of the existing text, deleting inappropriate material, adding new material or otherwise re-working text which already exists.

'Rewriting' refers to creating a new piece of writing which may either paraphrase the original or begin again, but does not involve reworking the existing text.

Three major categories of editing will be discussed: self editing, other editing, and peer editing.

Self editing is an evaluative process undertaken by the writer which may take place at any point in the writing process and involves examining the writing with a critical eye, attempting to read it as others will read it. With experience, writers usually become more demanding self editors. Other editing is normally done by someone with more experience. In classroom editing, this person is usually the teacher.

Peer editing is evaluation of text by a writer at the same writing level as the author. Peer editing now gaining wider acceptance in elementary schools differs from traditional writers' workshops in that it is usually done by inexperienced writers.

In future, computer programmes may be able to edit writing but at present they perform only crude text corrections. Spell-checking programs only measure input against programmed lexicons and words not listed are rejected as incorrect. They are unable to recognize incorrect usage of correctly spelled words and the skills of human editors are required to recognize the aptness of particular words in particular contexts.

Some writing programs record the numbers of words in sentences, alerting writers when sentences are either longer or shorter than average, but the computer can neither evaluate what it is scanning nor 'understand' that short or long sentences may intentionally be used for specific effects. While the use of computers in writing classrooms is increasing, the major focus of writing teachers remains with process, not technology.

Role of Editing in Writing Process

References to classroom editing often place it at the end of the writing process, as a sort of 'final step' in preparing writing for the reader. The notion of editing as the last step in writing may have stemmed from a widely quoted analysis of writing, the 'watershed' report of Rohman and Wlecke (1964), which used the descriptors "pre-writing, writing, and rewriting" to separate the writing process into three components. Rohman and Wlecke's recognition of these phases in the writing process was probably not unique, and possibly only crystallized what many writers, teachers and researchers had already recognized.

But the 'pre-write, write and rewrite' description they used to refer to steps in the process, may also have been misinterpreted as an implication that rewriting was done only as the last stage, or the 'final step' in producing finished text.

If writing is regarded as a linear process, which a pre-write, write and rewrite 'formula' might seem to imply, there could be a logical case made for teaching writing by formula: A produces B, which results in C and leads to an end product, D. But if writing is seen as a recursive process, in which there is no A, B or C, a linear formula would not work and, indeed, a formula approach does not produce good writing.

Public perceptions of literacy and writing pedagogy

During the past thirty years, (1) much media attention has been given and continues to be given, to the problems of functional illiteracy, in both the United States and Canada.

One response to this attention has been a search for ways to improve classroom writing, and this has involved a great deal of input from a great many sources. But teachers have at times found themselves caught in a tug-of-war of opinions. Attempts to make use of new pedagogy and new methodology and to

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(1) In 1955, Newsweek magazine published Why Johnny Can't Read. At intervals, the popular media has returned to the topic: the latest account is a 1988 survey sponsored and published by the Southam publishing chain, in six consecutive full-page features.

apply new techniques and technology sometimes met resistance from parents, teachers, administrators and the general public.

An early attempt at making writing more accessible to very young writers involved the Initial Teaching Alphabet (ITA), using simplified orthography rather than the traditional alphabet (Pitman, 1966). ITA appeared to offer a way of permitting students to concentrate on the message without being overly distracted by the medium. As students gained confidence and proficiency in writing and reading skills, a 'natural transition' was believed to take place, carrying students from ITA to traditional spelling. However, it was sometimes difficult to convince parents that these non- traditional products were effective in teaching students to write.

One major objection to ITA was that students and teachers had to learn two methods of spelling: first with ITA then with the traditional alphabet. What some educators saw as innovative was seen by others as the doubling of work loads.

Discussions of writing and writing traditions appear to be one of the topics in education which carry more emotional baggage than almost any other. Adults discussing writing often appear to be inextricably caught up in childhood memories and schoolroom memories, along with writing memories. Nor is writing a discrete subject, but rather a very complex activity, involving as it does, spelling, grammar, handwriting, content, ownership, style, and at times, personal risk taking.

One factor which appears to have received little

attention is that while proven ability as a writer is a requisite for most teachers of writing at post-secondary levels, teachers of writing in public schools have had "relatively little training in writing or in how to teach it" (Daniels, 1985, p 15). In some cases writing appears to engender almost as much stress for public school teachers as it does for public school students (Gere, 1984; Gere and Smith, 1979). The lack of writing experience may not only affect the ways in which writing and editing are taught in elementary schools, but also account for some of the differences between the ways in which writing is taught at public school level and at post-secondary level.

Attitudes toward editing

Among experienced writers the process of editing and revising is regarded as the point where the 'real' writing takes place (Donald Murray, 1968; Waldrep, 1985). Among inexperienced writers there appears to be, if not a reluctance to do any editing or revising, certainly a lack of understanding as to why editing or revising should be done and what it can accomplish. The problem is compounded by the fact that in many classrooms (and in many textbooks) editing and revising have been equated with error-correction.

Error correction is, unfortunately, all-too-familiar ground to many parents, teachers and administrators and has become almost an entrenched part of writing instruction in the

schools. It produces a measurable result which may appear in some instances to be regarded as 'proof' that something has been taught.

The result appears to be that in some classrooms, while lip service is paid to the notion of editing, rewriting, and revision, students in fact may be doing none of these things, but rather, be involved in a didactic relationship in which the teacher tells, instructs or gives rules, and the student listens, absorbs and complies (Daniels, 1985, p 14). Given these circumstances, the possibility of effective modelling of the editing process or the formation of effective peer-editing groups appears to be slim, and indeed, the peer-editing process does sometimes appear to retain elements of the didactic relationship with the difference that the 'correcter' is now another student rather than the teacher. This type of writing relationship, be it with a teacher or another student, may make it difficult for students to escape what Stewig (1983) referred to as the 'writing two-step' of writing a draft, then correcting it.

If student peers are correcting errors rather than editing writing, the anticipated improvements in writing quality and in editing skills will likely not materialize, and this may be what has happened in some classrooms where peer editing has been introduced but peer correcting has taken place. The result is often predictable: the enthusiasm of the teacher dims as one

more 'new' technique fails to produce the desired result, and the task of searching for and implementing yet another method of motivating and facilitating improvements in student writing begins again.

Editing, whether self-editing, other editing, or peer editing, is recognized by experienced writers as the heart of the writing process. Ernest Hemingway was noted for his harsh editing and diligent rewriting. His daily output of between 800 and 1,000 words was revised, edited and cut until it totalled just about 200 words (Murray, 1968). Hemingway is quoted as saying he rewrote the last page of Farewell to Arms 39 times, and when he was asked what the difficulty was, he replied: "Getting the words right." (Plimpton, 1963, p 222).

Hemingway was looking for the right words, but students seem to be looking for the correct words (Stewig, 1983). There is an essential difference between the two.

The possibility that peer editing often seemed to be concerned with correctness, rather than rightness, was the starting point for this study.

Relatively few studies exist which deal with the subject of peer editing. Those which do usually describe the results of peer groups editing their own work (Benson, 1979; Carter, 1982; Christensen, 1982; Crowhurst, 1979a; Graves and Murray, 1980; Karengianes, 1981; Lamberg, 1980; B. Newman, 1980). As students were not editing the same material, it was difficult to compare

their work or to identify common denominators in their editing processes. For that reason, this study examined the peer editing processes of a group of students editing a standard text written by a student who, although not a member of the class being studied, was of approximately the same age and lived in the same general area. It was hoped the use of a standard text would make it possible to make more direct comparisons of the editing done by members of the study group.

The study was designed to focus on only a small part of the peer editing process. It undertook to discover whether students appeared to be more concerned with offering suggestions which would affect the content of the text, or with correcting errors in the text. To this end, the kinds of suggestions made by students were studied, and the way in which they edited the standard text was examined in an attempt to discover whether there were any common denominators in the process and, if so, to identify them as clearly as possible.

Analysis of the work of these students suggests several avenues for further exploration into the ways in which peer editing is undertaken and for techniques which might help peer editors become more effective in helping writers to 'get the words right.'

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

> "...I don't think it's possible to describe the creation of fiction. It's a very odd process, and if you begin to describe it, you begin to sound as though it were a mechanical process with the author as a transmitter and, of course, that's utter nonsense because it's not metaphysical."
> Mavis Gallant (1988). p. 36

Research in Writing Process

A 1960-61 publication of the (American) National Council of Teachers of English contained this comment on the instruction of writing skills at the elementary level:

> Study of the skills in writing has gone on since before the Civil War in this country and considerably longer in Europe. Composition has been studied as a whole; likewise the interdependent parts thereof have been subjected to analysis, experiment, and to evaluation. Indeed, it appears that somewhat more attention has been given to the mechanical aspects of writing than to the essential ones of invention or to children's basic motivation for writing.
> (Burrows, 1961, p.5)

Examination of writing composition texts and handbooks almost thirty years later shows that despite development of many new pedagogic techniques to help students improve their writing composition skills, the basic premise remains almost equally true: less emphasis appears to be placed on what students have to say, than on how they say it. (1).

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(1) The compositional focus outlined in the B.C. Ministry of Education Curriculum Guide (1987) and the 1987 provincial examinations in English composition deals almost entirely with form and format.

Need for Standards

While Burrows (1981) was expressing concern with the emphasis placed on the mechanics of writing, others were expressing concern with the ways in which some research had been undertaken in the field of writing composition. Edmund (1961) found much of the then-current research conflicting and inconclusive, with a good portion limited in terms of the major generalizations which one might derive from it.

An analysis of the methodology used in some research in writing composition, undertaken by Braddock, Lloyd-Jones and Schoer (1963) found that many studies lacked either controls, a detached point of observation, a rigid definition of terminology, or a specific objective. It would be naive to suggest that all research done since that time has been impeccable, and equally careless to suggest that no research undertaken prior to that date was sound. But it does suggest that regardless of whether research was done prior to or following Braddock, Lloyd-Jones and Schoer's study, the methodology of the research should be considered equally with the findings of the research.

This is particularly true in the field of writing research, where at times, studies of similar topics appear to present wide variations in findings. This may in part be accounted for by inconsistent methodologies.

An example of inconsistencies in findings may be noted by comparing studies dealing with correlation among the language arts skills of reading and writing. There appears to be a sense that high achievement in one language skill may be taken as an indicator of high ability in all language skills. Good readers (an undefined term) could be expected to be good writers (also undefined), and vice versa, (Artey, Hildreth, Townsend, Beery and Dawson, 1954). This finding has been challenged on a number of occasions (Loban, 1976; Martin, 1955; Winter, 1957). Researchers today recognize that reading, writing and speaking behaviours demonstrated by students may be differentially influenced by a number of factors, such as socioeconomic background, peer group, school emphases and many others (Burrows, 1961; Clay, 1975; Hall, Moretz and Statom, 1976; Heath, 1980; King and Rentel, 1981; Stubbs, 1980). Further, one must weigh carefully any attempts to derive causations from statistical correlations between the various language skills. While Birnbaum (1982) did indeed discover correlations between the reading habits and writing products of students, such correlations do not always indicate causes.

The assumption persists that children who read a lot of good books are better writers than those who do not, and, as children who read many books often do appear to be better writers than children who read few books, it is tempting to seek connections between the two. Writing, however, can not be shown

to be a product of reading. The relationship may relate instead to a home atmosphere where good books are readily available, reading and writing are modelled, and literacy and literature play important roles in everyday life.

Differing perceptions of editing

The lack of definition in writing terminology creates major difficulties in comparing, contrasting and discussing various studies. Editing, for example, has been referred to as the outcome of exercises in correction (Braddock, 1963; Burrows, 1961). This notion is representative of much of the earlier literature about composition process: editing is regarded as something to be done after all other aspects of writing have been tended to.

Among experienced writers, however, simple correction of this sort is regarded as proof-reading.

The job of the editor is to ensure that a piece of writing is clear, complete and, if possible, interesting and that the writing is as free from error as possible (Canadian Press handbook, 1983). Professional editors usually leave major rewrites to the writer, but give very specific directions on how the writing might be improved. Professional editors regard over-editing as just as harmful to a story as under-editing, and a prime directive for editors is that major rewrites should not be attempted only because a story is not written the way the

editor would have written it (CP, 1983, p105).

Clearly, editing is not regarded by professional editors in the same light as some researchers and many classroom teachers view it: as the outcome of an exercise in correction. The goal of the experienced editor is to help the writer achieve the best possible presentation of the material, in the writer's own style. The editor is usually looking behind the work in an attempt to see what the writer really wants to say, and finding ways to help the writer achieve that goal. In other words, looking below the surface of the page (Rohman, 1964). Regarding editing only as a process of error-correction lowers and limits the potential of editing, and diminishes imagination, curiosity, discovery, and speculation, by replacing a sense of 'wondering' with mundane adherence to sets of rules.

A British Columbia Ministry of Education publication The Young Writers Project (1983) notes that editing is often the "most challenging stage of the writing process" for both the student writer and for the teacher, but convincing students of this is not easy. Traditional classroom interaction (the student writes, the teacher points out errors and the student corrects) does little to add challenge or excitement to writing. Complaining and proofreading, probably the two most widely practiced modes of teacher response to student writing, have turned out to be surpringly unhelplful and sometimes even damaging (Daniels, 1985, p 31)

Editing may be more important to the writing process than some educators might realize, and far from coming into play at the end of the writing process, editing skills may even be prerequisite to skills in writing (Lewes, 1988[1]), and the teaching of pre-editing skills is only beginning to be explored (Beyer, 1979; Johannesson, 1982; Loyie-Philippsen, 1988).

Variations in Editing

There are many different kinds of writing, but whether the writing is edited for a commercial publication, an academic or other specialized journal, or a volume of poetry, the processes have much in common. Two major stages in editing undertaken by the writer are the internal editing done by the writer for the writer during the processes of exploration and discovery, and external editing, done by the writer for the reader, after the topic has been clarified in the writer's own mind (Flower, Hayes et al, 1985). These steps may or may not be followed by peer-editing and/or other-editing.

Revising, editing and rewriting are terms which have been used almost interchangeably throughout the literature, and between Braddock (1963) and Flower (1986), a generation of researchers used some 30 different terms to refer to text alterations. Flower and Hayes (1985, 1986) deal with text

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(1) In a personal letter to the writer, Lewes commented," in short, good editing often precedes good writing."

alteration with a precision not previously demonstrated, using definitions which leave no room for confusion. Whether one agrees or disagrees with what they say, there is no doubt at all about what they are discussing.

Editing, rewriting and revising appear to be regarded as much the same thing in many accounts in the literature, but Flower and Hayes (1984) see each of these as very precise, identifiably different functions. By providing those very precise definitions, they preclude the dilemmas created in earlier studies, articles and reports, when the reader was often left to guess at what exactly was meant by any particular reference. It is unfortunate that not all researchers have followed Flower and Hayes' lead in providing such precise definitions for terminology used in their texts, as this move enables the reader to understand clearly the point under discussion.

The range of 'writing process' terminology may be demonstrated by examining some of the various usages of the word 'revision'. Experienced writers do not always impute the same meaning to 'revision' as do teachers and students (Spear, 1982), but use it in the sense of looking over the material again and questioning what they read: What is right with this? Is this logical? Is this connected? Is this exactly what I want to say? Will this be clear to the reader? Can I make it more effective? More easily understood? What can I build upon?

Teachers and students, in contrast, often use revision in the sense of looking over the material again and asking: What is wrong with this? Is the spelling correct? Is punctuation correct? Is the grammar correct? Do short sentences need combining? (Spear, 1982).

What Constitutes Good Writing?

If there is a demonstrable lack of agreement regarding descriptors for the various stages in producing writing, there is a concomitant lack of definition concerning the 'goodness' or worth of the end product, and this may contribute to one of the major problems encountered in teaching writing: text evaluation.

Mechanical aspects (spelling, grammar, and writing conventions) are measurable in the sense that there is usually an objective aspect allowing them to be categorized as being either correct or incorrect. But these are not the essential factors in producing effective compositions. Good writing demands much more than simply arranging properly spelled words in grammatically correct sentences and evaluation of the writing necessarily becomes more subjective. Perfectly correct writing can make perfectly dreadful reading.

Writing as a Self-taught Skill

Clarity of expression, density of material, flow, style, image-provoking strategies, and organization of material are all

important aspects of writing, but are neither easy to teach nor to evaluate. Murray (1968) referred to writing as a self-taught skill produced mainly by rewriting, and more often learned than taught.(1) If, as Elbow (1973), Murray (1968) and others insist, revising and rewriting are keys to good writing, the challenge must lie in finding ways to reveal those keys to students (Gundlach, 1982). And while teachers seem to agree that revision and rewriting are worthwhile, there are no agreed-upon systems of evaluating either revision or rewriting (Bracewell, 1978; Beach, 1986; Scardemalia and Bereiter, 1978; Ziv, 1984). No common agreement exists about what rewriting is (Braddock, 1963; DellaPiana, 1978; Flower and Hayes, 1985, 1986; Murray, 1968) much less on how to teach it.

If, as Donald Murray (1978a) suggests, revising is one of the "least researched, least examined, least understood and (usually) least taught" areas in writing process, it also appears to be viewed as one of the least creative, least enjoyable, and least worthwhile parts of the process (Calkins, 1980a; Graves, 1975, 1979). A key to this attitude may lie in composition texts: a study of these manuals might lead one to

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(1) Sloan Wilson (1976) whose father founded the School of Journalism at New York University, claimed his father was always embarassed by students who thanked him, as he believed writing could not be taught, only learned (p. 39).

believe that good writing is little more than a process of elimination: remove/correct enough 'wrong' things from the text, and what remains must be 'right.'

As has already been noted, the production of good writing is far more involved and proactive than a simple process of error correction, but in many cases, the writing of compositions appears to be taught and evaluated, at levels ranging from kindergarten through college, on the basis of error correction. Studies cited in an NCTE position statement (1984), and by Bonds (1980), Searle and Dillon (1980), and Ziv (1984) show that emphasis on error detection/correction is one of the factors which makes evaluation of writing so difficult.

The problem is double edged: emphasis on correction, along with a lack of criteria poses a problem for teachers faced with evaluating the writing, and for students who, because they lack clearly defined standards against which to measure their work, may be distracted by the temptation to undertake surface corrections rather than consider text content.

Traditional Teaching Methods

One traditional method of instructing novice writers in the nuances of their craft is exposing them to classics in writing (Daugherty, 1984). But Rohman and Wlecke (1964) did not believe exposure to good prose was particularly effective as a teaching method.

> If we train students how to recognize an example of good prose (the rhetoric of the finished word), we have not given them a basis on which to build their own writing abilities. All we have done, in fact, is to give them standards to judge the goodness of their finished effort. We have not really taught them how to make that effort. (Rohman and Wlecke, 1964, p. 17)

Students soon learn what is important to the teachers who mark their work, and students who achieve the better marks often seem to be those who have learned to attend to what is more greatly valued (Butler, 1980; Bereiter and Scardamalia (1981). But while this may have a positive effect on student marks, it does not always improve their writing abilities or the quality of their writing. Teachers' marking at times appears to follow hidden agendas or make use of undisclosed criteria (S. Freedman, 1984). The existance of these undisclosed criteria was suggested in a blind study involving experienced writers and regular students who completed the same classroom writing assignment. Teachers marking the assignment were not made aware that non-student writers were participating in the project, and the marking neither singled out the work of the experienced writers, nor rated it significantly higher than the student work (S. Freedman, 1984).

This was an indication to the researchers that teachers may not necessarily have been marking only for the quality of the writing but rather, may have been measuring it against another set of standards of which the experienced writers were unaware. The researchers did not suggest what the identity of

those standards may have been and the teachers' criteria for marking were not explained.

Two questions arise: how well would the professional writers have performed had they been aware of those criteria? How well would students have performed had they been able to write under conditions normally enjoyed by professional writers: free to choose subject matter, voice, genre, writing time and place? And, if the professional writers were able to write well without responding to the criteria used by the teachers, how important to the end result were they? What, then, were the teachers trying to teach? Did the marks they awarded truly reflect levels of achievement? If not, what were they marking?

Similarities between Experienced and Novice Writers.

The writing process of some very young writers appears to be strikingly similar to the process followed by many experienced writers (Graves and Murray, 1980). In a joint project which compared and analysed Murray's own work along with the work of students between the ages of six and nine years, Graves and Murray (1980) were able to demonstrate that both used writing for discovery, and that both worked in a sequence in which addition was the initial response, deletion was the second response, and reordering was the third response. Graves referred to this as the developmental order in which children learn revision.

Another point of similarity between the two groups was the on-going nature of the editing, and the recursiveness of the work. Neither divided the material into discrete segments, but re-entered the work repeatedly, reviewing and/or rewriting it a number of times.

Differences between experienced and novice writers

There are many points of difference between experienced and novice writers: experienced writers take a global view of their work, novice writers take a word, phrase, or line-level view (Flower and Hayes, 1985, 1986; Graves and Murray, 1980; Hull, 1984; Sommers and McQuade, 1984). Experienced writers use a number of problem-solving strategies, but novice writers often appear to have no idea how to solve problems or even in some cases that a problem exists (Flower and Hayes, 1985, 1986). The writing of experienced writers generally matches the mental image they have of it, but novices sometimes appear to believe they have written something different to what appears on the paper (Olson, 1977b). Perl (1978, 1979) demonstrated this belief in a study of miscue analysis, showing some inexperienced college writers who read their work aloud, read complete sentences where only partial sentences had been written. Incorrectly written word endings, plurals, past tenses, etc., were read correctly. Perl (1979, 1978) suggested student writer/readers may have been blinded to discrepancies between written and verbalized words by preoccupation with meaning. Experienced writers may be more accustomed to actually looking

at what they have written than inexperienced writers, who often appear to express their thoughts in a reduced form of writing. Perl suggested these sorts of 'errors' may not have been made through ignorance, but rather through eagerness. This eagerness may continue to blind inexperienced writers during revision and editing, so they literally do not see digressions or gaps.

Factors affecting performance

Other factors which may lead to performance differences between experienced and inexperienced writers deal with the application of rules. Inexperienced writers at times apply rules incorrectly: they may apply the right rule wrongly, the wrong rule rightly, or may even apply non-existant or erroneous rules (Shaughnessy, 1977). Experienced writers, on the other hand, at times appear to ignore rules or create their own rules (Daugherty, 1984; Taylor, 1984; Tchudi, 1983; Waldrep, 1985). Numerous interviews and anecdotal accounts focus on experienced writers, revealing behaviours ranging from practical to eccentric. The Paris Review, for instance, interviewed more than 200 established writers on their writing. These wide-ranging interviews formed the basis for six volumes edited by George Plimpton (1963, 1967, 1976 and three others), revealing writers' literary habits, personal philosophies, discussions of peers, commentaries on world or local situations, and a number of other topics, and recounting a variety of idiosyncratic behaviours in

various writing processes. Other accounts have dealt with the writing habits of post-secondary level teachers of writing (Tchudi, 1983; Waldrep, 1985).

These experienced writer/teachers noted quite seriously that they 'needed' such things as lined, yellow, legal-sized writing pads, pencils of a certain hardness, fountain or ball-point pens in particular colours of ink, specific makes or models of typewriters, certain kinds of word processors and programs, paticular light levels, sound levels, surface materials on desk or table tops, and so on (Waldrep, 1985). Yet while these idiosyncratic behaviours were viewed by individual writers as being of undeniable importance to their comfort level, there was no way of measuring what impact any of these factors may have on their actual writing processes.

Defining this impact becomes a matter of concern if the behaviour of experienced writers is to be taken as a model by inexperienced writers. Flower and Hayes (1981) warn that searching in the behaviours of experts for patterns can run the risk of following those patterns without understanding the motivation. Thus students who mimic the action of a writing model without understanding it may confuse the need for green ink and lined, yellow, legal-sized pages and the strains of Verdi's Four Seasons on the stereo with more important but less

visible parts of the process, such as the connectedness, density, or organization of the writing and thus unwittingly create a parody of writing process (Flower and Hayes, 1981).

Researchers note that there may exist as yet unsuspected problems dealing with student perceptions of the writing process. Petty (1984) drew attention to one area which he felt had been overlooked in research: the behaviour of literate non-writers. Petty believed attempts to establish reasons for non-writing behaviour might help provide insights into some of the problems experienced by novice writers, and a better understanding of the behaviour of literate non-writers might suggest strategies for improving the performance of minimal or reluctant writers. Another area of limited research which has received only scant attention from reviewers deals with literate blind or deaf students (Ewoldt, 1984; Gormley and Sarachan-Deily, 1982). Understanding how the writing processes of these students differ from or conform to the writing processes of other students may provide additional insights into writing problems.

Technology may also be affecting the ways in which writers write: word processors and computer terminals appear to offer many advantages to writers, but we do not yet know precisely how, or if, they influence either the writer or the writing (Papert, 1980).

Studies of the Writing Process

A classic approach in teaching students to generate writing is the three-stage process known as 'pre-write, write, and rewrite'. As noted, one of the early references in the literature to this particular process appears to have been made by Rohman and Wlecke (1964). Upon the paradigm of a plant, they imposed the concept of line (writing as a linear act) as a useful way of 'freezing' the growth pattern of the plant metaphor into a static yet structured whole which could then be analyzed point by point. Having in effect immobilized their specimen for study, they were then able to divide it into two main parts: that which occurs before words appear on the page, and that which takes place after words are written on a page. The former they called pre-writing, the latter would be further divided into writing and re-writing.

Writing was more than a simple linear process, but it was so complex and involved it could not be studied in a functioning state, so Rohman and Wlecke's (1964) technique of immobilizing it allowed them to study the internal patterns in the writing. References to the linearity of their 'frozen' specimen, however, appear to have led to a belief that Rohman and Wlecke saw writing itself as a simple linear process, but by their own account they recognized that much in writing took place 'under the surface of the page'.

D. Murray (1968) adopted a similar three part description

of the writing process, but used in his description the terms prevision, vision, and revision. Oddly, Murray's division of the writing process did not appear to be regarded by researchers as linear, while Rohman and Wlecke's did.

A number of researchers each evolved his or her own particular way of dividing the writing process (Bartlett, 1982; Belanger and Rodgers, 1983; Berkenkotter, 1984, Murray, 1968; Sherwood, 1980; Sommers and McQuade, 1984; Sudal, 1982) but in general, each of these descriptions acknowledged some form of activity prior to the physical writing process, the recursive nature of the writing process itself, and the provision of some method of altering what had been written. These views of the writing processes contrasted with earlier methods of teaching writing, which placed emphasis on the product of the writing, rather than on the process of the writing. Writing-as-product teaching methodology customarily involved such techniques as directed writing, rote writing, memorization and recopying, writing from dictation, and substitution writing, none of which is generally found in the writing-as-process teaching methodology.

Donald Graves In the Classroom.

Donald Graves (1975, 1979) has completed a number of studies which show that even very young children have something to say and can produce quite competent writing, given the opportunity to write on topics which are personally meaningful.

Graves is not only a noted researcher in the field of writing process, but is also a teacher of writing. Working with young children (and later, with teachers of young children) he demonstrated, as well as taught, writing. Whether done on large flip-sheets or on regular letter-sized paper, his work was readily visible to the students he taught. His questions about the children's writing encouraged them to ask questions about his writing. Graves freely shared his writing with students in an attempt to de-mystify the writing process, and readily allowed children to see that he had changed his mind, had added to the writing, substituted, amplified, deleted and otherwise edited text (Walshe, 1983).

He did not refer to his work as 'wrong' nor to what he was doing as error correction, but rather as finding a different way of looking at a subject, a different way of expressing a thought, or a different way of connecting ideas. His nonpejorative attitude was enabling for students, who were made free to edit and revise their work in an exploratory manner, making use of the potential for discovery provided by revision.

Donald Graves at all times stressed the value of content and intention of the writing over conventions of composition.

Donald Graves' writing process could have been the model for a description by another prolific writer and highly regarded teacher, Donald Murray (1978), whose comments about the writing process underscored the fluid nature of writing-in-progress.

> The writing process is too experimental and exploratory to be contained in a rigid definition; writers move back and forth through all stages of the writing proceses as they search for meaning and then attempt to It is also true that most writers do not define, describe, or possibly even understand the writing process. There's no reason for them to know what they are doing if they do it well, any more than we need to know grammatical terms if we speak and write clearly. (p 86)

Graves' young writers did not, of course, understand what they were doing in the sense that they were able to label their actions or provide process flowcharts, but with constructive encouragement, the students were able to write in a fresh, vigorous and enthusiastic manner. More to the point, they also edited and revised their own work, and independently undertook the rewriting of material as they felt it was required. These young writers contrasted strongly with the students observed by Rohman and Wlecke (1964) who appeared to 'tuck away' their own sense of reality as persons and "echo all the pat phrases of their culture in essentially meaningless combination." Rohman and Wlecke (1964) believed that

> ...both our culture and our pedagogical methods have encouraged other-directed self-images which hinder (self-affirmative) writing and which, in fact, hinder any kind of writing. As a result, we have almost a national neurosis about writing with no object for our anxiety except a vague and increasingly discredited code of 'correctness'. As one is expected to write acceptable grammar, and as one is expected to choose acceptable diction, so one is expected to think acceptable thoughts and feel acceptable feelings. (p. 22)

Analysis and observation

The practice of analyzing the product of writing has been questioned by some researchers, who believe the focus of research should be on writing behaviours rather than products (Melas, 1974; Petty, 1984; Sawkins, 1970; Stallard, 1974). To date, no method has been found which will permit researchers to record the multivariate influences, both overt and covert, which affect writers as they work. 'Think-aloud' protocol studies can record what the writer says, but not the actual thoughts which are taking place as he or she writes. Similarly, the researcher can observe the writing process, note various behaviours as they happen, and analyse the results of those behaviours, but can not be privy to the impulses which generated them.

Given the wide range of factors influencing the writer at any given point in the writing process, one must question whether the addition of one more influence, the presence of a researcher, may not affect the results obtained by that researcher. The writer who cherishes solitude may find the simple presence of another person to be disruptive, and that disruption may affect the writing process of that writer. Flower (1985) is one of the few researchers to even allude to the possibility that subtle alterations in the writing may take place because of the research process. Flower (1985) belives that writers who are asked to comment on work during the actual process of writing are not disturbed by this procedure.

No reference has been made to the possible effect on the work of an author who prefers writing with a 2B pencil on lined sheets of legal-sized yellow paper, but, for research purposes, has agreed instead to use an electric stylus on a sensitized electronic pad. Does awareness of the tape recorder faithfully capturing the words of a writer as he or she writes affect the performance of that writer? Does the presence of a video camera inhibit or alter the actions of the writer? Is the writer actually able to concentrate fully on the task at hand if he or she is also verbalizing the process -- or is the writer paying at least some attention to the task of observing the process, and thereby in some undefined way, altering it? These are important considerations, because technology is more and more often being introduced into the research process (Bechtel, 1979; Crowley, 1981; and others) and while these technological tools have the reassuring quality of (sometimes) producing measurable results, one must also consider the possibility that results may be influenced, subtly and/or significantly by the very mechanisms set in place to measure them.

Changes in Pedagogical Methodology

In recent years, numbers of teachers have acknowledged that teaching writing process is more effective than teaching product (Butler, 1983) and that freedom is essential to development of a child's writing (D. Graves, 1979, 1975, 1973).

> ...the idea that students should be able to ... generate an exuberance of ideas accords well with our understanding of children's creativity and the building of a child's self-concept through the expression of personal experiences, feelings and values (Butler, 1983).

While some teachers may have accepted these ideas, there appears, at times, to be a guerilla movement going on in writing pedagogy, with 'underground' writing produced in the classroom and 'sanitized' versions made available for "the less tolerant eyes of administrators and parents" (Butler, 1983) who may be dismayed by the messiness and untidiness of students' ideas "discovered in a rush of excitement"

Discovery and Prewriting

Along with previously noted studies revealing differences between the ways in which experienced and novice writers handle writing is the finding that inexperienced writers do not seem to share a sense of writing as discovery (N. Sommers, 1980), and in the revision process often fail to see incongruities which exist between their intention and their execution (Sommers, 1980).

Pre-writing appears to be more intense and more meaningful for experienced writers than for the inexperienced writer: editing and revising, according to anecdotal accounts by experienced writers, begin long before the writing stage begins. Except for classroom situations, there appears to be no great rush to capture ideas on paper. Instead, experienced writers appear to have a need for time to 'mull over' ideas and let them simmer on a back burner while they proceed with other tasks. The classroom writer, on the other

hand, often appears to regard the pre-writing period as a time concerned only with the gathering of ideas in an effort to find something to write about, and once an idea has been identified, immediately begins to write about it.

Experienced writers, however, appear to require time for letting ideas 'bounce around' in the back of their heads (Bartolomae, 1985) or simply stopping to sit and think (Bloom, 1985) before beginning to write. Some steep themselves in their subject, letting the material stew in their subconscious before writing (Corbett, 1985) before seeing how it looks on a page or testing it against the original thought (R. Graves, 1984). Experienced writers appear to be aware of the importance of prewriting for beginning writers, but feel they, themselves, perform prewriting chores intuitively as part of their daily lives (D. Murray, 1968, Phelps, 1985), composing without conscious effort and banking this pre-composed material to be drawn upon when needed (Brent, 1985). They sometimes refer to writing as being first of all an internal act, in which solitude and reflection are as important as word processors (R. Graves, 1984).

Writers describing their own writing processes use interesting analogies: along with process terminology, they borrow terms from the kitchen, the crafts, and the arts, thus writing has been variously described as a process in which ideas are sketched out, roughed out, fitted together, then fermented, stewed or simmered before they become ready for use (Guth 1985).

Experienced writers are not always analytical about their writing, with some averring they don't know where the words come from, much less where the ideas come from (Knoblach, 1985). Some may attempt to deliberately start the internal editing process or 'get the juices flowing' (a frequently used term) by first doing mundane, routine work such as internal editing or mental rehearsal (Lunsford, 1985), likening this part of the process to "mental jogging" (Lloyd-Jones, 1985). The pre-writing phase appears to be commonly acknowledged among experienced writers (Milic, 1985).

> Before I write, I write in my mind. The more difficult and complex the writing, the more time I need to think before I write. ... While I walk, drive, swim and exercise, I am thinking, planning, writing. I write, revise, rewrite, agonize, despair, give up, only to start all over again, and all this before I even begin to put words on paper (Lutz, 1985).

While some writers "collect and mull" before writing (Donald Murray, 1985) others literally visualize the writing (Patricia Murray, 1985), seeing words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs take shape on screens inside their heads.

Tchudi (1985) refers to a "Write Idea" which sounds very much like the stereotypical light bulb in the brain often used by cartoonists to denote inspiration. However, Tchudi notes that considerable incubation goes on before the light bulb appears.

Some mental writing consists not in figuring out what the writer wants to write before clothing thoughts in words but in letting ideas happen, letting them 'spark' each other, and listening to voices speaking dialogue (Warnock, 1985). Warnock says her head is "always working on a current project" and this inner writing seems to enrich her life (Warnock, 1985). Others literally visualize work in their mind, tacking up a theme or topic on a mental wall and "walking around it, pondering, thinking" (Weathers, 1985).

While a number of writers freely discussed what was involved in their own writing: prewriting, internal editing, writing, self-editing, revising, re-editing, rewriting -- few expressed even minimal concern with the conventions of writing and grammar during the generative phases of their work. They were concerned firstly with the wider idea -- with the possibilities inherent in the original notion -- and gave only passing attention to 'correcting' work while it was in progress.

One may argue that the grammar and spelling of experienced writers is likely on a higher level of correctness than that of novice writers, and this is probably true, but the point must be made that even when experienced writers did make errors in spelling or grammar during the early stages of writing, there was no reflection of a sense of concern with the correctness of the mechanical aspects of writing. Exploration, internal editing or discovery was of paramount importance. The descriptions provided by experienced writers dealing with

their own working processes and text revisions clearly reveal that the global aspects of their work were of primary importance, and conventions of writing at this stage were given only passing attention (Waldrep, 1985; Daugherty, 1984). This prioritization is exactly opposite to that demonstrated by the inexperienced writer. (Flower and Hayes, 1981a, 1985, 1986).

One other point of difference is that experienced writers often seem able to solve problems by drawing on stored problem representations containing not only a conventional definition of the situation, audience, and the writer's purpose, but also including quite detailed information about solutions, even down to appropriate tone and phrases (Flower and Hayes, 1980). This type of reference bank may account for the ability of "in-house" writers to deal quickly and easily with formula writing, while sometimes experiencing difficulty in dealing with new material: they have stored such a wide range of strategies it may sometimes be difficult for them to decide which of these strategies will be the most appropriate (Applebee, 1984).

Another of the more evident differences between experienced and inexperienced writers is that experienced writers, who appear to have internalized a series of markers, or a sixth sense which indicates when 'something' needs revising, seem to more easily recognize a need for editing than do inexperienced writers, who do not appear to have developed that awareness or sensitivity.

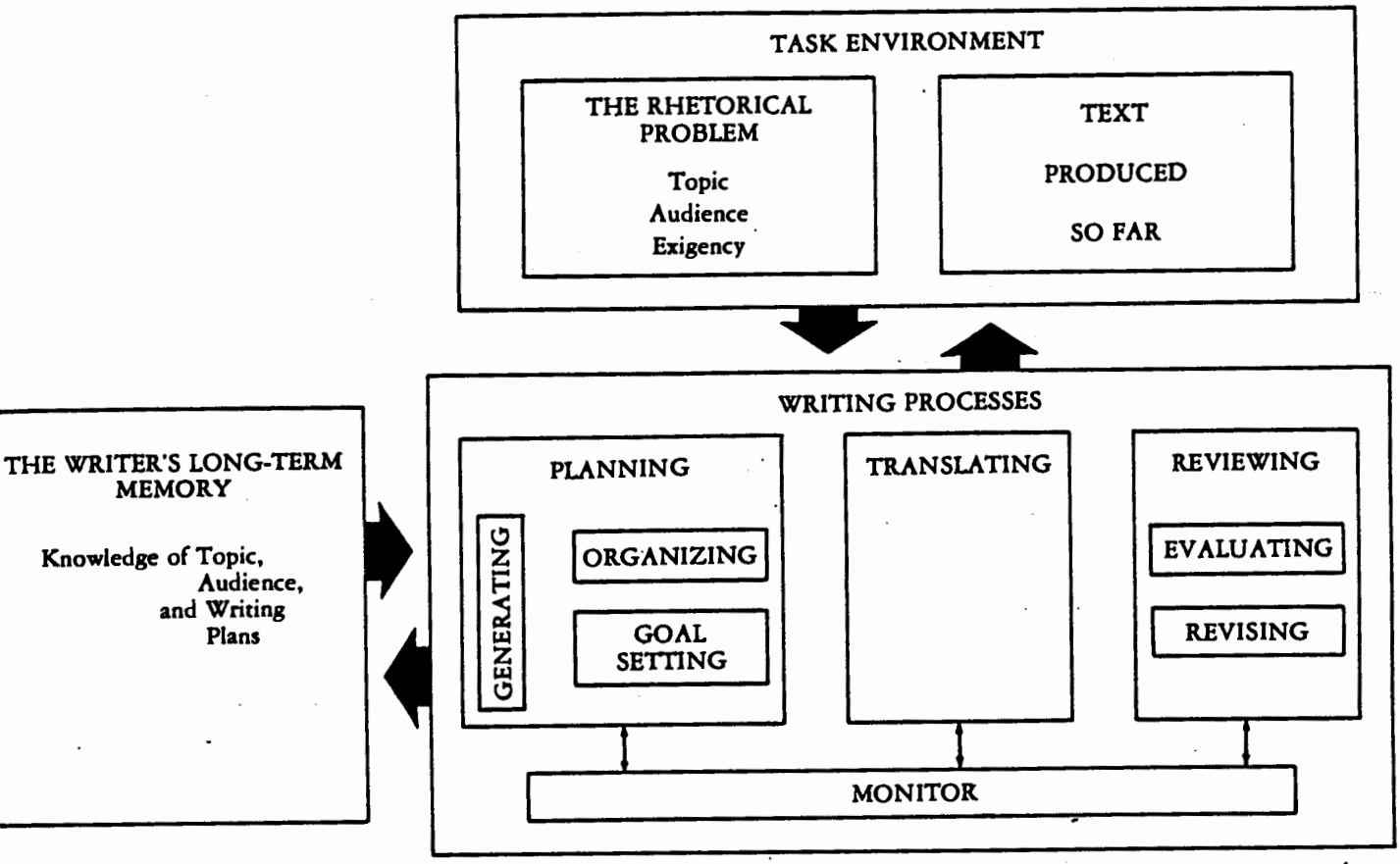
Internal and external editing

As has been noted, experienced writers make use of several different types of editing: internal editing, which helps to provide both focus and framework (Flower and Hayes, 1986. See Fig. 1) and which may take place before or after words are placed on paper; self-editing, which allows the writer to take the stance of the reader; and external editing, done by a professional editor, a colleague, or some other person (D. Murray, 1978a, 1978b).

Experienced writers accept and recognize the value of external editing, but the student writer's most usual editor is the teacher and most students appear to view teachers' comments on papers as a form of punishment (Lewes, 1981). Whatever the reason for this perception, it does not suggest that students regard teachers as useful role models for the writing process, nor do students appear to regard teachers' contributions as helpful in the writing process.

The aim of teacher editing is usually two-fold: firstly to improve the work in hand, and secondly to help the student writer improve his or her self-editing skills. There are serious implications for teaching in the concept of internal editing, not the least of which is the notion that articulate, verbal, glib students who are customarily over-rewarded for first-draft writing may be "released from the prison of praise and high grades and encouraged to write much better" (D. Murray, 1978a).

FIGURE I



A model of cognitive processes in writing. From "Detection, Diagnosis, and the Strategies of Revision" by Linda S. Flower, John R. Hayes, Linda Carey, Karen Schriver, and James Stratman, published in College Composition and Communication, February 1986, Vol. 37. Copyright 1986 by the National Council of Teachers of English. Reprinted with permission.

Editing skills do not often appear to be taught to student writers however, possibly because they seem to be unconscious (automatic) processes which may not require teaching (Christensen, 1982).

Internal editing plays an important and little understood role in writing (Rohman, 1964) and this phase of the writing process is quite different from the correcting, or proofreading mode, which occurs much later in the process (Britton, 1975; D. Murray, 1978a). If external editing which at least offers a visible product, is difficult to teach, how much more difficult must it be for the teacher to explain to students an undertaking which is invisible in the composition process, unrecognized in the writing process, and unrewarded in the marking process?

Internal editing, or 'shaping at the point of utterance' was regarded by Britton (1978) as a crucial aspect of writing.

> (Results of experiments) were consistent with the belief that we focus on the end in view, shaping the utterance as we write; and when a seam is 'played out' or we are interrupted, we get started again by reading what we have written, running along the tracks we have laid down. (Britton, 1978, p. 24).

Internal editing may be related to what Flower (1986) recognizes as writer-based prose -- a sort of interior monologue created by the writer, which may include intuited but unarticulated connections. The writer then converts this 'saturated language' into ideas which may be communicated to others, as reader-based prose (Flower, 1986).

Internal editing is a valuable part of the discovery process, during which the writer may investigate, try out, test, challenge and manipulate ideas. And, as the writing process is not divided into small, discrete compartments but interconnects and overlaps, internal editing becomes not an activity which happens solely in the compartment marked 'internal editing' but one which intertwines with external editing as well. Both in self-editing and peer editing, this discovery phase may even help reveal opportunities for development which could lead away from the original direction of the writing (Rossi, 1982; D. Murray, 1978a).

There is another important area of editing: external editing, or editing performed by some other person. This usually falls into one of two categories: the editing performed by an editor distanced from the writer (usually by authority or experience, as in the cases of professional editors or teacher-editors) or editing performed by peers.

In recent years, peer editing has been given an increasingly important role in writing process in the classroom and is a technique which many teachers have attempted to introduce. The subject of peer editing will be dealt with at length in the next chapter.

How Much is 'Enough' Editing?

One area which often seems to provide difficulty for the inexperienced writer (and for those who teach inexperienced

writers), is the question of how much revision is required in any given piece of text. Inexperienced writers are often accustomed to the 'writing two-step': write a draft, submit it for marking, then re-write to accommodate any corrections (Stewig, 1983). This single-draft, single-revision approach is far removed from the editing habits of experienced writers.

Inexperienced writers' involvement in editing and revising appears often to depend upon a number of factors, most of which are externally controlled: Is the work authentic or inauthentic? What is the purpose of the work? How much time is allowed for the work? Why has the teacher assigned the work? What are the criteria to be met? What mark is required to pass? (Flower, 1986; Fulwiler, 1982; D. Murray, 1978a). In many cases, it appears the point for teachers is not teaching students to recognize when sufficient editing and revision has been done, but encouraging students to get something down on paper in the first place (Paulsen 1984).

There may be other reasons as well why students feel a single revision is sufficient: writing apprehension, which can have a measurable impact on student performance, may inhibit performance (Daly and Miller, 1975). An overwhelming fear of error dominates the minds of some students, to the detriment of any creative thought (Shaughnessy, 1977). Even the student who is not affected by writing apprehension may be inhibited by teaching that is so meticulous in detail that little room is

left for student-initiated experimentation or creativity (Holdaway, 1979).

Lack of experience combined with lack of writing role models may be another contributory factor. Crowhurst (1983, 1979b), Butler (1980) and others have commented on the beliefs expressed by students that good writers know how to write, and therefore do not have to edit and rewrite at all, although they may go through one final reading to check for spelling errors. Crowhurst (1983, 1979) noted that this belief was general among students in elementary grades and often persisted up to and including senior secondary level.

TV interviewer and performer Joan Rivers (1985), a Barnard College graduate with a major in English literature, gives an example of this belief when she discusses her reaction while watching pre-Broadway tryouts of Tennessee Williams' The Night of the Iguana. Rivers was "mesmerized to see a big, lumbering play being redone -- whole chunks pulled out, speeches rewritten, directions changed..." adding that she had no concept till then of the incredible dedication of (stage) writers. "I had always thought he (Tennessee Williams) sat down in his room and wrote A Streetcar Named Desire and brought it to somebody who said, "This is very good. I'll produce it." But there was this Pulitzer Prize winner ... working like a beginner with his first play .. day after day, ... cutting and fixing and pruning and changing and switching." Williams was not working like a

beginner with his first play, but very much like the experienced writer he was, and the changing and switching were evidence of the more global aspects of his editing.

Just as Rivers was surpised by the amount of time Williams' spent on revising, many inexperienced writers probably have no clear idea of what proportion of a writer's time is spent on less obvious aspects of writing, such as prewriting or internal editing.

Experienced writers usually spend more time on self-editing and revising than they do on the initial writing (Gorrell, 1985) and one writer estimated that of 30 hours spent on a not-yet-completed essay, 20 hours had been spent in editing and revising and an undetermined portion of the remaining 10 hours has been taken up in pre-writing activities (Brent, 1975). There is, of course, no clear-cut ratio between the various areas of writing process -- some writers spend more time in pre-writing activities or 'agonizing' over early drafts (Gorrell, 1985) but feel by taking more care in the preliminary stages, less revision is required in final drafts.

Yet another difference between student writers and experienced writers way be the way in which they regard intermediate drafts. Students may not regard draft work as valuable or worth keeping, so teachers may not have access to early drafts created by the student, if indeed such drafts ever existed. Thus teachers are not always able to track the work

through a number of drafts. Experienced writers, on the other hand, are more apt to retain what they have written until the piece is complete. Some writers keep all drafts of everything they write and researchers are able to study sequential drafts to trace the growth of the work. For every writer like Agatha Christie or Saul Bellow, who, although they do a good deal of internal editing, commit little to paper prior to the final copy, there are others like Irving Layton or Malcolm Lowrey, who write numerous hard-copy drafts. Few, however, display the tenacity of John Jakes (I, Barbarian), or Fëdor Dostoevsky[1] (The Double), each of whom spent 20 years editing and revising before finally republishing the noted works with major changes.

Some authors, like Governor General's award winner Hugh Garner (1973), claim to write 'by ear'.

> "(I was) awful in grammar in public school and still am today. Though I don't know what a gerund or a participle is, and don't want to know, I can use them correctly in a written sentence. I'm like a self-taught jazz pianist who can't read a word of music but knows the black keys from the white keys, and which ones to press. ... I can also spot an ungrammatical sentence most times (and) know how to change it." (p. 328).

Christie[2] and Garner were not alone: Conventions of

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(1) A number of alternate spellings exist for this author: Feydor, Feodor, and Dostoyevsky are among them.

(2) Christie claims 'working in her mind' is easier because she doesn't have to worry about her spelling, which she describes as 'terrible'.

writing have eluded other well-known writers as well (1).

Little exists in the literature to indicate how writers develop an awareness of when, how, or how much to revise, edit or rewrite, but Tate (1981) suggests it takes a "good reader to know whether a piece of writing is working or not and if it isn't, what's wrong with it."

Certainly a good reader will recognize whether or not a story works, but the argument that good readers can recognize why a story works or does not work is unsupported. Tate (1981) does not address this point, and no indication is given of the basis for this supposition. However, there is a persistant notion that good readers should be good writers: it may be that good readers build internal models against which they measure written material. It has been shown that experienced writers do build banks of repair strategies (Flower and Hayes, 1985, 1986; Applebee, 1984). If repair strategies can be drawn from a model gained through reading, it might suggest that some part of the writing process may be acquired passively, and not solely through active participation, but this is an untested notion.

Impact of Teacher Editing on Student Writing

Searle and Dillon (1980), in a study of the impact of teacher-editing on 135 pieces of student writing provided by 12 elementary school teachers, showed teacher emphasis to be

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(1) Janet Hobhouse (1975), Anybody Who Was Anybody. Gertrude Stein's early essays at Harvard showed "she wrote simple English sentences with great difficulty, failing in her command of basic grammatical construction and simple spelling....Her handwriting was and remained atrocious."

overwhelmingly on form, with predominantly evaluative and instructive responses. Teacher comments appeared to have been influenced largely by the quantity and mechanical correctness of writing produced by a student.

> The criteria for good writing at the intermediate grades listed by participants were numerous, but relatively uniform criteria could be classified as three major categories: mechanics, language structure, and style. All three categories dealt with forms of language. Only one comment by one participant dealt directly with content. (p. 238)

Searle and Dillon's was a preliminary study: they noted the need for more research with greater numbers of participants, to either confirm or deny some suppositions which could not be supported. For example, they said many teachers were unable to provide samples of their responses and so it appeared that some pupils, in fact, received no responses to their writing.

A further area of study suggested by Searle and Dillon (1980) deals with examining the possibility that much instruction in writing is still product-centered because products lend themselves more easily to marking-for-form rather than the marking-for-content required in process evaluation. The editing done by the teachers in Searle and Dillon's study was almost all of the error-correcting variety, and comments by teachers, stressing form rather than content, did little to encourage students to do more than repair mistakes.

Evaluation is an important part of the process of instruction (Strickland, 1961) which can offer a powerful tool in reinforcing positive achievement, but marking only mechanical and grammatical errors can carry with it the message that these are the most important parts of writing, and depreciate the value of form, content, tone, voice, and style. Responding to errors after students have handed in what they consider to be final drafts appears, in any case, to result in only minor revisions (Daniels, 1985). Teachers may do better by first paying attention to what students wish to say and their purpose in saying it, and only after attending to these items making an appraisal of the form in which the ideas were set out (Strickland, 1961).

There are some indications that students can learn from revising a paper after the teacher has reviewed it but this type of editing for error identification appears to have only a minor effect, affecting only the mechanics of writing (Buxton, 1959). Further, Lyman (1931) found a correlation of up to fifty percent in the correction of grammatical and mechanical errors when students learned to correct errors themselves before submitting papers, thus for the teacher there appears to be greater advantage to spending time teaching self-editing than in spending time correcting student papers for errors (Paulsen, 1984)

Anecdotal reports of writing process by experienced

writers appear to indicate that writers focus on different matters in successive drafts: in a first draft (and there may be several first drafts), writers are more apt to hammer out the basic form of the piece and roughly frame in the structure; second drafts tend to focus on adjusting the structure, making changes by editing what was written (or not written) in the first draft (Tchudi, 1985). Tchudi compared the work of experienced and inexperienced writers to the work of amateur and professional carpenters: professionals see that a door jamb is out of alignment and know how to shim it into place. Amateurs live with a door that's hung crookedly.

Experienced writers often use first drafts for structure, not in the sense of outlining a framework which will be filled in later, but by discovering the framework somewhere in the first draft and formalizing, delineating and strengthening that shape in subsequent drafts (Paulsen, 1984; Weathers, 1985; Gorrell, 1985).

Editing Expository Writing and Editing Poetry

Most research into editing and revising deals only with expository writing, but DellaPiana (1978) has created a model of writing-as-revision recognizing four phases in poetic writing, which offer strong parallels to the stages in expository writing:

1) the preconception and set (an initial vision of what the work will be,)

2) discrimination and dissonance (seeing what the work does or not do and finding matches or mismatches between what the text does, what it is intended to do, and what the text itself suggests),

3) tension (concern with getting the work to do what one intends it to do), and

4) reconception.

Although few researchers studying expository writing have applied their findings to poetic writing, DellaPiana's model does appear to closely match the processes which have come to be regarded as basic to the expository writing process. Further study may reveal more similarities between the two processes.

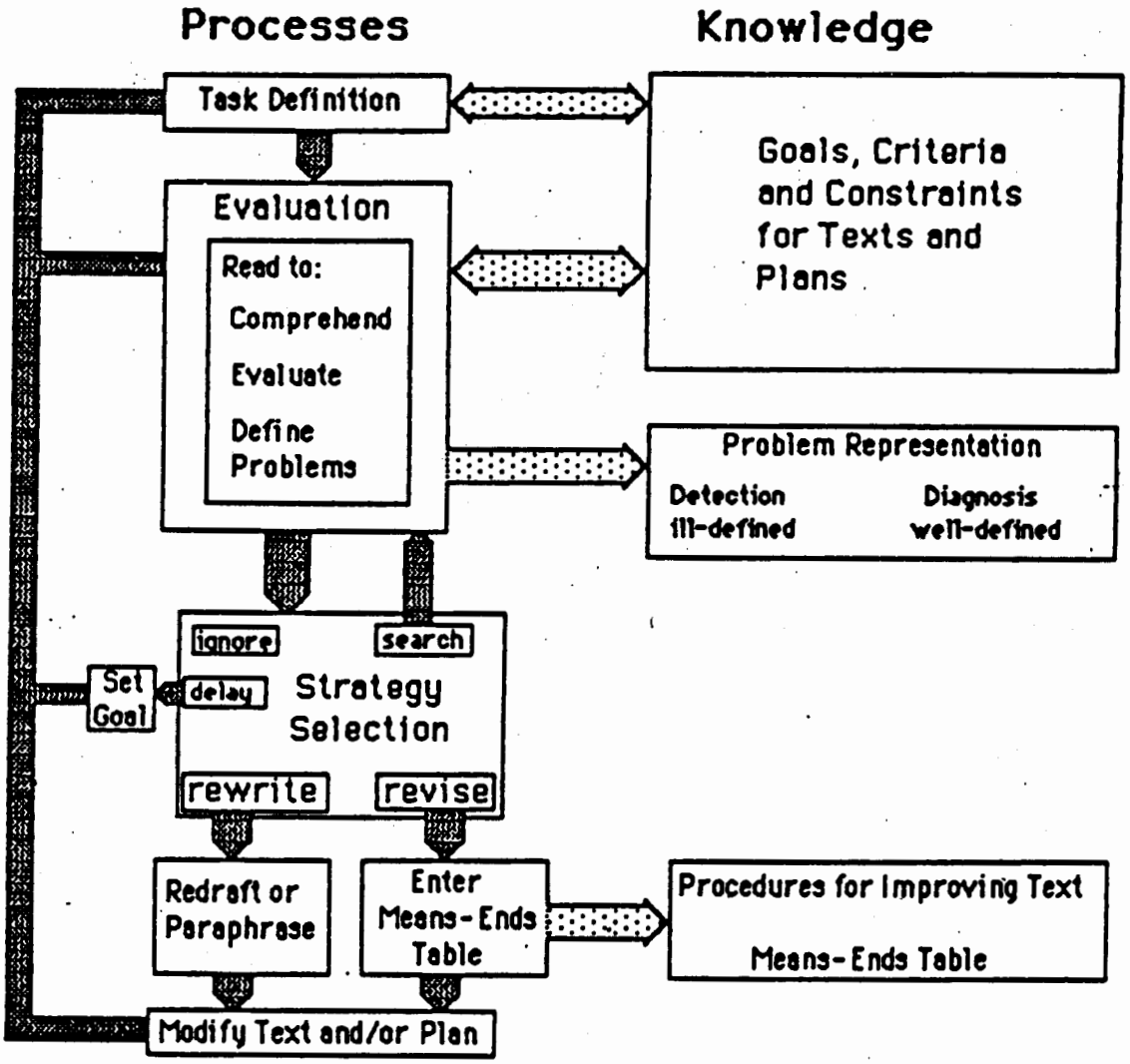
Like researchers in expository writing, DellaPiana suggests revision in the writing of poetry should not be seen solely as editing and polishing after a work is largely finished but as a process which must occur prior to and throughout the writing of the poem until completion or abandonment of the work.

In common with other genres, there appears to be a lack of accord on the criteria for poetic writing: What constitutes 'good' poetry, or even what poetry is (DellaPiana, 1978).

New Model for Editing and Revising.

Flower, Hayes, et al, (1986) have postulated a new model

FIGURE TWO



Cognitive Processes in Revision. From Detection, diagnosis, and the strategies of revision, by Linda Flower, John R. Hayes, Linda Carey, Karen Schriver, and James Stratman, in College Composition and Communication, February, 1986. Copyright 1986 by the National Council of Teachers of English. Reprinted with permission.

for editing and revising which they believe sets out interesting, useful and testabble hypotheses about the kinds of skills experts and novices are likely to exhibit differentially, particularly on controlled revision tasks. Their hypothesis includes the assumption that "expertise affects not only what information a subject may heed in short term memory, but also to some extent the subject's ability to report what is heeded. Thus, they reason, experts who have "overlearned or automated" some writing subprocesses

> "...will not be able to verbalize this process, whereas novices can... Conversely, both experts and novices might ... use the same subprocess, but only experts -- as a result of better verbal skills -- might be able to report that they were doing so" (p. 9).

Flower further assumes some high level processes can not be automated "no matter how expert the expert" and that "traces of the information used or produced in the process will be available for reporting in short-term memory." As a check on recall reporting, Flower examined textual data, which provided information about the assumptions concerning the processes employed by both novices and experts. In nearly all cases the process data was paralleled by differences in written output.

Central subprocesses identified were: task definition, evaluation, problem representation, detection, diagnosis and strategy selection. (See Figure Two).

Modelling Editing in Writing

There are two major approaches to the question of

modelling: one holds that good writing (eg, classics) provides a model for students to use when learning to write, implying that students can internalize whatever it is in the writing that makes it 'good' and incorporate those ingredients into their own writing. There is some suggestion that while good literature can be readily enjoyed, the smoothness of the finished product can render it inaccessible as a model for learning.

The other major approach to the question of modelling deals with behaviour modelling: teacher-as-writer providing students with an active model not only of the writing process, but a shared model of the writing product as well. Researchers have noted that "the power of teaching by example can not be overestimated" and it must play a role in curriculum ... development (Finkel, 1984; D. Murray, 1968; Strasser, 1984).

While there are strong suggestions that there is an improved classroom product when classroom modelling is provided by a writing teacher, no statistical support for this supposition appears to be available. Whether the perceived effect exists because of the modelling, because of a supportive and informed attitude by an actively writing teacher, whether it reflects a self-fulfilling prophecy or 'Pygmalion' effect, whether it is a combination of these factors, or whether it exists at all, has yet to be shown.

Students of writing teachers may have an advantage in that they can learn through the "same naturalistic approach

by which they learn to talk," (Ames, 1985; Bartholomae, 1985) that is, by imitation and close personal interaction. There are indications that students who have had the advantage of naturalistic methods of acquiring language arts skills in their home enviroments, both before and during formal schooling, do better in reading and writing than students who lack this exposure (Burrows, 1961; Clay, 1975; Hall, Moretz and Statom, 1976; Heath, 1983; King and Rentel, 1981; Morrow, 1981).

Students do appear to learn by imitation and mimicry, whether at the level of the university, learning the language of discourse in written composition (Bartholomae, 1985), or in primary and preschool classes, learning social concepts through the symbolic processes of dramatic play (Pelligrinni, 1984). Students must become comfortable with the conventions used in any particular community (Fish, 1980) and until takes place, they will progress with great difficulty, if at all. Students working within narrow confines and conventions in the classroom, may be expected to produce narrow, conventional classroom writing: students must be given themes that matter to them (Ames, 1985; Bereiter and Scardemalia, 1984; Crable- Sundmacher, 1984; Marr, 1984) and restricted classroom codes will likely produce equally restrictive writing (Gere and Smith, 1979). If teachers want students to produce authentic writing, they must provide the students with authentic assignments (Butler, 1980).

Butler (1981) has reported some success in promoting authentic revision by offering students the opportunity to learn editing and revising strategies by analyzing and working with genuine writing produced by anonymous writers. This type of emotionally neutral material appears to enable the inexperienced writer to avoid problems which sometimes arise when the egocentricity of young writers meets the lack of tact among peer editors.

Learn by Writing, Teach by Correcting

Rohman and Wlecke (1964) disputed a notion which is still common today: there is "so much incorrectness and ineffectiveness" in compositions written by students because students a) have not been taught enough about language and rhetoric, or b) have not been taught effectively enough. According to Rohman and Wlecke (1964), students are taught about language and rhetoric in one way or another throughout most of their schooling and the notion that effective teaching means nothing more than rigorous teaching is questionable. There are two assumptions which they say are almost dogmas with many teachers: "If you want to learn to wite, write! If you want to teach writing, correct!

There is no 'special magic' in these oft-tried approaches according to Rohman and Wlecke (1964), who stated they believed

researchers had not so much discredited for all time frequent writing and hard marking, as they had altered their views on the subject from axiomatic to problematic.

Many writers express the belief that the only way to learn writing is by writing (D. Murray, 19968; Elbow, 1973, 1983), but low volumes of writing may not be the only reason why some students write poorly. Some may have genuine difficulty recognizing structural problems in sentences (Shaughnessy, 1977) or struggle with short-term memory limits (Daiute, 1982). Some students may be such poor readers of their own work that they do not know what requires editing (Tate, 1981), or may not understand the true scope of revision activities (1), regarding revision as "tidying up first draft copy" (D. Murray, 1978) or "shuffling a few commas around" (Fulwiler, 1982) to make papers more acceptable.

There are many 'invisible' factors involved in writing: a perfectly correct paper may contain 'noise' and 'static' which distract the attention of the reader (Marder, 1984) and these are conditions which editors learn to recognize and alter in the editing processes. Attention of the audience can be lost through circumlocutions, cliches, excessive summary and the rendition of the obvious (Marder, 1984). Noise may include new information which is not clearly explained in the text,

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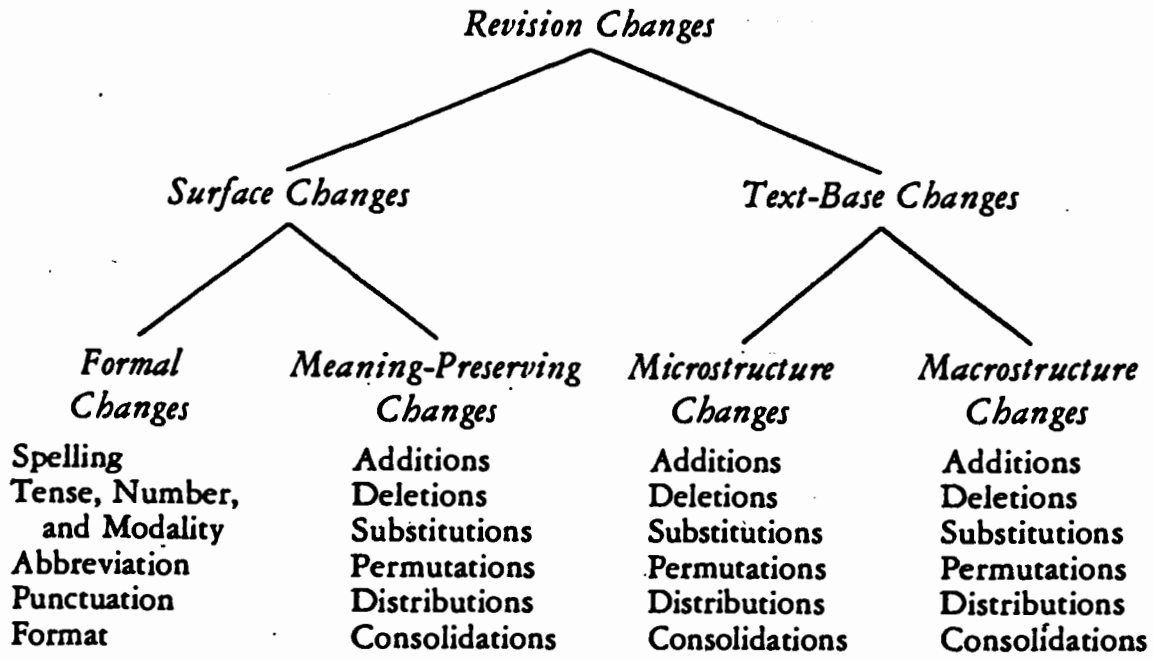
(1) See Faigley and Witte (1981) Taxomony of Revision, (Fig. 3)

FIGURE THREE



A taxonomy of revision changes. From Analyzing Revision, by Lester Faigley and Stepehen Witte, in College Composition and Communication, December 1981, Vol. 37. Copyright 1981 by the National Council of Teachers of English. Reprinted with permission.

the text, or dense series of abstractions which frustrate and tire the reader with unfathomable information (Marder, 1984).

It is much easier to mark errors than to deal with noise factors of these sorts, but error correction is not always the best editing strategy to improve a piece of writing (Stewig, 1983). Very objective error correction may lead students to believe that good writing is simply a matter of avoiding errors while overly subjective evaluation may lead students to the equally erroneous impression that the art of writing well is merely the art of appealing to the tastes and whims of one particular teacher (Stewig, 1983).

Summary

To summarize the research, it would appear that the 'secret' to good writing has much more to do with experience and application than with 'knacks' or 'ways with words'. Experienced writers make use of different approaches to writing, but in general appear to begin with some sort of internal editing process, followed by experimentation and global reorganization or revision, before they turn their attention small and particular parts of the whole. These steps may be repeated any number of times and in any order, but only after these steps are satisfactorily completed do experienced writers appear to pay conscious attention to error correction and proofreading.

The editing demonstrated by peer editors in this study will be compared, insofar as is possible, with the editing habits of experienced writers revealed in the literature.

CHAPTER THREE

DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY

EDITING BEHAVIOURS

Accounts and studies of the writing and editing behaviours of different groups of writers deal with beginning writers (Dobson, 1983; D. Graves, 1975), experienced writers (Hull, 1984; Sommers, 1980; Waldrep, 1985), young writers (Lamme and Childers, 1983), intermediate writers (Benson, 1979, Odell, 1975), senior secondary writers (Beach, 1979; Bridwell, 1980; Emig, 1971; Land, 1984; Monohan, 1984), college and university writers (Crowley, 1981; Perl, 1978; Piankao, 1979), and professional writers (Shuman, 1981.) Each of these deals with editing revising done by writers, using their own work.

Rationale

In order to study editing processes, it was necessary to find some way to examine editing which would allow for comparison and contrast between various pieces of editing. To accomplish this, a common ground for editing was required, and this common ground was provided by a standard text.

In order to more closely simulate peer editing, the standard text was written by a same-age, same-grade student in the same school district, but at a different school.

It was hoped that product analysis would provide a way of examining the editing without that work being influenced by the many variables introduced by writing and editing either one's own work, the work of a known writing partner, or material which differed in some way from that with which other students dealt. Students in the study would be peer editing, but with one major difference from customary peer editing: they would share the same peer. Each member of the group was given a photo copy of the same standard text.

The editing done by students would be examined in an attempt to discover how the students edited, whether there was evidence of prioritization in their editing processes, whether the editing was error-centered or content-centered, and what sorts of suggestions students made when peer editing.

This study does not involve protocol research. It is a product study only. No control group was used and the sample size was small. It is freely acknowledged that this work is insufficient to support any wide generalization, but it may indicate areas of further study which might be productive.

Participants

The students taking part in this exercise were members of a Grade six class. There were 40 class members, ranging in age from 11 to 13 years, with most in the 12-year old group.

No precise mean age is available. The class consisted of 19 girls and 21 boys. The work of two students was not included in the observations. These students, both boys, had arrived in Canada very recently: one from Asia, one from Europe, and spoke very little English. Neither edited, revised, corrected or altered the standard text in any way. Each wrote his name on the paper, then recopied the existing text. Under the circumstances it was not felt that their work was truly representative of peer editing, and so it was not included in the scoring. The remaining class members were thus evenly divided, with 19 boys and 19 girls participating.

Setting

The session took place in the classroom normally occupied by that class. No special arrangements were made within the classroom. Students were not videotaped, filmed or recorded in any way during the writing process, nor were they subjected to any observation other than that which normally takes place during a classroom activity. The teacher moved around the room, responding to general questions from students but not initiating suggestions on how students might deal with the standard text material.

Questions asked by students generally dealt with such matters as whether the work should be in pen or in pencil, could red pencils be used, should it be double or single spaced, did

spelling have to be "out of their heads" or were they allowed to use dictionaries, and other matters of that nature.

Instructions

Students were given individual photocopies of a typed, double-spaced standard text, along with two sheets of lined half-page foolscap paper. Extra supplies of paper were placed at the front of the room for students to use if, and as, required. Students had access to whatever books they normally used during writing periods (dictionary, thesaurus, etc.) and could write in either pen or pencil, with the sole stipulation that the result must be readable.

The only deviation from their normal routine was that they were requested not to use either 'liquid paper' or erasers. Anything to be deleted was to be stroked out with a single line. This was done in order that it would be possible to see exactly what words or phrases had been altered and, if changes were made, to permit comparison of the altered text with the original text. This also made it possible to see whether students made more than one change or edited their own comments.

These students were accustomed to using 'liquid paper' to blank out words, phrases or sentences they wished to alter, then writing corrections or revisions on the opaqued surface.

It was emphasized that, as they were not to use liquid paper or erasers, neatness would not be considered, but that

legibility would be very important.

Students were told this was not a test, but a practise exercise which would not be marked in any way. If they did not feel comfortable working with the standard text, they were free to write on a topic of their own choosing. No student selected this option. There are a number of possible reasons for this: students may have felt working with assigned text was 'easier', they may not have wished to do something other students were not doing, may have chosen to use a delaying strategy until they had a better idea either of what was expected of them, or what they wanted to do, or other influences may have been at work. The time frame for this exercise was a regular classroom period of 35 minutes, held in the first period after lunch.

Students were asked to read the photocopied story, and then to edit it, making any suggestions that they thought might help the writer to improve the story. If time permitted, students were encouraged to revise the story themselves, making any changes to it that they wished.

They were also told that if, after editing the story, there was still time available but they did not wish to revise this story, they could use the remainder of the time for free writing. This did not appear to motivate students to rush through the project, and no student did, in fact, undertake free writing.

It took approximately eight minutes to settle the class

and comply with classroom procedures (taking attendance, etc.) passing out papers and answering questions, and another five minutes at the end of the class with gathering papers, answering questions about the story and sharing comments on it. The actual 'on task' time was therefore of about 22 minutes duration.

Procedure

The work done by the students was read twice: the first reading focussed on the remarks students made about the story, and the suggestions they had made to help the writer improve the story. The second reading involved examining the editing done on the original story. These results were then divided into various groupings for scoring purposes.

Some students had used proofreading marks; others had written comments on the page or had made direct revisions to the copy. Each suggested or actual text alteration made by the students was classified as either an addition (something added which had not previously been present in the text), deletion (something had been removed from the text), or substitution (something had been written in place of something else in the text.) Each of these text alterations was then reclassified within its own group as to whether it dealt with puncutation, with grammar, or with changes to the content of the text.

Analysis of Student Work

Analysis of written comments offered by the students, both their evaluations of the material and the suggestions they offered to the writer, appear to indicate that some students were following rules. No provision had been made for students to identify the rules they used, thus the student who suggested the writer should "not write the little words that don't mean anything" but instead "write the ones that have more meaning and understanding" may have been quoting a 'rule', making a style suggestion, or may have had something else in mind. This student did not provide an example of the words that had "more meaning and understanding" or revise the standard text to achieve this, so it is difficult to know exactly what was intended. This student was, it appeared, doing exactly the same as some teachers of writing do: making an ambiguous comment which only added confusion (Searle and Dillon, 1980.)

Other students referred to "unproper English", word order, and unecessary punctuation. Students are not always as precise in rule application as teachers might wish and may apply the right rules wrongly, or the wrong rules rightly (Belanger and Rogers, 1983; Scardamalia and Bereiter, 1983; Ziv, 1984) or may even be citing non-rules.

One student volunteered a comment after the session ended, that there was "a rule that you couldn't say 'I' in a story." With no protocol study in place, it is difficult to

know whether these students were consciously applying rules or conventions or were, as Hugh Garner (1973) expressed it, "writing by ear" -- a process described in a more academic manner as "measuring text against a generalized set of internalized criteria" (Flower and Hayes, 1981.)

Although some students did attempt to identify some of the text elements they dealt with, they did not identify all text elements. This may indicate that they had learned text forms through other than formal methods of instruction (Bereiter and Scardemalia, 1981): they knew something needed fixing and had some idea of how to fix it, but likely could not have explained either what they did, or why.

Scoring

Edited text was quantified in one of nine subcategories:

Substitution - punctuation

Substitution - grammar

Substitution - content

Addition - puncutation

Addition - grammar

Addition - content

Deletion - punctuation

Deletion - grammar

Deletion - content

Editing involving content alteration, substitution, addition or deletion is macroediting: major in scope and often involving addition of information for greater clarity. Editing involving puncutation or grammar, either through substitutuion, addition or deletion, is microediting -- minor in scope, often convention based, frequently involving error correction.

Results

The greatest amount of text editing by this group of Grade six students involved grammar -- 67.5 per cent of all substitutions involved grammar, 69.9 per cent of all deletions involved grammar.

Virtually all of the grammar editing undertaken in this study was concerned solely with error correction. No instances were discerned in which grammar had been edited for effect, for emphasis, for style or for clarity.

The deletions, too, generally involved errors and were a good example of Flower and Hayes' (1986) suggestion that one valid strategy demonstrated by writers when they are unable to fix a perceived error, is the removal of the problem-causing phrase or sentence.

The only activity which was not grammar-based was addition, and this proved to be tactic most often used to accomplish editorial revision. Two thirds of all revisions were undertaken during the process of adding material to the

standard text.

Text alterations showed the following frequencies:

	Punctuation	Grammar	Content
Addition	23%	10.2%	66.6%
Deletion	21.2%	66.9%	11.8%
Substitution	8.5%	67.5%	23.9%

Total additions: 39

Total deletions: 127

Total substitions: 188

Text alterations based on additions:

Punctuation 9

Grammar 4

Content 26

Text alterations based on deletions:

Punctuation 27

Grammar 85

Content 15

Text alterations based on substitutions:

Punctuation 16

Grammar 127

Content 45

Total text alterations involving punctuation:	52
Total text alterations involving grammar:	216
Total text alterations involving content:	86

Total additions to text:	39
Total deletions from text:	127
Total substitutions to text:	188

Most students edited the story, but slightly fewer than half (18/38) offered suggestions for improving the story, and of the 18 students who made editorial comments, only four dealt with anything other than correction of grammar. One student suggested the writer should try "changing word use around." It is not clear exactly what was meant by the comment.

The remaining editorial suggestions included changing the title, giving a reason for building the boat, explaining whether it was hard or easy, telling more about the boat (for example, what kind, how big, and what colour it was), giving the uncle's name, telling how often he came, describing what the builders did for the remainder of the winter, putting some excitement in the story, "putting a better starting," and continuing the story to include what happened after the builders discovered the boat wouldn't go through the door.

Students who offered editorial suggestions typically made more than one suggestion.

Three students offered positive reinforcement to the writer. One noted, "The story itself was just fine. It was very amusing," then commented that the writer's word use was "not very good." A second said the story was "not bad" but suggested the writer do it over and use better grammar. The third student said "It would be a good idea to check it over and right (sic) it agian (sic) and check in the dictionary (sic) for words your (sic) not sure of. otherwise very nice."

A number of students made no editorial suggestions whatsoever, but began independent revisions of the story, some making significant text alterations, while others dealt with mechanical and conventional aspects. Among the latter group, it was unclear whether they were making changes 'by ear' or if they were aware of the specific functions they were altering; it was, therefore, also unclear whether they would have been able to label the text alterations they had made.

A number of the students made comments which were difficult to understand. One example of this was the student referred to previously, who made the comment regarding 'little words that don't mean anything'. When the revision done by this student is compared to the edited text, however, and the revised text compared with the original text, it may be seen that the student has corrected the grammar, has in three instances combined sentences and in one instance separated a sentence into two parts. Other than these grammatical alterations, few changes

have been made to the story, although the word 'stuff' was replaced in two instances: once with 'instructions' and once with 'the work'. 'Stuff' may have been the 'little word' referred to, or the student may have had something else in mind.

Another student also questioned the use of the word 'stuff' and made a direct suggestion that this word should be replaced with something more specific. However, when the student rewrote the copy, the word 'stuff' was repeated in the rewritten text. While the student-as-editor recognized the need for an editorial alteration, the student-as-writer either forgot the suggestion or could not think of a satisfactory substitute for 'stuff'.

One student used a marking code, but did not specify what the code meant. This could have meant that the student devised the code for this particular piece of work and simply forgot to provide a key, or was making use of a code commonly used in the classroom which would not need explanation. This same student made editorial comments which suggested looking over the assignment and rewriting it "in a more orderly way" and also referred to spelling. In the revisions done to the text, the student had marked 'sp' next to the word 'in'. It is not clear if the student believed a spelling error had occurred at this point or if some other meaning had been given to 'sp'.

One student provided constructive peer editing, urging the writer to "watch your spelling" and suggesting details

which could be added to the text. These suggestions involved describing and giving a reason for wanting a boat. In the rewritten copy, the student did so, describing it as a 10 foot long, lime green sail boat, required to take the family to visit a sick grandfather, because they were unable to afford air fare.

This student was the only class member to make specific recommendations and to follow those recommendations when revsising the story.

Several students did make editorial suggestions concerning content, but their own revisions dealt solely with correcting grammar and punctuation. Some of the editorial suggestions they made dealt with such things as deails which could be included in the story: a name for the uncle, the frequency with which he visited, and what happened after the boat could not be fitted through the door. However, when the students rewrote the text, the uncle remained unnamed, no reference was made to how often he came, nor was any alteration made to the ending of the story and nothing was added to indicate what might have happened after the builders discovered the boat would not go through the door.

Curiously enough, not one student suggested giving the boat a name.

It is possible the student-as-editor thought the suggested information would add to the story, but the student-as-writer either forgot or did not know how to

incorporate the recommended details into the story. Comparing the responses of students who made editorial suggestions with their own revisions, one is struck with the suspicion that students paid little or no attention to the edited text when they were actually involved with the revisions. This reflects a classroom phenomenon frequently noted by teachers: marked corrections are quite often not corrected in final copies, but continue to be written incorrectly even in the final version.

It may readily be seen that this group of Grade six students was much more concerned with the mechanics of the writing than with the contents. As no protocol research was undertaken, it is difficult to say why this might be so, but several factors may have influenced their actions:

a) students may have been accustomed to having their own work marked and/or edited with the major emphasis placed on spelling, grammar, and the mechanics of writing.

b) the number of errors contained in the standard text may have been responsible for the editorial emphasis on conventions of writing.

c) students may not have been sufficiently motivated to do more than tend to surface revisions.

A fourth possibility must be considered: some students seemed reluctant to undertake substantive revision or to make editorial suggestions which

could have helped the writer to make substantive revisions. But what appears to be reluctance may in fact have been a delaying strategy (as noted in Flower, Hayes, et al, 1985) in which they engaged until such time as they deciphered more cues as to what was expected of them, or themselves decided how they wanted to proceed with the story.

Flower and Hayes (1986) suggest the delaying tactic may be used at any stage in the writing process, and may be accompanied by the complementary tactic of abandoning text which is either beyond repair, or contains too many problems to be fixed.

If, as they suggest, this delaying strategy is a known tactic in self-editing procedures, it may equally well be a technique adopted by external editors: peer editors may be unsure of what is expected, the text may contain too many problems, or problems for which they are unable to explicate solutions, and the tactic of choice becomes either delaying or abandoning attempts at peer editing. At the same time, peer editors may feel that something is expected from them and, lacking any other option at that moment, may revert to error correction as a safe and familiar process. This may seem a more attractive alternative if the student has had little opportunity to observe substantive editing and is more familiar with error correction.Several students appear to have selected a delaying or abandoning tactic to deal with the problems they encountered

in the peer editing process. Ten students did not edit the standard text at all, but moved directly to text revision. This may indicate that they were unsure of how to make editorial suggestions to the writer, but were able to undertake alterations when they themselves did the writing. A lack of editorial vocabulary may have resulted in students being unable to explain the problem or how to deal with it, although they may have been able to recognize what needed repair and had some idea of how to go about it.

The ten students who abandoned attempts at editing the standard text may have found revising easier than analyzing the text and making editorial recommendations for dealing with the problems encountered in the text. It must be noted that no evidence for this exists in the writing and is raised only as a possibility. It is equally possible that students did consider editing and may have spent time analyzing the standard text with a view to editing. They did not, however, make notations on the text which would confirm this possibility.

One curious statistic emerges: five of the 38 students (10.2 per cent of the group) specified spelling errors as an area which required attention. In fact, only one spelling error was included in the text: the word 'to' was used in place of 'too', but this particular error was noted by only two of the five students who commented on spelling. The other three gave no specific examples of incorrect spelling in the text, nor did

they correct the spelling error in the course of editing the text. This might lead one to suspect that student comments regarding spelling were not so much a reflection of the correctness or incorrectness of spelling they were actually seeing, as a reflection of a concept they had learned: spelling is a frequent and important problem in writing.

While ten per cent of the students named spelling as a flaw in the work, none named the inappropriate use of oral English in a written composition. Although they did not label this particular fault, almost all recognized that there was something amiss at that point in the text. Many attempted to rewrite the oral passages, with varying degrees of success.

The actions of the study group correlate to various strategies identified by Flower and Hayes (1986). For example, two of the five students who expressed concern over spelling were successful in identifying and correcting the spelling error. The third student rewrote the sentence in such a way that neither 'to' nor 'too' was required in the sentence and the fourth deleted words during revision, excluding problem words or phrases, while the fifth solved that and other problems by not revising the text at all, ignoring the problem by starting anew: all strategies mentioned by Flower and Hayes (1986) as identifiable avoidance strategies.

The implications of these actions and strategies for peer editing must also be considered. Unless the peer editors are confident in their analyses and problem suggestions, there must always exist the possibility that they may alter text to avoid problems, rather than solving the problems, or they may ignore the problems by suggesting the writer begin anew.

Most of the Grade six students involved in this study appeared to be very familiar with proofreading and error correction, but seemed not to possess, or at least, to possess in only limited degrees, the editing skills which would have enabled them to provide effective peer editing. It is difficult to say why this was so: students may have believed editing meant error correction and recopying, they may have been accustomed to having their own compositions 'edited' by having errors pointed out and being required to correct those errors (recopying rather than revising), or there may have been other factors involved. Students appeared to lack not only peer editing skills, but also self editing skills, and this was generally evident both in the editorial comments made and not made.

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION

> "... young children become literate by being nurtured through developmental stages.[1]" (p. 16)

Preferred editing strategies

Analysis of the editing performed by this group of Grade six students indicates the most preferred editing strategy was strongly involved with error correction, with most attention given to some form of grammatical revision. Text alterations consisting of corrections of perceived errors in grammar, spelling and punctuation were three times as frequent as were text revisions dealing with content, which confirmed an initial supposition that the primary focus of attention would be with mechanical matters of form and format, and with the conventions of language.

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(1) A program to foster literacy: Early steps in learning to write, by Marietta Hurst, Lee Dobson, Mayling Chow, Joy Nucich, Lynda Stickley, and Gwen Smith. LA 8094. Published by the B.C. Teachers' Federation Lesson Aids Service, Vancouver, B.C.

Most students in this study appeared to attempt, with varying degrees of success, to deal with problems arising from the use of oral English in a written composition. Their actions corroborated findings that editing difficulties may arise not only because students fail to recognize the need for revision, but also because they are not sure what they should do to solve the problem (Bereiter and Scaradamalia, 1981, 1983; Emig, 1978; Ziv, 1984).

A research finding confirmed by Flower and Hayes (1985, 1986) shows that experienced writers give greater attention to global concerns than do novice writers. However, a recurring comment by experienced writers deals with the fact that, given free rein, editing can completely change the direction of their writing (Daugherty, 1984; Walrep, 1985). One must ask whether students would be willing to accept changes in the direction of their work if, as is customary in the classroom, they are writing to fulfill an assignment. A new direction might threaten to take the work away from its assigned area and thus jeopardize their success. If this is so, substantive editing could appear to be a counter-productive move and thus a poor strategy selection. If indeed this is a factor, minimal editing might appear to students to be a safer course. On the other hand, the lack of intense editing might be attributed to reflecting a belief that editing means only correcting errors. If this is so, students might not see a need for taking a more global view of the work.

Other factors may contribute to diminished editing skills: students seeking a particular goal, such as satisfactory mark in composition, may be unwilling to initiate action that has not demonstrably improved previous results (grading). While some researchers believe low levels of student editing indicate that students do not know how to revise (Crowhurst, 1982; Fulwiler, 1982; Tate, 1981), lack of interest may be also be an inhibitory factor. A decline in interest in revision in upper elementary grades (Hogan, 1980) may have something to do with what students have learned about writing process during the preceding years, some aspects of the curriculum or classroom, personal development of students in that particular age group, combinations of these, or other factors. No studies have been discovered concerning changes in the level of interest in either self-editing or peer editing, but one must suspect it would follow a similar pattern. For whatever reason, upper elementary students are usually far more comfortable correcting surface concerns than undertaking substantive editing (Birnbaum, 1982) and the study group's behaviour reflected that attitude.

No interaction was observed between students in the study group which would indicate participation in or awareness of peer editing, writing workshop techniques, or interactive small group editing. Questions addressed to the teacher dealt only with mechanics and classroom procedures, not editorial suggestions or input.

There were no indications of reorganization or rearrangement of the material. Students appeared to proceed directly to consideration at the single word or phrase level, and for the most part, their focus was on error correction.

A few students indulged in what might be referred to as 'text-decorating'. For example, the student who suggested the boat was a blue boat was simply embroidering information which already existed in the text. There was no particular reason for the boat to be blue, nor a sense that that particular boat could only be blue. One exception to the 'text-decorating' aspect was provided by the student who suggested the boat was 'dusty', and indeed, a boat sitting in a basement over the course of a winter could well become dusty. 'Dusty' adds an element of authenticity to this particular description that 'blue' does not.

Time Factor in Writing

Based upon the editing done by this Grade six study group, it appears that thinking time in writing assignments is minimal. This may well be a reflection of the limited class time usually provided for student writing and editing. Some students were observed to begin the assignment by picking up a red pencil and beginning to mark errors while they were reading through the material for the first time. Aside from the differences in the amounts of time available to experienced writers and to novice writers, there also appears to be a difference in the management

of that time. Obviously experienced writers spend a great deal more time at their writing than do inexperienced writers, but their manipulation of work also appears to differ from that of the students. Experienced writers often have many pieces of work in progress at one time. When work on one piece temporarily halts, work on another begins. Classroom observation will show students usually appear to work on one piece of writing at a time, and to carry it through to a conclusion before beginning another piece of writing. The way in which writing is assigned and marked likely has a good deal to do with this.

While classroom time constraints may be a limiting factor in the editing process, students observed in this study did not appear to be concerned with gaining extra time for their editing or to give indications of requiring more editing time. Students were given the option of only suggesting changes, rather than actually making the changes, a strategy which could have provided them with much more time for both consideration and editing of the work. None chose to make use of this option.

It is interesting to speculate why this may have happened: Flower and Hayes' (1986) model of the cognitive processes in revision offers a number of possibilities. Task definition (either the assigned task or the perceived task) may have been unclear to the students. Their comprehension of the story may have been poor, their evaluation may have been faulty, and/or they may have been deficient in defining the problems.

The strategies available to students in this instance were quite varied. One option was to ignore the task, and several students appear to have selected this option when they simply recopied the text without making any alterations. They could delay, and some students may have been exercising this option by doing a minimum of work. They could rewrite the work, and most appeared to select this option -- correcting and making minor alterations such as text-decorating.

Another option existed: they could revise by redrafting or paraphrasing the work. Only a few attempted to do so.

The actions, and lack of actions, demonstrated by the study group may be a reflection of the emphasis teachers generally place on assessing only final drafts, and evaluating spelling, grammar and punctuation during the early stages of the work (Beach, 1979), and these students appeared to reflect a supposition shared by many inexperienced writers that editing is just a matter of pointing out errors (Crowhurst, 1979a, 1979b).

These students did not behave as experienced editors do, by asking for either sweeping or specific content revisions (Shuman, 1982), but were content to proof-read: a type of feedback which may unintentionally teach students not to revise (Nold, 1982), by reinforcing the 'two-step' writing mode (Stewig, 1983) or the write/correct format of 'knowledge-telling' (Scradamalia and Bereiter, 1983). Emphasis on

correctness affects students both as peer-editors and as self-editors, by denying them opportunities to use editing and revising to delve deeper into their subject matter (McPhillips, 1985; Marder, 1984; D. Murray, 1968).

Despite hours of instruction, students often appear to be at a loss as to how the writing process should be carried out, and they may be better equipped to undertake this process if they first learn how to edit writing (Lewes, 1981). Giving and using editorial feedback effectively appears to be a skill many students have never been taught (Ilacqua, 1980).

Feedback in writing

Lamberg (1980) defined three types of feedback: self-provided feedback, peer feedback, and teacher feedback. Peer feedback may be more advantageous than teacher feedback (Moffett, 1968), but self-provided feedback may be even more valuable (Lamberg, 1980).

Faulty feedback may leave students with the impression that 'good' writing is what is left after 'bad' writing is removed from the text. Students who have received mostly corrective feedback, either from teachers or from peer editors, generally reflect a corrective stance in their self-feedback, which can limit their self-editing capabilities as well (Lamberg, 1977; McDonald, 1978).

Students in the study group did not demonstrate strong feedback skills, did not appear able to give constructive feedback to the writer, nor were they able to make use themselves of the feedback they had provided. This could suggest that editorial feedback was given only to fulfill a perceived requirement, but had no genuine value in the editing process.

Teacher evaluation provides direction

Teachers do not usually give emphasis to revision or editing in their marking (Birdsall, 1979), customarily assessing only the final draft. They do not usually evaluate content and organization of the rough draft but deal with surface concerns, such as spelling, grammar, and punctuation: the areas most often tended to by inexperienced writers and inexperienced editors (Beach, 1979; Bolker, 1978).

It would be unrealistic to expect elementary school teachers to edit the work of their students with the same rigor as professional editors edit the work of experienced writers, but it may be valuable for students to understand the relationship that does exist between experienced writers and experienced editors, if only to put to rest the notion that editing is just a matter of pointing out errors and that revision is just a synonym for correcting errors (Crowhurst, 1979a, 1979b).

Influence of Writing Models

Experienced writers frequently cite the important role played in their development as writers by the influence of other writers: teachers or professors who wrote and shared writing, parents or relatives who wrote, peers or siblings who were active writers, have been responsible not only for providing models for writers, but often providing feedback as well. Writers are vastly encouraged by humanistic responses (Coe, 1985; Little, 1980) but require specificity and immediacy in those responses.

Experienced writers may offer appreciative comments on particular pieces of literature, or may recgonize the effect or influence of a particular author on their own writing, but this usually appears to take place at a much later stage in their literary development. In the early stages of writing, the more valuable models appear to have been those which were closer and more readily accessible (Megna, 1976; Pomerenke, 1984). For this reason, the work of a peer may provide a more effective model for the beginning student than the 'seamless' writing of an acknowledged literary giant. A growing body of research is affirming the important role that modelling and feedback plays in teaching writing (Ames, 1985; Bartholomae, 1985; Carroll, 1984; NCTE position paper, 1984; Spencer, 1983; Belanger, 1983) Crowhurst, 1982, 1979).

Some teachers provide active modelling and feedback for their students, demonstrating the writing process by sharing their own work and becoming not teacher-editors but peer-editors (Strasser, 1984). These teachers afford an opportunity for students to become part of a writing community, and so to be guided by observation and by participation in the less often taught aspects of the writing process: editing, revising, mind-changing and discovery through writing. In other classrooms, teachers may invite professional writers to hold workshops, seminars, or visits with the students. Students are able to observe first hand that not only do experienced writers need to edit and revise, this is an important and ongoing part of the writing process for these writers. Among experienced writers, changing one's mind means only trying a new thought, not admitting failure or wrongness in the original thought. Students also observe that when experienced writers alter copy they do it by searching for unexpected nuances, by strengthening images or increasing the density of the material, not by searching out and correcting errors (Strasser, 1984).

Rohman and Wlecke (1964) noted that learning to write by writing, and teaching writing by correcting were not always satisfactory techniques for producing good writers. Many references in the literature appear to corroborate their suggestion that correcting may not be the most effective

technique for teaching writing, but their suggestion that one does not learn to write by writing does not find agreement among experienced writers (Elbow, 1973; Fulwiler, 1982; Geuder, 1974; Moffett, 1968; Shaugnessy, 1977; Walshe, 1983; Walvoord, 1984). Indeed, D. Murray (1968) and other experienced writers insist that writing is not just one way of learning to write, it is the "only way of learning to write."

The discrepancy may lie somewhere between the experienced writer's view of what the writing process involves, and the classroom teacher's view of what that process entails. The writer's view of writing stresses editing, but not the kind of corrective, or error-seeking editing which often happens in the classroom.

Editing is a reaction to feedback, and feedback can be defined simply as information on performance (Lamberg, 1980). Feedback is not necessarily negative, corrective, error-seeking or critical in a pejorative sense. Healthy and productive feedback can have a positive effect upon subsequent performance (Beach 1979; Benson, 1979; Denman, 1975; Little, 1980; Olds, 1970; F. Smith, 1976).

Classroom feedback can come from many sources; teachers, peers, other students, or the writers. There are varying kinds of feedback, and generalizations have been made about some of these categories, which would indicate that not all feedback is equally useful. Peer feedback may be more useful than teacher feedback (Moffett, 1981) because information peers

give each other can differ from the information teachers provide (Russell, 1985). This may reflect the possibility that peer agendas differ from teacher agendas, but peer feedback can provide both useful questions about content, and suggestions which the writer may find easier to follow. Students more readily accept and use peer criticism (Christensen, 1982) and evidence increased motivation to write and revise (James, 1981). Further, students can learn style and organization through reading each others' papers (Christensen, 1982) and may develop better social relationships in the classroom (Pianko, 1979).

However, not all peer feedback automatically falls into these highly productive categories. Unless students have learned how to provide feedback, the kinds of information they offer may be little more than 'warm fuzzy' comments ("This is nice", etc). or error identification. If the error identification is skewed through the peer's own weaknessess in grammar or spelling, the result will be a further degradation of the process, providing incorrect error identification.

Effectiveness of feedback can be measured by changes in subsequent performance. As the feedback in this instance was not given to the original author, there is no way of knowing if the comments made by the students would have affected subsequent performance, and one can only speculate upon responses which might have been made by the original author.

Specificity and clarity are essential ingredients in

effective feedback for editing (F. Smith, 1976; P. Smith, 1984). Peer feedback, or peer editing, while also requiring specificity and clarity, offers the advantage of providing this information at a level which is useful to the writer: both writer and editor are at or near the same level and have the same general capabilities.

The editor who over-edits, or edits at a level not within reach of the writer, is ineffective (F. Smith, 1976), and this is sometimes seen as a weaknesses in teacher editing: teachers may comment extensively, pointing out numbers of problems in all aspects of the writing (Lamberg, 1977),and these comments may at times be negative in tone as well (Searle and Dillon, (1980).

Peer editors who have learned how to provide effective feedback, can offer comment in an amount and at a level which will be useful to the writer.

There is an additional advantage: as the peer editor improves in awareness, he or she also develops stronger self-feedback or self-editing processes. This improvement in the level of writing by the peer editor is a frequent outcome of good peer editing. Students involved in peer editing become both givers and receivers of information and by attending to particular aspects in the particular aspects of the writing of others, they will improve their subsequent compositions (Hogan, 1984; Lamberg, 1977). Peer editing thus offers many advantages: students can benefit from the editorial suggestions of peers,

the student doing the editing learns from the process, and that student's work improves as well. Teachers, relieved from the burden of being sole reader and sole editor for the writing of 35-40 students, are able to provide more quality time with writers on an individual or small group basis.

Peer editing is a strategy which can offer students a way to learn editing: both external editing and internal editing. As noted, editing the work of peers can strengthen and develop the ability to edit one's own work, and having work edited by peers provides feedback which can strengthen and develop one's self-feedback process, but editing must be consciously taught if students are to learn to communicate effectively in the course of the process. Observation of students in the subject group leads to the suggestion that working with the writing process may not, by itself, be sufficient to ensure that students become capable editors. Pre-editing training and practice in editing can help students learn how to provide effective feedback -- both for self-editing and for peer editing.

Pre-editing behaviour can begin with helping students to identify specific strengths and weaknesses in pieces of anonymous writing (Butler, 1983) and progress through to the kinds of editorial guides and checklists which assist the neophyte editor to recognize some effective ways to assist a writer in improving a piece of work. (See APP II for examples of editorial checklists).

Student attitudes toward editing

There is a strong suggestion in the literature that students do not 'like' editing and revising (Belanger and Rogers, 1983; Birdsall, 1979; Bolker, 1978; Bonds, 1980; Champagne, 1980; Daly, 1979; D. Graves, 1983; F. Smith, 1982; Ziv, 1984). Many reasons have been suggested to account for this apparent aversion, including anxiety (Daly, 1979); lack of involvement with the work, a requirement to create inauthentic work, or associating the need to 'do it again' with failure (D. Graves, 1983); a feeling of inadequacy when the work does not 'come out right the first time' (F. Smith, 1982); or simply lack of recognition on the part of the student as to why or how material should be revised (Ziv, 1984). This lack of awareness regarding revision could be seen as a factor which could be addressed by teacher input, most particularly by comments teachers write on student work, but studies have shown that comments from teachers, while meant to be helpful, are often anything but (Bibberstine, 1976; Bolker, 1978; Groff, 1975; Searle and Dillon, 1983; Ziv, 1984). Teacher comments can lack the specificity[1] which could make them constructive.

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(1) For example, the ubiquitous "AWK" offers no suggestion as to why the phrase or sentence is awkward, nor does it offer constructive suggestions for solving the problem.

These types of comments may reflect the possibility that some teachers, like some students, may recognize that something is not as it should be, but are unclear about precisely what that something is or how it might be improved. It is also possible the problem has been clearly recognized, but the teacher did not have sufficient time to provide an adequate explanation for the student. Pressure of numbers of written compositions waiting to be marked can create severe problems for teachers. However, the teacher who writes "SP" on work at least offers a concrete statement by directing the student to a specific action.

Given non-specific direction, students who are unsure or confused can not help but become more unsure and confused, and less willing to leave themselves open to further negative comment, and less apt to either edit or to revise. The students in the study group demonstrated a willingness to undertake editing as they knew it, but analysis of their editorial comments and editing processes would suggest they need assistance in understanding and learning effective editing techniques. It appeared that a number of students in the study group began to edit before they had completely read the text material. Teaching pre-editing processes to students can encourage them to take time to read work to get the sense of it before picking up their editing pencils, and can also encourage them to think about their own work before they edit it (Philippsen, 1987).

Pre-editing activities

Pre-editing practice may help students to identify specific strengths in writing and to make constructive comments based upon these strengths. Students need careful coaching in peer editing: they often find it difficult to respond as editors, and when they do, responses may be skimpy and general (Crowhurst, 1979). Guidelines or checklists may help students understand some specifics which peer editors may watch for, but there is a danger that students will simply seize on a few phrases and limit their responses to those replies (Crowhurst, 1979). Teaching student writers to be specific in their responses helps prevent this approach.

In some classrooms, teachers encourage specificity in feedback by providing active modelling and demonstrating to students a personal involvement in the writing process. These teachers frequently involve themselves in the peer editing process as well, submitting their work to the students for editorial suggestions.

This type of active role modelling appears to yield promising results, although formal, controlled studies have not yet been undertaken to substantiate this impression.

In order to provide effective and sympathetic assistance to student writers, if may be necessary for teachers to become active writers themselves. By so doing, they may acquire different sets of criteria for writing, which may in

turn lead to replacing emphasis on text-decorating and error-correcting with a more useful set of editing strategies. The use of a more collegial approach toward writing in the classroom may result in teachers and students becoming both more enabled and more enabling in the writing and editing process.

Given that the teacher is capable of providing the direction and guidance which can help students learn effective editing techniques, peer editing may become a powerful tool in classroom writing.

Suggestions for further study

Further study might profitably be undertaken on the following topics:

1. Beach (1979) suggests students might pay more attention to editing and revision if teachers demonstrated more interest in this stage of the writing. What would be the result if teachers marked editing and revision rather than final compositions? Would students in fact respond by becoming more active editors?

2. Would students perform better if thinking time was provided for internal editing, before students began writing? If there was a demonstrable difference in performance by students who did have time for pre-editing activities, or internal editing, what would be the minimum length of time needed to bring about an altered level of achievement?

3. Searle and Dillon (1980) suggest students do not write because they are told in a variety of ways that they cannot write. Would writing improve if students were affirmed in their abilities to write and in their abilities to provide effective feedback and editing?

4. What are the specific differences demonstrated by students whose teachers model writing and take active part in classroom writing, and students whose teachers do not participate at this level?

5. Experienced writers often display idiosyncratic writing behaviours. Would student editing and writing improve if they were permitted to have greater input into their writing behaviours? (For example, choosing their own writing implements, locations, times, etc).

6. Would analysis of the classroom behaviours of teachers who are themselves writers reveal any differences in approach or attitude between this group a group of non-writing teachers?

APPENDIX ONE

This is a copy of the standard text provided for each student:

THE BOAT

Me and my dad and my uncle, we was gonna build a boat. In my basement. And my uncle, he had all the plans and stuff. And so we started to build it and it took all winter. I got to do some of the stuff but mostly just hold things. Then when we got it finished we went to take it out the door and the boat was to big to go through the door. And I sure laughed.

STUDENT RESPONSES:

Each student has been assigned a number, and responses are described under the number assigned to the student. Numbering was random and does not indicate ranking.

Item (1) shows student editing, item (a) is student revision. All entries are reported exactly as written, and spelling has not been corrected.

1. My Dad, my uncle and I were going to build a boat. In my basement. And my uncle had all the plans and stuff. And so we started to built it and it took all winter. I had to do some of the stuff but mostly just hold things. Then when we finished we went to take it out the door and the boat was to big. It would not go through the door. I sure laughed!

a) My Dad, my uncle, were going to build a boat because we needed a new one our old one had patches on it. We built the boat in our basement.

2. My Dad, my Uncle and I were going to build a boat in my basement, my uncle had all the plans and stuff. And so we started to build. It tok all winter. I got to do some of the

stuff but mostly just hold things. Then when we got it finished we went to take it out the door and the boat was to big to go through the door, and I sure laughed!.

a) On December, my dad and I were going to build a boat.

3. My dad and my uncle and I. Was gonna build a boat. In my dad and my uncle's basement. We had all the plans and stuff and so we started to build it and it took all winter. I got to do some of the stuff but mostly just I hold things. When we got it finished we wanted to take it out the door but the boat was to big to go through the door. And we laughed!

a) My dad and my uncle and I was gonna build a boat. We are build the boat because we want to go fishing.

4. My and my dad and my uncle were going to build a boat in my basement. My uncle had all the plans and stuff, so we started to build it. It took all winter. I got to do some of the stuff but mostly just hold things. Then when we got it finished we went to take it out the door and the boat was to big to go through the door. I sure laughed!

a) My Dad, my Uncle and I were going to build a boat.

5. My Dad, my uncle and I were going to build a boat in my basement. My uncle had all the plans and stuff. And so we

started to build it and it took all winter. I got to do some of the stuff, but mostly just hold things. Then when we got finished, we went to take to build it and it took all winter. I got to do some of the stuff but mostly just hold things. Then when we got it finished we went to take it out the door and the boat was to big to go through the door, and I sure laughed.
('To' in the last line is circled, and 'sp' noted.)
a) On December 19th, my dad, my uncle and I started to build a boat.

6. My dad and my uncle and I were going to build a boat in my basement. And my uncle he had all the plans and stuff. And sowe started to build it. It took all winter. I got to do some of the stuff but mostly just holding things. Then when we got it finished we went to take it out the door. The boat was to big to go through the door. And I sure laughed!
a) My dad and my uncle and I were going to build a boat. My uncle had all of the plans. And so we made the boat out of wood.

7. My dad, my uncle and me we were goning to build a boat in the basement. My uncle had all the plans and the stuff we need so we started to built the boat and it took all winter. I got to do some of the work but mostly holding things. When we got it finished we went to take it out the door and the boat was to big to go through the door. I laughed hard!

a) Dad and I and my uncle, we were going to build a boat. In my basement. My uncle, he had all the plans and stuff. And so we started to build the boat and we took all winter. I got to do some stuff but mostly just hold stuff. Then when we finished and when we went to take it out the door and the boat was to big to go through the door. And I laughed

8. My dad my Uncle and I are going to build a boat. In our basement. My uncle has all the plans and instructions. So we began to build the boat and it took all winter. I got to do some of the work but mostly just holding things. Then when it was finially finished we took it out the door. The boat was to large to go through the door and I laughed!

a) My dad, uncle and I are going to build a boat in our basement. My uncle has all the plans and instructions so we started to build the boat. It took all winter. I got to do some of the work but mostly just holding things. Then when it was finally finished we took it out the door. The boat was to lagge to go through the door and I laughted.

9. Red 'x's were added between word 'uncle' and the comma in the first sentence; on the word 'we' following the comma; on the period following 'basement'; on the comma following 'uncle', and on the exclamation mark.

a) My dad and my uncle and I. We are going to build a boat in my

uncles basement. My Uncle has plans and stuff. We started to build it and it took all winter. I got to do some of the stuff but mostly hold things. When we finished we whent to take it out the door and the boat was to big to go through the door, and I sure laughed.

10. My dad, my uncle and I, we were going to build a boat in my basement. My uncle, he had all the plans and stuff. So we started to build it and it took all winter. I to do some of the stuff but mostly just hold things. Then when we finished it we went to take it out the door and the boat was to big to go through the door. And I sure laughed!

a) My dad, my uncle and I, we were going to build a boat in my basement. My uncle, he had all of the plans and stuff. So we started to build it and it took all winter. I was allowed to (do) some of the stuff but mostly hold things sothen when we finished it we went to take it out the door and the boat was to big to go through the door. I sure laughed!

11. ('Me and my dad and my uncle', was circled and 'wrond order' noted. 'Was gonna' was circled, and 'unproper english' noted. The period in the first sentence was marked 'unecessary'. 'And', 'he', and 'And' were circled in the next sentence, and the period following 'stuff' changed to a comma. 'Unecessary' was written under 'He'. In line three, a comma was inserted between 'it' and 'and'. A vertical line was drawn between

'mostly' and 'just' and the word 'hold' was changed to 'held'. A red box was drawn around 'to go through the door', and 'And' and the word 'unnecessary' was noted on both.)

a) My dad, my uncle and I were going to build a boat in my basement. My uncle had all the equipment, so we started to build it. It took all winter. I got to do some things but mostly I held stuff. When we got it finished we went to take it out the door, the boat was to big. I sure laughed.

12. (This student used a code. 'L' stood for lanauge (sic), 'S' spelling and 'Sl' spelling and lanauge (sic). 'L' was marked over the first two words, 'Me' and 'and'; 'Sl' was marked over 'was' and 'gonna'. In line two, 'he' was crossed out and 'not nessary' added. In line two 'specfy' was written over 'stuff'. In line three, 'had a chance to do' replaced 'got to do'. In line four, 'stuff' was marked 'specfey'. In line five 'the' before 'door' was deleted, 'door' was changed to 'doors'. In line six, 'basement' was added before 'door'.)

a) My dad and I, and my uncle, were going to build a boat. In our basement. My uncle had all the plans and tools. It took all winter to build. I had a chance to do some of the stuff but hold stuff mostly. When we got it finished it would not go through the door. I looked and laughed. The end.

13. (This student also used a code. Only NS (new sentence) was

explained. No meaning was given for 'WW' 'SP' or 'WS'. 'WW' was noted on : Me and my dad and my uncle, we was gonna; And my uncle; and stuff; stuff; but mostly just hold things. 'In' was marked 'SP'; 'to go through the door' was marked 'WS'. Unexplained brackets were placed around 'he', 'and' and 'then'.)

a) My uncle, dad and I, were going to build a boat in my basement. My uncle had all of the plans and tools to build it so we started to build it. It looked good but took us all winter to build it.

I was allowed to help on the boat, but the most work I did was holding things for them. When it was complete, we tried to take it out of the basement, but the door was too small. and I laughed.

14.(The student circled 'Me and my dad and my uncle' and 'we was gonna' and noted 'bad grammar'.) The text was edited to read: In my basement. My uncle had all the plans and stuff, so we started to build. It took all winter. I got to do some of the stuff but mostly just hold things. When it was finished, we went to take it out the door and the boat was to big to fit through the door. I sure laughed!

a) My dad, uncle and I were going to build a boat in my basement. My uncle had all the plans and stuff, so we started to build. It took all winter. I got to do some of the stuff but mostly just hold things. When it was finished, we went to take

it out the door it was to big to fit through the door. I sure laughed!

15. My dad, uncle and I are going to build a boat. In our basement. my uncle had all the plans for it, so we started to build it, it took all winter. I got to do some of the work but mostly I just held things. when we got it finished we took it outside but it was to big to go through the door, I sure laughed!

a) My dad, uncle and I are going to build a boat in our basement. My uncle had all the plans for it, so we started to build it, it took all winter. I got to do some of the work but mostly I just held things. When we got finished we took it outside but it was to big to go through the door, I sure did laugh!

16. My dad, uncle and I were going to build a boat. In my basement. And my uncle, he had all the plans and stuff all ready. so we started to build it, and it took us all winter to bild. I got to do some of the stuff but mostly just holding things. when we got it finished we went to take it out the door but the boat was to big to go through the door. And I sure laughed!

a) My dad, uncle and I, were going to build a boat. In my basement. and my uncle, he had all the plans and stuff all

ready. So we started to build it, and it took us all winter to bild it. I got to do some of the stuff but I mostly just holding things. When we got it finished we went to take it out the door, but the boat was to big to go through the door. and I sure laughed!

17. (This student marked 'x's over 'me', 'and', 'was', 'gonna', and 'boat' in sentence one. An arrow pointed to the period at the end of the sentence. Marks were placed over 'And', 'stuff', and 'And' in sentence two. In three an arrow pointed to 'it'. Marks were placed over 'stuff' in sentence four; 'finished', 'we', and 'the' in five; and over 'door', and 'And' in six.)

a) My dad,uncle and I were going to build a boat in my basement. My uncle had al the plans and things. We started to build the boat and it took all winter. I got to do some of the things but I mostly held things. When we got it finished we went to take it out door. The boat was to big to go through the door. I sure laughed.

18. (This student edited only the first sentence, writing 'My dad and My Uncle and I' for 'Me and my dad and my uncle', 'were going to' for 'was gonna' and deleting the period after 'boat'.)

a) My uncle, dad and I were going to build a boat in our basement. My uncle had all the plans and equipment. It took all winter to build it. I mostly just had to hold the things. I laughed when it was to big to take out the door.

19. (This student marked the standard copy with a series of 'x's. In sentence one, these marks were placed over the words 'me', 'my', and 'uncle', 'we', 'was', 'gonna', and the period after 'boat'. In two, 'stuff', and 'and' were marked and punctuation after 'uncle' and 'stuff' deleted. In sentence, 'stuff' and 'Then' were marked. In the period after 'door' was changed to a comma. 'And I sure laughed' was deleted and an 'x' placed above it.)

a) My uncle, dad and I were going to build a boat in my basement. And my uncle had all of the plans and equipment so we started to build it and it to all winter. I got to do some of the work but mostly just got to hold things. When we got it finished we went to take it out the door and the boat was to big to go through the door and I burst into laughter

20. My dad, Uncle and I were going to build a boat. In my basement. And my uncle, he had all the plans etc. And so we started to build it and it took all winter. I got to do some of the stuff but mostly just held things. Then when we got it finished we went to take it outside and the boat was to big to go through the door. And I sure did laugh!

a) My dad, Uncle and I were going to build a boat. In my basement. And my uncle, he had all the plans etc. And so we started to build it and it took all winter. I got to do some of the stuff but I mostly just held things. Then when we got it

finished we went to take it outside and the boat was to big to go through the door. And I sure did laugh!

21. My uncle, my dad and I are going to build a boat. In my basement. And my uncle had all the plans and stuff. And so we started to build it. It took all winter. I got to do some of the stuff. Mostly I just got to hold things. Then when we got it finished we went to take it out the door and the boat was to big to go through the door. And I sure laughed!
a) My uncle, my dad and I are going to build a boat. In my basement. And myuncle had all the plans and stuff. And so we started to build the boat. It took all winter. I got to do some of the stuff. Mostly I just got to hold the things. Then when we got it finished we went to take it out the door the boat was to big to get through the door. It was sure funny.

22. (This student made no revisions before rewriting the text.)
a) My dad my uncle and I, were going to build an army boat in our basement. My dad had all the plans and stuff. So we started to build it and it took 6 years to make. When it was finised we went to take it out the door but it was to big so we wreak it and start all over again.

23. My dad, my uncle and I were going to build a boat in my basement. My uncle had all the plans and stuff. So we started to

build it and it took all winter. I got to do some of the things but mostly just hold things. Then when we got it finished we went to take it out the door and the boat was too big to go through the door, and I sure laughed!

a) My dad, my uncle and I were going to build a blue and yellow sail boat so we could go fishing and just sail around. We started to build the sail boat in my basement. We used all sorts of tools to build the sailboat and it took a winter. I got to do some things but they were very hard so I mostly got to hold the tools. When we got it finished we went to take it out the door and BAM! we crashed into the wall and a picture fell down.

24. Me and my dad and my uncle, we were going to build a boat. In my basement. And my uncle, he had all the plans and stuff. And so we started to build it, and it took all winter. I got to do some of the stuff but mostly just hold things. Then when we got it finished we went to take it out the door and the boat was to big to go through the door. And I sure laughed!

a) My dad my uncle and me, were going to build a boat in my basement. My uncle had all the plans and stuff. The boat is a sailboat, it is 10 feet long. It is going to be light green. We decided to build the boat because my grandpa is sick and we have to sail over and see him because we don't have anogh money to fly. So we started to build it and it took all winter.

25. My dad and my uncle and I were going to build a big big boat for fishing in our basement. My uncle, he had all the plans on how to build the boat. And so we started to built it, it took all winter. I got to do some of the work but mostly just hold things. When the boat was finished we went to take it outside, but the boat was to big to go through the door. And I sure laughed!

a) On Oct 1973 my dad wanted to build a boat to sail across the ocean. So he started to build, with the help of my uncle.

26. (This student circled 'me and my' and 'we was gonna', then began to revise the story.)

a) When my dad and I got home my uncle had a great idea. His idea was to build a boat in our basement. My dad wasn't sure about the idea but he said it was OK anyways.

27. My dad, my uncle, and me, were going to build a boat, in my basement. My uncle had all the plans and stuff. And so we started to build and it took all winter. I got to do some of the stuff but mostly just hold things. When we were finished we went to take it out the door and the boat was to big to go through the door, and I laughed!

a) Yesterday my dad was watching a television show about boats

28. My dad, my uncle and I, we are going to build a boat. In my

basement. And my uncle, he had all the plans and equipment. And so we started to build it and it took all winter. I got to do some of the equipment work but mostly just hold things in place. Then when we got it finished (day) we went to take it out the door and the boat was to big to go through the door. And I sure laughed!

a) My dad my uncle and I we were building a boat in our basement. My uncle, he had all the plans and the equipment for working. And so we started to build the boat it took us all winter. I worked on the equipment but mostly just holding things for my uncle and my dad. We finished it then we took it out the door then the most funniest thing hapened we couldn't get it through the door. Then I sure laughed.

29. (The student noted "you should check your sentence structure," then began a revision.)

a) Me and my uncle Bob and father, went to build a boat, in are basement. My Uncle Bob brought all the plans and material. The boat took all winter to build. I got to do some of the work but I mostly got materials for my dad and uncle. When we finished the boat we tryed to put it through the door but it was to big. I stood there and laught.

30. (The student printed "Re Do" on the text before revising.)

a) My dad, uncle and I, we were going to build a boat in my basement. My uncle had all the plans. So we started to build the

boat the boat took us all winter to build. My uncle and dad let me do some of the work most just to hold things. When the boat was all finished we tried to get it through the door but it didn't fit.

31. (The student revised without editing the paragraph.)
a) Me and my dad, and my uncle, were going to try and bild a boat. I my basement. My uncle had all the plans to build the boat. So we all started to build it and it took all winter.

32. My and my dad and my uncle, we were going to build a boat. In my basement. My uncle, he had alla the plans and organized. So we started to build it, it took all winter. I got to do some of the things but mostly just hold things. Then when we finished it we went to take it out the door and the boat was to big, to go through, and I laughed!
a) (This student did not revise the story.)

33. (This student's name was written on the first page, but the text was not edited. The student began a revised version.)
a) My dad, uncle and I is going to build a boat in my basement. My uncle he has the brains at building the boat. So we started to build the boat and it took all winter. Mostly all I had to do was just hold up nails, board, etc. When we finished the boat it was to big to go through the door and I sure laughed.

34. Me, my dad and my uncle, we were gonna build a boat in my basement. My uncle had all the plans. We started to build the boat and it took all winter. They let me do some of the work but mostly just holding things. Then when we got it finished and we went to take it out the door but the boat was to big, to go through the door, I sure laughed at that!

a) Me, my dad and my uncle, we were going to build a boat, in my basement. My uncle had all the plans. We started to build the boat and it took all winter. They let me do some of the work, but mostly just holding things. Then when we got it finished and we went to take it out the door, but the boat was to big to go thorugh the door, I sure laughed a that!

35. (This student moved directly to revising.)

a) Me my dad and my uncle, were going to build a boat in my basement. My uncle had all the things needed. It tok a whole winter and got too help. When it was finish we were going to take it out it wouldn't fit. I laughed so hard i just about got sick.

36. (This student moved directly to revising.)

a) My dad, my uncle and I were going to build a boat in my basement. My uncle had all the plans and so we started to build it and it took all winter. I was the only one who did the work. The only thing my dad and my uncle did was laze around eating

chips and popcorn and watching TV while I was working.

37. (This student moved directly to revising.)
a) Me and my dad and my uncle were going to make a black and blue sail boat in the dusty basement. My uncle had all the plans and tools so we started to build our sail boat. Building the sail boat took all winter and I got tired. I got to build some thing but mostly I just held the tools. When we got it finished we went upstairs to bring it outside. When we tried to take it through the door THUMP it wouldn't go through boy did laugh.
38. (This student moved directly to revising.)
a) My my dad and I were going to build a boat in our basement. I was going to be a fiberglass boat to go fishing in. My uncle had all the tools and plans to begin. It took all winter to build it but finaly it was finished, we couldn't get it out of the door so we had to fit it through the window but that didn't fit. We cut alot of the wall out but we finaly got it through.

The following are responses to a request for suggestions on how the story might be improved:

1. Your spelling is fine but your word use is not very good. I changed your word use around. Try working on that. The story itself was just fine. I sure liked the part where the boat could not get through the door. It was very amusing.

2. No response.

3. Change title. Why are you going (to build the boat) Was it hard or easy?

4. No response.

5. Spelling.

6. No response.

7. Redo

8. Don't write the little words that don't mean anything. Write the ones that have more meaning and understanding.

9. No response.

10. No response.

11. Word order. unproper english. unecessary (punctuation). more detail.

12. Specfy (3 notations). Not nessary (my uncle, he had all the plans. 'He' was crossed out.) Spelling. Take more time and

practise your language skills.

13. I think you should look over this assignment and rewrite it over in a more orderly way. Spelling.

14. Bad grammar (2 notations)

15 through 23 made no responses.

24. Watch your spelling and tell more about the boat, like tell what kind and how big what color and why you want it?

25. Change title. What did you do for the rest of the winter?

26. Do over. Not bad, but could use better grammer.

27. Make a better title for the story. Why did they decide to build a boat. Put more detail. Put better starting. Put some excitement in story.

28. What was your uncles name. How often did he come. When did you finished the boat then what did you do after you laughed and couldn't get it through the door.

29. You should check your sentence structure.

30. Redoo!

31. No response.

32. It would be a good idea to check it over and right it agian and check in diconary for words your not sure of. otherwise very nice.

33. No comment

34. No comment

35. You should have used better grammer.

36. No comment

37. No comment

38. No comment

SOME CHECKSHEETS FOR

PEER EVALUATION AND SELF - EVALUATION

Writing Resource Center

Ohio Wesleyan University

(From the Writing Resource Centre, Ohio Wesleyan University. Used with permission.)

SURVEY ON ATTITUDES ABOUT WRITING

Directions: Below are a series of statements about writing. There are no right or wrong answers to these statements. Please indicate the degree to which each statement applies to you by circling whether you (1) strongly agree, (2) agree, (3) are uncertain, (4) disagree, or (5) strongly disagree with the statement. While some of these statements may seem repetitious, take your time and try to be as honest as possible. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

1. I avoid writing.....1 2 3 4 5
2. I have no fear of my writing being evaluated.....1 2 3 4 5
3. I look forward to writing down my ideas.....1 2 3 4 5
4. I am afraid of writing essays when I know they will be evaluated.....1 2 3 4 5
5. Taking a composition course is a very frightening experience.....1 2 3 4 5
6. Handing in a composition makes me feel good.....1 2 3 4 5
7. My mind seems to go blank when I start to work on a composition.....1 2 3 4 5
8. Expressing ideas through writing seems to be a waste of time.....1 2 3 4 5
9. I would enjoy submitting my writing to magazines for evaluation and publication....1 2 3 4 5
10. I like to write my ideas down.....1 2 3 4 5
11. I feel confident in my ability to clearly express my ideas in writing.....1 2 3 4 5
12. I like to have my friends read what I have written.....1 2 3 4 5
13. I'm nervous about writing.....1 2 3 4 5
14. People seem to enjoy what I write.....1 2 3 4 5
15. I enjoy writing.....1 2 3 4 5
16. I never seem to be able to clearly write down my ideas.....1 2 3 4 5
17. Writing is a lot of fun.....1 2 3 4 5

Proofreading Checklist

Identify the errors you have made in your essay, and mark the boxes which correspond to the mistakes you have found.
Each Checklist may be used for three (3) consecutive weeks.

	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3
Sentence Fragments			
Comma Splices			
Run-On Sentences			
Failure to Use a Comma Where Needed			
Subject-Verb Agreement			
Verb Tenses			
Pronoun Agreement			
Misspelling			
Diction (Especially slang terms that are out of place)			
Controlling idea not clearly stated			
Controlling idea not carried through			
Transitions not made clearly			
Paragraphs too long, too short, or non-existent			
Ideas not stated clearly or logically			

WEEK 1-Most Common Error _____
WEEK 2-Most Common Error _____
WEEK 3-Most Common Error _____

SELF-EVALUATION CHECK SHEET FOR STUDENT USE

Before typing or writing the final draft of a paper, ask yourself the following questions and note your answers with a "yes," "no," or "?" in the appropriate box.

	PAPER			
DO I HAVE				
1) an adequate introduction?	☐	☐	☐	☐
2) a thesis statement that is limited, clearly focused, and specifically stated?	☐	☐	☐	☐
3) a paragraph division for each major point?	☐	☐	☐	☐
4) for each paragraph, a topic sentence which clearly states the controlling idea?	☐	☐	☐	☐
5) for each paragraph, a sufficient development in a controlled structure (i.e., time order, comparison, contrast, example)?	☐	☐	☐	☐
6) for each sentence, a clear relationship to the controlling idea of the paragraph (i.e., no sentences which are irrelevant to this idea)?	☐	☐	☐	☐
7) transitional words/phrases and other means of coherence to help the reader move from one idea to another?	☐	☐	☐	☐
8) consistent point of view (avoidance of shifts in person, number, tense, tone)?	☐	☐	☐	☐
9) an adequate conclusion?	☐	☐	☐	☐
HAVE I CHECKED				
1) spelling?	☐	☐	☐	☐
2) punctuation (apostrophes, commas, periods, etc.)?	☐	☐	☐	☐
3) sentence correctness (NO fragments, comma splices, dangling modifiers, pronouns with unclear or missing antecedents, lack of agreement between subject-verb/pronoun-referent)?	☐	☐	☐	☐

STEPS IN ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL WRITING

Pre-Writing: produce a rich mass of information and ideas by "clustering," brainstorming, free writing, group work, research, fieldwork, interviews, etc.

Rough Drafting: get substance of paper down rapidly, not worrying about careful organization, mechanics, or even complete sentences.

Writing First Draft: re-organize rough draft - adding, deleting, shifting as necessary - and get the mechanics right.

Conferencing: get advice from group, peer editor, friends, family, or teacher/supervisor.

Revising: use the advice to make paper clearer and more focused, with better details and evidence.

Editing: check for diction, spelling, punctuation, and grammar.

Proofreading: even if a professional has typed your paper, you are responsible for detecting all "typos," misreadings, omissions, and other errors.

Evaluation: review teacher's/supervisor's assessment of the strong points and weak points, actively internalizing this information for use in subsequent papers.

Re-Writing: whenever possible, demonstrate that you have internalized evaluator's assessment by re-writing at least a section of the paper.

Every writer must revise and edit the first draft of a paper. In fact, many professional writers feel the real work of writing begins with the rewriting. Sentences are corrected so that they sound better; words are changed so that ideas have greater impact and paragraphs are reorganized and rearranged in order to make the paper more powerful. It is during the editing process that a rough draft is transformed into a finished product.

Since there are many different kinds of errors to look for while editing, it's a good idea to read the paper thoroughly several times, focusing on a different aspect each time. Below are suggestions for editing your paper.

1. The first time you read the paper, check the paragraphs.
   --Is your thesis clearly stated?

   --Is there a logical progression of ideas?

   --Does each paragraph have a main idea?

   --Should one paragraph be divided into two or can two paragraphs be combined?

   --Are any paragraphs unrelated to the topic?

   --Have you included most of the information from your outline?

   --Does your opening paragraph spark interest in the topic?

   --Does your concluding paragraph summarize the paper?

2. After you have corrected your paragraphs, read the paper again, focusing on the sentences.

   --Is there continuity between sentences?

   --Is every sentence a complete sentence with a subject and verb?

   --Is there enough variety in sentence structure?

   --Are most sentences in the active voice?

   --Is each sentence to the point? Have you avoided wordiness?

3. Your third reading should focus on language.

   --Have you eliminated clichés?

   --Are there original phrases?

   --Are words repeated too often?

   --Have you included sensory language?

   --Have you chosen powerful descriptive words?

First Reading (React)

1. Underline or circle words or sentences which seem particularly effective or particularly weak.

2. Ask yourself: what is the purpose of the paper? What central point is it trying to make?

3. Consider your reaction to the paper and its subject. Is it positive or negative? Does the paper hold your interest?

Second Reading (Analyze)

1. Again, what is the main idea or purpose of the paper? Is it stated explicitly? If so, underline the sentence(s). If not, formulate a topic or thesis sentence yourself.

2. If there is no main idea, then what are the minor ideas? How many are there and why don't they add up to a main idea?

3. Can you trace the flow of the main idea? If so, how is the idea carried through? Through logical explanation, through illustration (specific examples), through chronological process, through comparison/contrast?

4. If you cannot follow the flow, where does the progression break down? Are there any sentences or groups of sentences which seem irrelevant?

5. Are there any points which need more elaboration? Would you like the writer to explain anything in greater detail or perhaps supply a specific example to illustrate and clarify the point?

6. If the paper holds your interest is it because you find the topic inherently interesting or because the writer has created the interest for you through his/her particular approach, or use of language?

7. Are all sentences clear and grammatical? Go back to the sentences or words you underlined or circled in #1 of the "react" section. Can you describe why these usages are effective or weak?

8. Are the various points in the paper optimally organized? What would be the effect of rearranging the ideas?

9. Does the writer make smooth transitions between ideas?

The Proof of the Pudding

A. Title
   (1) Is the title imaginative and provocative?
   (2) Is the title appropriate? Does it reflect a narrowed topic?

B. Introductory Paragraph
   (1) Is there a one-sentence controlling idea?
   (2) Does it make some definite assertion? Is it clearly stated?
   (3) Does it suggest a structure for the essay?
   (4) Does the rest of the introductory paragraph lead into the C.I.?

C. On the Word Level
   (1) Spelling errors
   (2) Poor word/choice/unidiomatic locutions
   (3) Redundancies
   (4) Verb tense errors
   (5) Incorrect verb form errors
   (6) Confusion between adjectives and adverbs
   (7) Apostrophe errors

   Agreement between words
   (8) Lack of subject-verb agreement
   (9) Lack of pronoun-antecedent agreement

D. On the sentence Level
   (1) Awkward/wordy sentences
   (2) Vague sentences/insufficiently factual
   (3) Fragments
   (4) Run-ons/comma splices
   (5) Interior comma errors
   (6) Good sentence variety?

E. On the Paragraph Level
   (1) Does each paragraph have a well-stated C.I.?
   (2) Is each paragraph restricted to one basic C.I.?
   (3) Is this idea adequately developed within the paragraph?
   (4) Is there smooth transition between sentences?
   (5) Is there smooth transition between paragraphs?

F. Concluding Paragraph
   (1) Is there a sense of closure? Does the conclusion restate the C.I., recapitulate or summarize arguments, or draw conclusions?

G. Overall - The Whole Composition
   (1) Is the topic a sufficiently narrowed and adequately handled one?
   (2) Is the overall organization of the essay handled well?

CRITICIZING WRITING

1. CONTENT
   A. Does the author know what he is talking about?
   B. What is his authority?
   C. Is his subject or his treatment of it in any way new?
   D. Is the subject of any significance to the audience?
2. VALIDITY
   A. Is the author being truthful?
   B. Are his facts correct?
   C. Does he exaggerate or otherwise bias his subject?
3. PERSONA/VOICE
   A. What sort of person does the author seem to be?
   B. Does the writing "sound like" a person (vs. a machine)?
   C. Is the voice consistent?
4. ATTITUDE
   A. Who is the likely audience?
   B. What is the author's attitude toward the audience?
   C. Does the writer speak over or under the heads of his audience?
5. TONE
   A. How does the author view his subject (comic, serious, ironic, etc.)?
   B. Is his tone appropriate to his subject?
   C. Is the tone controlled (vs. overdone)?
6. DICTION AND SYNTAX
   A. Does the author handle language well?
   B. Are his words well chosen? Economical?
   C. Are his sentences clear? Do they aid the reader in seeing his purpose?
7. ORGANIZATION
   A. Is the paper well organized?
   B. Is the organization entirely clear?
8. DEVELOPMENT
   A. Are the points of the paper sufficiently developed?
   B. Are there sufficient details?
   C. Are the details appropriate?
   D. Are all the points relevant?
9. PURPOSE
   A. What is the purpose or point of the paper?
   B. Is the purpose entirely clear?
   C. Does everything in the paper clearly relate to and help develop the purpose?
   D. Is the point of the paper worth making?
10. MECHANICS
   A. Is the paper free of error (spelling, punctuation, grammar, etc.)?
   B. Does the writer know the conventions of print?
11. Is the paper well written?

Good writing is the skillful control of all these aspects (1-10)

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TIPS FOR STUDENTS EVALUATING THE PAPERS OF THEIR PEERS

When you first receive a paper, resist the urge to begin reading it straight through word by word, correcting every little error you see. Scan it first for major problems.

1. Read the first and last paragraphs of the paper to determine whether they have a common thesis and focus. If they have little in common, you may have on your hands a paper which has switched topics somewhere in the middle. You can often find the place where the paper shifts topics simply by reading the first sentence of each paragraph.

2. Skim the paper to check whether the thesis has been developed and "proved." In addition, watch for many short paragraphs with very general topic sentences: such paragraphs may represent nothing more than a collection of possible introductions to various aspects of the topic, rather than a sequential line of reasoning to "prove" one thesis.

IF THE PAPER CONTAINS ERRORS 1. OR 2., RETURN IT TO THE STUDENT IMMEDIATELY FOR RE-WRITING. URGE THE WRITER TO CONSULT OUR HANDOUTS ON ESSAY ORGANIZATION AND OUTLINING FOR HELP IN RE-STRUCTURING AND DEVELOPING THE ESSAY.

3. Examine the introductory paragraph. Does it have a thesis sentence that accurately announces the main thrust of the paper? Do the subsequent sentences give a preview of the progression of ideas to be developed in proving the thesis statement?

4. Check the organizational structure of the paper. Is the outline of the paper discernible? Can the reader skimming the paper reproduce the plan which the writer followed? (When reading long papers, I find it useful to actually jot down the sequence of ideas being presented.)

5. Do the sub-points develop the topic with sufficient completeness? Obviously it is easier to detect faults in what is included, and harder to detach oneself to consider omissions. Nonetheless, once you have determined that the paper does have a clear plan, it is worthwhile to ask whether it includes everything that it ought.

6. Is the development free from repetition and irrelevance? Has the student treated the same point in two different places? Are there sentences or entire paragraphs that

drift away from the thesis of the paper? (A related problem is proportion: has the student given a minor point more space or emphasis than its relative importance justifies?)

7. Are the ideas arranged in a logical or appropriate sequence? Like completeness, this area is easy to overlook, but it is worth taking a minute to ask, "Is this the most effective organizational plan the student could have chosen?"

8. Check for proper integration of source material and quotations. A student's research paper sometimes is too dependent upon quoted material, or fails to integrate quoted material smoothly with the student's own points, or paraphrases large sections from a few sources. The student may have to re-write the entire paper if he/she has allowed the sources to dominate the paper.

Only after checking for the eight problems noted above should you focus on grammar, usage, punctuation, and spelling. Unless the mechanical errors are overwhelming in number, they will not interfere with readability nearly as much as these larger problems do.

NON-JUDGMENTAL PEER EVALUATION

Make a descriptive statement about the essay, paragraph by paragraph.

For Example: The first paragraph sets the scene and states that the thesis is _____.

The second paragraph seems confusing because it somewhat contradicts _____ in the first paragraph.

The third paragraph is full of vivid examples, by I don't see a topic sentence.

The fourth paragraph picks up _____ aspect of thesis, but I wish there were a few supporting details to help me understand.

The fifth paragraph has a final, long sentence which I simply can't figure out.

The sixth paragraph: I liked this best! I enjoyed your second example about ...

And so forth ...

NON-JUDGMENTAL SELF-EVALUATION

For Length and Development.

Count number of:

- words
- paragraphs
- points you think you have developed
- question you think you have answered

For Mechanics.

Count number (or%) of:

- correctly spelled words
- sentences with correct beginning and end punctuation
- sentences with correct internal punctuation

For Style.

Count numbers of:

- modifiers
- phrases and clauses
- different types of modifiers (single word, phrase, clause)
- words or phrases which show comparison (including figures of speech)
- different sentence patterns
- different types of sentences (simple, compound, complex)

QUESTIONS FOR EVALUATION AND/OR REVISION OF PAPERS

CONTEXT

Does it show original, worthwhile thinking?
Does it fulfill the assignment?

INTRODUCTION

Does it arouse interest?
Does it include a thesis, either stated or implied, which clearly shows the writer's attitude toward the subject?
Is it appropriate?

BODY

Does each paragraph have one main idea, either stated or implied, which clearly relates to and develops the thesis?
Does each paragraph contain specific details which expand or clarify the main idea of the paragraph?
Is every sentence clearly related to the thesis?
Has the writer employed clear, logical transitions to enable the reader to follow his train of thought?
Is the writer's diction appropriate and accurate?
Are the sentences concise and active?

CONCLUSION

Is it logical and clearly related to the thesis?
Does it develop naturally from the material, or does it seem forced and artificial?

MECHANICS, USAGE AND SPELLING

Are there misspelled words?
Are there any sentence fragments?
Are there any inexcusable comma errors, such as the use of a comma in place of a period or semicolon?
Are there other punctuation errors?
Do the subjects and verbs agree in number?
Do the pronouns have definnite antecedents, with which the pronouns agree in number and person?
Are the verb tenses consistent throughout the paper?

NOTE: Read your paper aloud whenever possible, developing your own ability to be objectively analytical. Instead of relying on someone else's proofreading, editing and revising, practice until you can do it yourself.

- Are there any sentences that don't make sense?
- Do you have a strong opening line or sentence?
- Does every paragraph tell something important?
- Are there any lines that need more colorful words?
- Could someone repeat the experiment by following your notes?
- Check to see that you haven't begun more than three sentences with the same word.

(From the Writing Resource Centre, Delta School District. Used with permission.)

The Editing Committee has "spot checked" your writing. Our comments are below:

One thing I really liked about your writing was ______________________

____

____

The area I checked was : (Circle One)

* Word Choice * Opening * Ending * Content

* Sequence * Sentence Structure

O.K.

Here's my suggestion of what to change: ______________________

____

______________________________ Editor ______________________

One thing I really liked about your writing was ______________________

____

____

The area I checked was : (Circle One)

* Word Choice * Opening * Ending * Content

* Sequence * Sentence Structure

O.K.

Here's my suggestion of what to change: ______________________

____

______________________________ Editor ______________________

One thing I really liked about your writing was ______________________

____

____

The area I checked was : (Circle One)

* Word Choice * Opening * Ending * Content

* Sequence * Sentence Structure

O.K.

Here's my suggestion of what to change: ______________________

____

______________________________ Editor ______________________

1. Content (Ideas) (Subject) ✓
   * Complete
   * Clear
   * Interesting

   * Are my thoughts complete?
   * Do they make sense?
   * Did I express my ideas clearly?
   * Will my audience understand what I have said?
   * Will they have a "complete and clear" picture in their minds?
   * Will my audience find my ideas interesting?

Could I edit to ...
add more details or description to expand my ideas or to make them clearer?

---

2. Opening ✓
   * catch attention
   * set the stage
   * state the main idea

   * Will the first sentences catch my audience's attention?
   * Does it set the stage for what is to follow?
   * If it is a story, does the beginning tell who the hero is, what he is doing, and when and where he is doing it? (5 W's)
   * If it is an exposition, does the opening state the main idea to be elaborated on?

Could I edit to ...
add, replace, remove or rearrange words or phrases so the opening would be more effective?

---

3. Sequence (Organization) ✓
   * logical
   * smooth
   * focused

   * Are my ideas put in a logical order with a beginning, middle, and end?
   * Does each sentence flow smoothly onto the next one?
   * Are all my sentences related to the topic? Did I stick to my subject by keeping my ideas focused?

Could I edit to ...
- rearrange the sentences so my ideas would be clearer and easier to follow?
- remove or replace parts that do not relate to the topic?

4. Word Choice (Vocabulary) ✓
   * precise
   * interesting
   * varied

   * Did I enrich my sentences with a variety of fresh, lively and interesting words?
   * Did I choose the best, most precise words to make my ideas clear?

Could I edit to ...
- add more 'describing' words?
- replace tired, overused or unclear words?
- remove unnecessary words?

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5. Sentence Structure ✓
   * varied sentence length
   * word & phrase order
   * type (kind)

   * Did I use a variety of longer and shorter sentences for emphasis and interest?
   * Did I use a variety of sentence patterns by changing the words or phrases?
   * Did I use a variety of sentence types (i.e., statement, question, command), if appropriate?

Could I edit to ...
combine or rearrange whole sentences or their parts to provide variety?

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6. Ending ✓
   * tie ideas together
   * sums up thoughts
   * provides conclusion

   * Does my final sentence conclude the ideas so that they seem tied together and finished?
   * Is there an echo of the beginning of my piece in the ending?
   * Are the thoughts summed up, or conclusions drawn?

Could I edit to ...
add, remove or rearrange words or phrases to strengthen the ending ?

Let's be Editors who CARE!

"An Editor is an Author's best friend!"

Now it's your turn to help your friend strengthen his or her writing. Give the author some helpful hints by making some comments below:

One thing I really liked about your writing was _____

_____

_____

Now you might work on this area to strengthen it:

- Word Choice - Opening - Ending - More Ideas] Circle
- More Details - Sequence - Sentence Structure] One

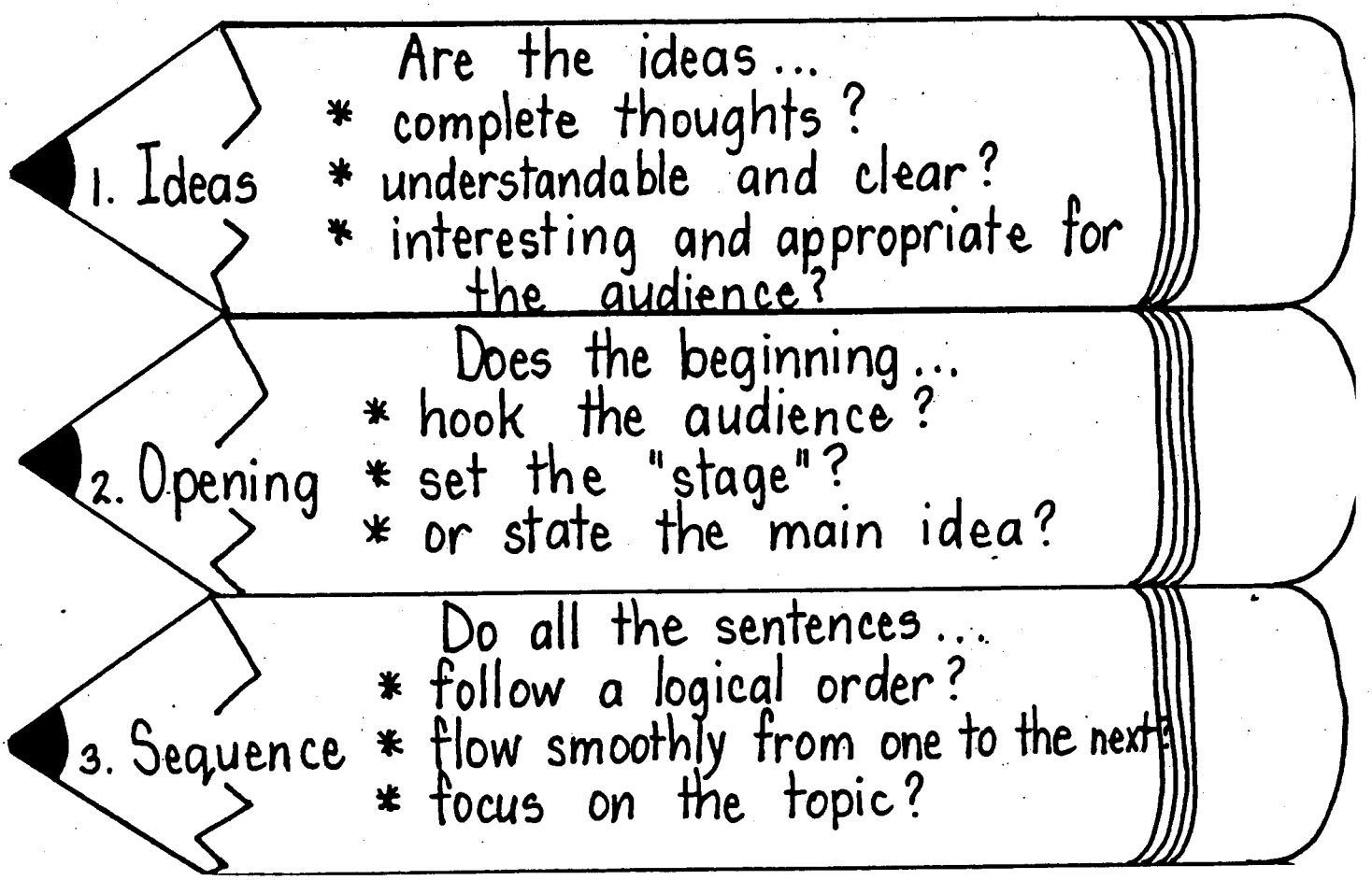
Here's my suggestions of what to change: _____

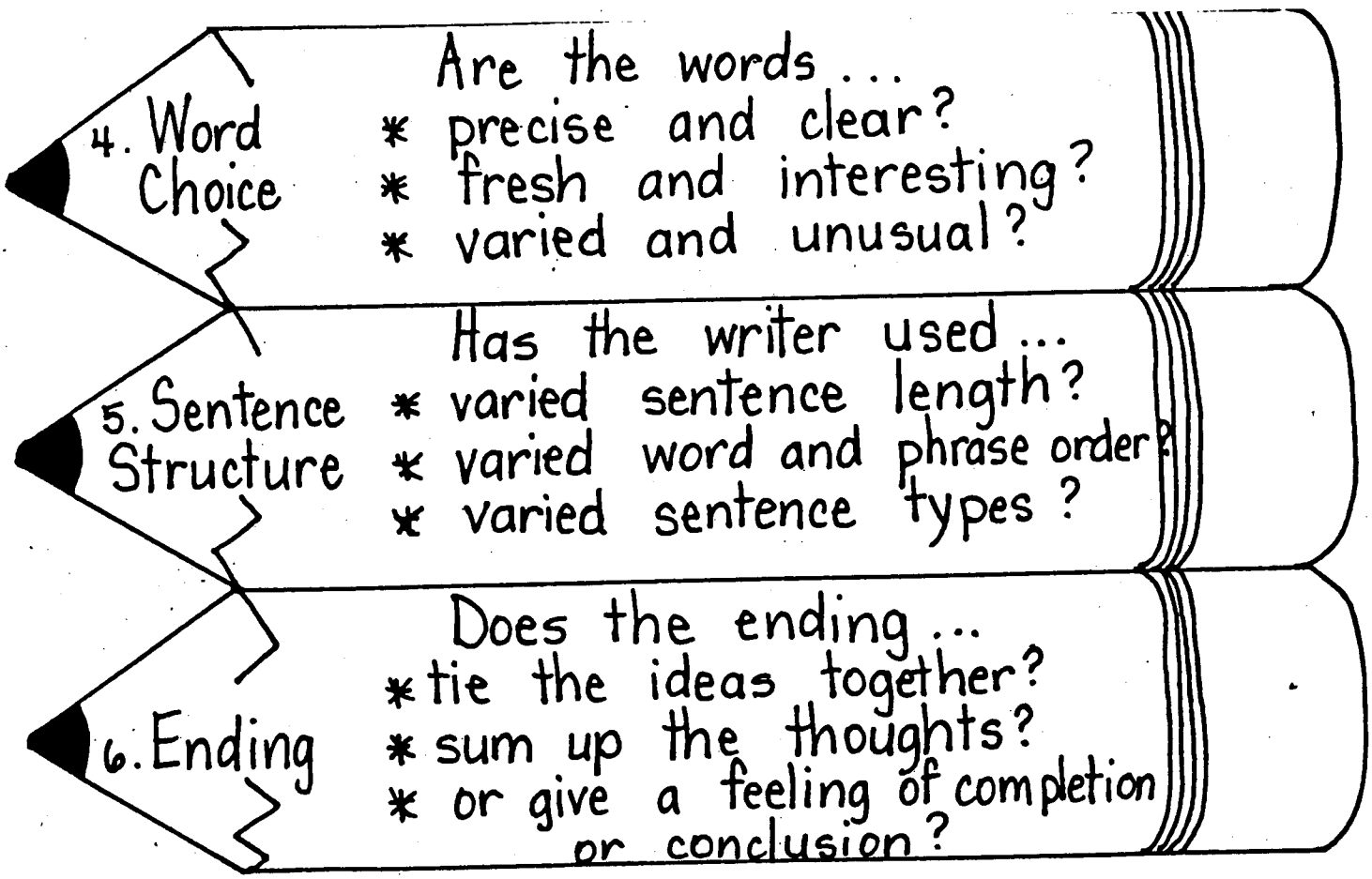
_____

_____

Author _____ Editor _____

"LET'S EDIT" PENCILS




4. Word Choice
Are the words ...
* precise and clear?
* fresh and interesting?
* varied and unusual?
5. Sentence Structure
Has the writer used ...
* varied sentence length?
* varied word and phrase order?
* varied sentence types?
6. Ending
Does the ending ...
* tie the ideas together?
* sum up the thoughts?
* or give a feeling of completion or conclusion?

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