

Teacher Guide

MICHIGAN
ADULT
EDUCATION



Preparing Workers for 21st Century Employment

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION IN THE WORKPLACE

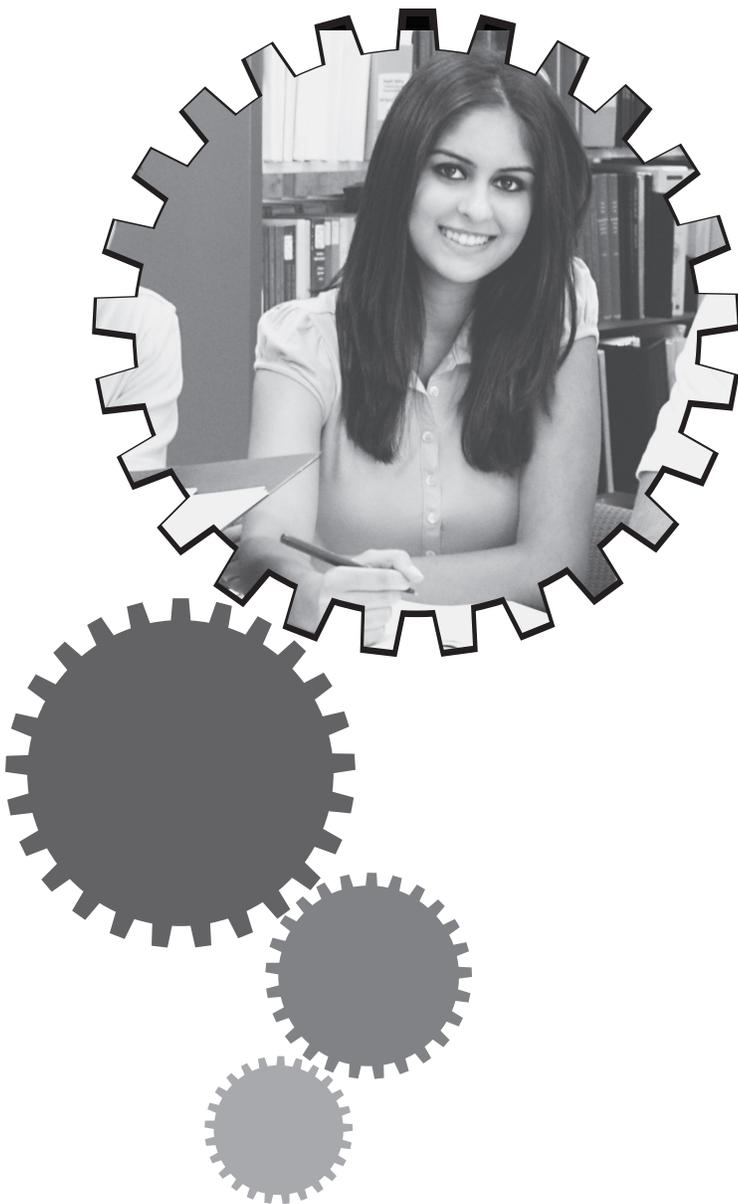
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Part I

Introduction and Overview



Preparing Workers for 21st Century Employment “Written Communication in the Workplace” Teacher Guide

Part One: Introduction and Overview

The focus of “Preparing Workers for 21st Century Employment” writing component is on “Written Communication in the Workplace”. The writers of the workbook scenarios and the classroom activities for this teacher guide have tried to strike a balance between grammar and direct instruction in business writing practice. It is clear that both pieces are necessary. Understanding of a particular grammar rule that applies will provide students an answer to “why” we do it this way. Over focus in classroom instruction on rules of grammar however will often leave students in a state of “glassy eyed” monotony with little comprehension. The major emphasis of the classroom activities is on actual workplace writing. Only the instructor can strike the balance between the teaching of rules and actual writing practice needed by a specific group of students.

Many articles over the past decade have referred to writing skill development as the forgotten “R”. America’s business leaders have not missed this deficiency in their employees. In 2006 The Conference Board, a private non-profit with a ninety year record of dissemination of knowledge on management and the workplace, issued “Are They Really ready to Work”. This report featured “Employers Perspectives on Basic Knowledge and Applied Skills of New Entrants to the 21st Century U.S. Workforce”. Four hundred thirty-one employers responded from all over the country. They were first asked to rank 20 skill areas and then rate the effectiveness of new hires in those areas. When listing deficiencies of new employees with a high school diploma or an equivalency 80.9% of those employers named “Written Communication” as a deficiency. This was the skill deficiency named most often.

In Michigan many of the employers we spoke to as we developed this material spoke vehemently about the need for more writing proficiency in their employees. The Writing Skill Focus Groups were possibly the most spirited of the three that have been done so far. Andrew Executive Director of *The Source* in Grand Rapids put it this way.

“Writing is perhaps the most challenging but also the most critical skill. With so much of communication being electronic, written communication has as much impact as any aspect of workplace skill. Written forms of communication must be accurate to be effective. Ineffective written communication leads to mistakes and also reflects poorly on the person who is communicating ineffectively.”

Karen Oncu from Grand Traverse Container Inc. commented,

“As an HR manager, I understand the importance of good writing skills and what that means for our company. It’s a skill that cuts across all segments of our workforce, from customer service to machine operations. When you work in a team environment such as we do, you have to make sure that the information you’re conveying to a co-worker is clear and understandable. A lot of time is lost on the job when a message has to be clarified because of poor writing skills.”

Perhaps Joe Singer from LACKS Industries said it best,

“Writing for business and technology is not so much a matter of writing to be understood. It’s writing so that you cannot be misunderstood.”

The above quotes are all included in the Preparing Workers for 21st Century Employment, Written Communication in the Workplace, workbook. These quotes and others demonstrate that Michigan’s employer community understands the importance of effective writing skill. While some test for writing ability prior to employment all use the completion of the application as guide to approximate writing skill. Across the board the employers agreed that some may be hired into entry level positions without regard to writing ability but such employees will find it difficult to progress to a “lead” or “supervisor” position without being able to write effectively.

Organization and Points of Emphasis

In all three volumes in this series the EFF Work Readiness Profile Tasks that are demonstrated by each scenario were listed on the right hand side of the page. The writing skill material for this project is organized into four units with each featuring targeted EFF Work Readiness Profile skills. Unit 1 has a focus on the ability to “Work with Others and Serve Clients”. The scenarios in Unit 2 are organized around various aspects of workplace “Responsibility”. Unit 3 raises issues where workers are asked to “Monitor and Correct Performance”. The last unit (4) features scenarios which address issues of “Integrity”, ability to “Solve Problems” as well as “Use of Technology and Systems”.

The same Conference Board report noted above indicated that most employers believed that new hires were deficient in “soft skills”. Among those listed as deficiencies by most of the respondents were, Professionalism/Work Ethic, Critical Thinking/Problem Solving, and Ethics/Social Responsibility. How are we to teach such concepts? One way is to ask participants to discuss how each scenario illustrates the need to be responsible or how a person can monitor and correct their own work. Each of these EFF skills can become an integral component of the instructional delivery. Debbie Hansen of Oxford Bank in Clarkston honed in on the need to develop such skills in adult students when she said,

“CEO survey respondents on new employee deficiencies indicate that a lack of professionalism is immediately behind a lack of written communication skills. These two proficiencies are closely linked. The ability to present both factual data and your thoughts and ideas professionally in written form is a key hiring point.”

Instructors should give serious consideration to the need to place special emphasis both on the quotes from Michigan Employers and the EFF Work Readiness Profile skills when using these materials with a class. Discussion of the quote so participants can identify the core message (main idea) from the quoted employer is one key. Each scenario is either a positive or negative illustration of the EFF Work Readiness Profile skills noted. Use these illustrations to begin a discussion of the broader implication of employer expectations from employees. Employers, HR professionals and the like all point to the need for the workforce to develop a common set of values for work. The EFF Work Readiness Profile skills are a good starting point for us to begin that discussion.

The title of each selection gives an indication of the type of written workplace communication featured in the scenario. Some titles emphasize the form of the communication, “Customer Service – Answering Complaints” and “Writing a Letter of Customer Appreciation” are examples. Other titles feature the grammar rule to be covered. “They May Sound the Same, But They Don’t Have the Same Meaning” and “Writing Complete Ideas That Don’t Go On Forever” are example of grammar-based titles.

We must take special note of the increasing use of email to communicate in the workplace. Many of the employer participants in the focus groups mentioned email as a particular issue which needed to be addressed. Some noted the lack of control over business communication with customers since workers may be in direct contact with clients without having the message sifted by a supervisor. Others spoke of the lack of professional standards for email communication. Unit 2 contains several scenarios related to email use with two of them devoted to “Email Etiquette” Some email basics are contained in Classroom Activities 2.6 and 2.7 for review with participants.

Additional Support

Two aids for students struggling with writing skill follow. Each is designed to provide the student with a personal avenue for writing skill improvement. Use of such strategies gives the adult student control over the path of their skill improvement.

Student Grammar Journal

You may wish to have your students begin a journal of grammar rules and a spelling log. In this way, students become more aware of their problem areas in communication and have an immediate reference that makes sense to them. Purchase inexpensive address books (or ask students to) that have alphabetized tabs. This way your students can easily keep their journal alphabetically.

If a student has difficulty with how to use commas correctly, the student can write down the rule and an example in sentence format under the “c” tab. This type of self-developed tool will help students in editing their own writing in the workplace.

For Example:

Problem	Rule (in your own words)	Write a Sentence Using the Rule
Commas	Always put a comma after different words in a series	I will need to order more plates, napkins, and toothpicks.

Student Portfolios of Workplace Writing

Workplace documents come in many shapes and sizes: brochures, ads, reports, memos, letters, handbooks, manuals, policy statements, pamphlets, proposals, instructions, logs, recommendations, newsletters, press releases, and in today's world emails.

Provide students with a portfolio or expandable file folder. Have students start a collection of examples of different types of workplace documents. Those who are currently employed can start collecting actual written documents from their place of employment. Since each company has its own culture careful examination of actual documents will help worker/students develop a writing style that is compatible with that particular workplace. Students can use these documents as guides when writing for their personal use or in the workplace.

As students gather different documents, discuss why each is an example of effective writing and appropriate workplace format. Assist students with the development of a way to organize collected documents into specific categories/types or some other organizational feature (ex. date issued) so collected documents don't become a hodge-podge of items thrown into a folder.

Classroom Activities

The classroom activities which follow in Part Two of this Teacher Guide are designed to provide the instructor with additional practice for students and are optional when using the workbook scenarios. Many give grammar instruction to support effective application of the writing skill or workplace format covered by a particular scenario. They are sorted using the same Scenario Number and Title from the workbook although page numbers will be different. Many contain a special "Grammar Rule Review" box to provide the instructor with ready access to the language used to describe a particular rule of grammar. Some of the units have multiple activities for instructional use while some have only one listed application. Certainly instructors are free to revise, alter, or otherwise be certain that the activity is appropriate for the group before using it in the classroom. The activities in this guide are not intended to limit instructor creativity. Please devise your own whenever needed.

Innovative Support Idea for Preparing Workers Writing

Christy Luckey-Nelson, Director of NW Michigan Adult Education provided information on the innovative way her agency found to support the Preparing Workers Writing Pilot!

We invited any Adult Education or UpSkills class participant to enter the Writing contest. We had 15 entries representing all 5 service Centers in Northwest Michigan. The contest was for one \$100.00 prize, but the second place winner was so close that I put in \$20.00. The 2nd place winner had a head injury and could barely read 2 years ago!

It ended up being a really great event. We had 5 judges for the contest:

Janie McNabb, Director of Program Development & Community Relations – NW MI COG

Jan Warren, Director – Northwest Michigan Works!

Nate Capellupo, Business Liaison – Northwest Michigan Works!

Erica Nakfoor, State of Michigan /Adult Education

Char Slater, Career Advisor/JET Program/Northwest Michigan Works!

Adult Education Essay Contest Winners:

Brenda Chircop was the winner of an essay contest where students were asked to write about the importance of writing skills in today's world of work. The contest was open to Learning Lab and UpSkills Students at all five Northwest Michigan WORKS! Service Centers.

"I was very excited and thankful," said Chircop. "I feel like I've accomplished a milestone in my life."

Chircop is an UpSkills student at Michigan WORKS! in Traverse City. The program provides intensive instruction to adults facing multiple barriers to education and employment. When Chircop started in the class, her reading, writing and math skills were at a third grade level. Now she's up to ninth grade.

"I had low self-esteem at the beginning but I've built more confidence," said Chircop.

She says she did a lot of research for her essay and talked with three different employers to get their points of view.

"If you do not have good writing skills it can cost you and cause problems for your company," said Chircop.

"She [Chircop] gave a nice overview of using both verbal and written communication in dealing with co-workers and customers," said Andrea Rothney, the Learning Lab Specialist who coordinated the essay contest.

Another Traverse City UpSkills student, Dar Roberts, was the runner-up in the essay contest. He won \$20.

"It was the first thing I wrote in 35 years and to come out in second place is not too shabby," said Roberts.

"He [Roberts] gave some good examples of what can go wrong when there is unclear written communication," said Rothney.

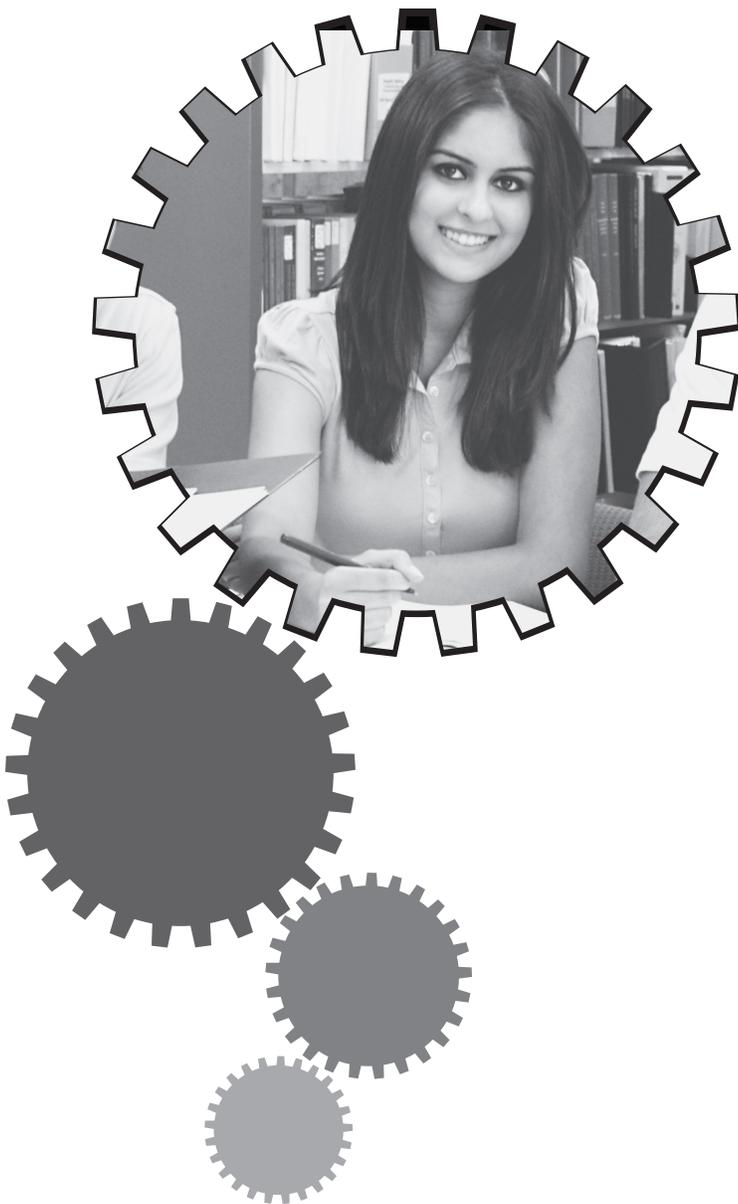
Both Chircop and Roberts credited their UpSkills Instructor Kimberly Raymond for helping them improve their writing skills.

"She encouraged us," said Roberts. "She helped us to believe in ourselves and know everybody has an opportunity to be successful."

The essay contest was part of the Preparing Workers for 21st Century Employment Writing Pilot Program. The contest was sponsored by the Michigan Adult Education Professional Development Project, for the Michigan Department of Energy, Labor and Economic Growth Office of Adult Learning.

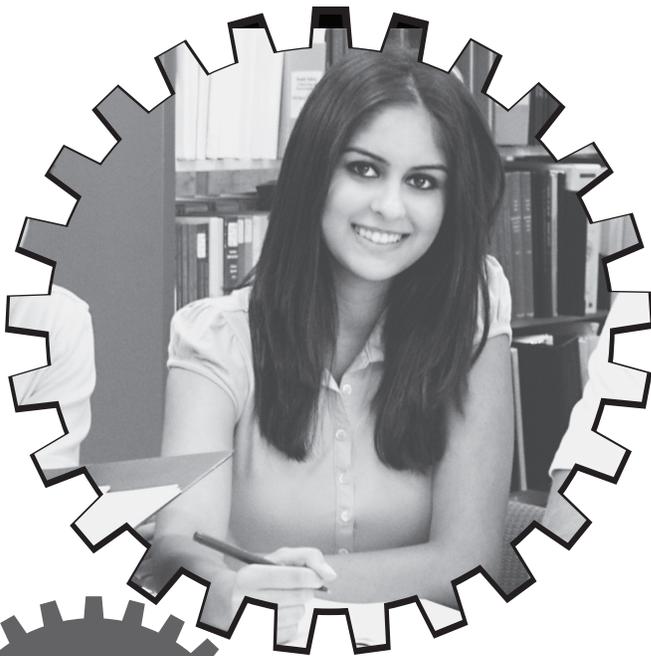
Part II

Classroom Activities

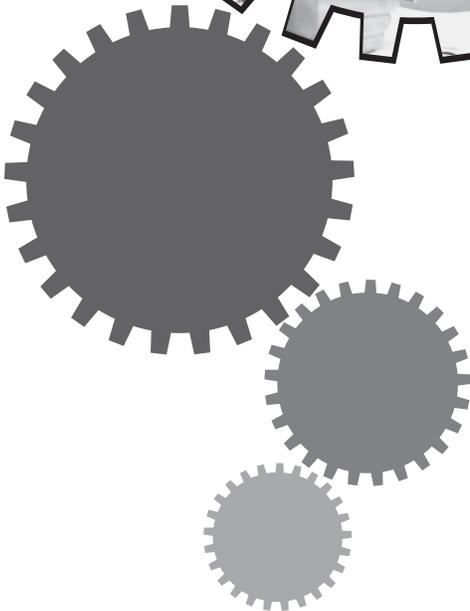


Unit

Work with Others and Serve Clients



- Address customer comments, questions, and concerns with direct, accurate, and timely responses.
- Be respectful and open to the thoughts, opinions, and contributions of others.
- Verify customer or client identification to provide services or carry out procedures.
- Work as a team to develop and achieve mutual goals and objectives.



1.1 Writing in the Workplace — Len and Kea

Activity 1: Divide the class into teams of four. Provide each team with a sheet of paper. Give the students a few minutes to brainstorm all of the types of writing that they do every day in their personal lives, as well as in their jobs. Have the students share their ideas with the rest of the group. Write their ideas on chart paper or on the board. Discuss the many types of writing that people do every day. Make sure to include such things as lists, notes, emails, and text messages.

Extended Activity: Write down different job titles on slips of paper. Examples could include: chef, construction worker, daycare worker, nursing assistant, truck driver, convenience clerk, postal employee, cashier. You may wish to select job titles that are common in your area.

Put the slips in a cup and have the students draw a slip. Have students list the different types of writing that they think each job might use. When they are done, have them share their ideas with the group. Finish the discussion by talking about the need for being an effective writer in all types of jobs.

Rachel Schrottenboer – GRCC Learning Center in reference to Scenario 1.1:

“We started by talking about the types of writing students do in their daily lives. All of the students recognized how important writing is and were able to connect it to their day to day routines. Some mentioned the importance of being able to write a note to their child’s teacher and also for filling out various forms.”

At the end of our discussion, we focused on Think About it # 4. Students tried to think of jobs that didn’t require writing. Most of them felt there weren’t any jobs that didn’t require writing. One woman said she never had to write on her job, but this wasn’t necessarily a good thing because she felt like she wasn’t learning how to write; she wants to have a job that required her to write. Another student mentioned that at his job he has to fill out production reports but he doesn’t feel confident writing them. He always copies other reports. These students’ comments reflect the whole groups’ desire to learn how to write. This is a difficult area for most of my students.”

1.2 Writing Workplace Notes: The Beginning and the End — Cindi

Activity 1: Have students read the story and brainstorm ideas for why they believe Bruce was upset. Write these ideas on the board. Discuss that fellow workers often feel less important or disrespected when someone does not take the time to draft a properly written note. Workers may misinterpret what has been written or may not think that it is important or worth reading.

Explain to students that writing is all about communicating ideas. Sentences are how we package those ideas. A sentence contains a complete thought or idea. However, a reader cannot understand that idea if the reader can’t figure out where it begins and where it ends. This is what beginning capitalization and end punctuation provides. Each sentence should begin with a capital letter and end with a punctuation mark. Sometimes called “outside” punctuation, end punctuation marks include a period, question mark, or exclamation mark.

Review with students their revision of Cindi’s note. A possible example of the note with capitalization and end punctuation corrections is as follows:

Bruce,

The coffee machine is not working. It needs to be fixed before the morning rush arrives. I have tried fixing it, but I can't get it to work. I am so frustrated! I know that John has fixed it in the past. Please make sure that this is the first thing that John does in the morning before he begins his regular shift. I hope that this works for you.

Will you please give me a call to let me know that John was able to fix the machine? I would very much appreciate it. I am so sorry that I had to leave you with this problem. You are always a great help to me.

Thank you!

Cindi

Activity 2: Have students work in teams of two and rewrite Cindi's note to Bruce. Discuss with students that punctuation is the set of symbols used in writing that guides the reader. A sentence always ends with a period, a question mark, or an exclamation point. Review with students the rules of end punctuation.

Grammar Rule Review – Make It Your Own!

- Period [.] — Used to end a sentence that gives information, states facts, or gives a command.
- Question Mark [?] — Used to end a sentence that is a question.
- Exclamation point [!] — Used to end a sentence that shows strong emotions.

Next, discuss the need for a capital letter at the beginning of a complete sentence. Students may wish to write these rules in their personal grammar journal.

Extended Activity: Create a chart such as the following and place it on chart paper or on the board.

Period	Question Mark	Exclamation Mark

Provide students with workplace documents such as letters, memos, and emails. Have students locate different types of sentences that use each type of end punctuation marks. Discuss what type of end punctuation was used most often and why.

Olivia Destrades Mendoza – LCWM – Writes in reference to the reaction of her class to Scenario 1.2:

“This scenario lasted longer in-class than I imagined it would, because it sparked so much discussion with the students. The students read through the scenario and understood the main issues. Vocabulary words were challenging but not too difficult to grasp. One student pointed out that Bruce (the boss) may have been offended because Cindi had capitalized both her own name and her co-worker John’s name, but not Bruce’s name. I thought that was astute and a good point. If, as a supervisor, I felt that the errors were due to lack of education then I would be less likely to be offended. However if it seemed evident that Cindi (in this case) was aware of conventional writing practices and simply didn’t take the time to use them, it would be a different matter. I believe that the scenario could be made more explicit in terms of Cindi knowing but not taking the time, rather than not knowing how to write a solid letter.”

1.3 Is That What They Really Wanted? — Edgar

Activity 1: Have students read the story and the letter that Edgar received. Have students identify different ways the list of items could be written.

Examples:

- glass, tile, carpet, pads, linoleum, and indoor paint colors
- glass tile, carpet pads, linoleum, and indoor paint colors
- glass, tile, carpet pads, linoleum, and indoor paint colors

Activity 2: Brainstorm how Edgar may wish to address his comma communication problem with the order. Explain that the use of a comma in a series of items can make the difference between interpreting an idea correctly or incorrectly.

Review “outside” punctuation marks with students and how these types of punctuation tell the reader where an idea begins and ends. Outside punctuation marks include: periods, question marks, and exclamation points. Explain that commas are a type of “inside” punctuation. Inside punctuation marks help the reader more clearly understand what is being said within a sentence.

Grammar Rule Review – Make It Your Own!

- Commas in a Series – Commas should be used to separate three or more items in a series.

You may wish to have students write this rule in their personal grammar journal, along with an example of how commas are used correctly in a series for both three or more words and three or more short phrases.

Note: Generally a comma is used before the conjunction, such as the word “and,” when using a series of words or phrases.

Extended Activity: Have students work in teams of two and create sentences that use a series of words or phrases. Have each team write their sentence on the board. As a group, edit the sentences

by correctly using commas in a series.

Examples:

John Joseph Drew, and Gail are responsible for the project. (Are there four workers, three workers, or two workers?)

Eliza plans on answering her email filing reports, and drafting a memo before she goes home. (Is Eliza answering her email and filing reports, or is she answering her email filing reports?)

1.4 It's Not Quite Complete — Todd and Darvella

Activity 1: Discuss that a problem often seen in workplace writing is the use of sentence fragments. When a sentence ends too quickly and does not have both a subject and a verb, it is called a sentence fragment. Sentence fragments can cause a reader to misunderstand the message.

Write the following sentence fragments on the board. The questions in parentheses are for your usage if students do not immediately identify the sentence as a fragment.

- Since you asked. (Will you get the answer?)
- Because of another appointment. (What did he or she do?)
- Quickly completing the new display. (Who completed the display and what did he or she do?)
- If you want to be placed on the list for a promotion. (What should you do?)

Ask students what is missing from each of the sentences. Review the three parts of a complete sentence. Have the students create a complete sentence for each of the above items.

Grammar Rule Review – Make It Your Own!

- Fixing Sentence Fragments — Identify the subject, verb, and the complete thought. If one is missing, add it to create a complete sentence

Activity 2: Have the students read the story. Discuss why Darvella misunderstood the telephone message that Todd had left on his desk. Have students share experiences when a message that they wrote or read was misunderstood. Discuss the need to always write with the reader in mind.

1.5 Writing Directions — Eli

Review: Review with students the importance of the following items when writing directions for someone else:

- First, understand the activity or task you are describing.
- Always put yourself in the place of the reader (the one who has to use or follow your instructions).

- Visualize each step in your mind and what is needed to accomplish the task.
- Write in a clear and concise manner.
- Test the instructions to make sure that they really work.

NW Michigan Adult Education Upskills Class instructor made the following suggestion relative to Scenario 1.5:

As an extended activity, I had the class write their own set of directions in both paragraph form as well as using a list. (This led to a great discussion on “transition” words. They swapped papers with a partner and edited them. (They were urged to be “concise”—vocabulary word) They were asked to point out what made the directions easy to read (question #1) and also point out transition words (question #2) in their peer’s writing.

Activity 1: Put different tasks on strips of paper. Examples: How to tie your shoes. How to make a jelly sandwich. How to change a light bulb. How to turn on the computer. How to measure the size of the room.

Have the students draw a slip of paper and write directions for their “how to” task. When they are done, have each student share his or her directions with another student in the class. Have the student complete each step of the written directions. Discuss whether or not the student was able to complete the task based on the directions. Why or why not? Students may wish to ask questions such as:

- Are there steps missing?
- Are the directions easy to follow?
- How could these instructions be better?

Show students how to use a graphic organizer to develop their step-by-step instructions. Two organizers are included on the following pages. The first organizer has students write the actions for each step. Some tasks may require less or more steps.

Name of Task: _____

Step	Action
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

The second graphic organizer uses “If I do this step, then this will happen” format. Additional steps can be added depending upon the task.

Name of Task _____

Step 1

if...

then...

Step 2

if...

then...

Step 3

if...

then...

Step 4

if...

then...

Step 5

if...

then...

1.6 Informal Writing Doesn't Belong in the Workplace — Shay

Activity 1 —Discussion: Introduce the lesson by having students identify how they speak or write to their friends is different from the way they speak or write at the workplace. Write the words “formal” and “informal” on the board or chart paper. Have students discuss what each word means to them in their lives. Examples may be that “formal” means using your best manners when you go out to a nice restaurant. “Informal” may mean sitting in your living room and watching a football game with your friends. Share with students that when writing in the workplace, they should always use words and phrases that are appropriate for a professional setting.

Extended Activity: Have students rewrite the journal entry using phrases that are more appropriate to the workplace. An example of a revised journal would be:

This book will provide you with commands for your pet. Mornings are best for training your pet. In the morning, your pet is more alert. Therefore, you will be more successful in your training efforts in the morning.

1.7 Customer Service: Answering Complaints — Cecil

Activity 1: Write the following phrase on the board: “Customer Satisfaction”. Ask students what this means. Write the students’ words on the board. Next, ask students what words customers use when they are not happy. Write these words on the board.

Review the list of words. Have students identify words that they could use to respond to different types of customer complaints. Discuss that responding to customer complaints and complaint letters is a difficult, but important task in any workplace. Share with students that it is important for them to understand how a workplace deals with customer complaints. Some workplaces have policies and procedures. Others may have a customer service department to deal with complaints.

As you read the story and discuss the questions, share with students that good customer service is everyone’s job. People who are upset need to feel that they are understood. How an employee responds to a complaint is the first step in providing good customer service.

Bruce Bennett – LCWM - Writes in reference to Scenario 1.7 and says:

“When looking at the letter, I think it is very important to ask students what they notice about the letter. We identified some key points that demonstrated customer service in the letter. First, we pointed out that the letter is personal and contains specific information including the customer’s name and the details about the complaint. Next, the apology is a very important piece because it demonstrates the acceptance of responsibility by the company. The next example of good service is offering compensation for trouble by providing a voucher. Lastly, follow up is noted in the letter so the customer knows they will be contacted at a later time. Just like the letter states: As a valued customer in the last paragraph, the customer should feel valued after Cecil exhibited superior customer service skills.”

Extended Activity: Ask students about different situations that they have experienced when customers have complained at their work or when they as the customer have complained about a situation. What did the customer say? What did the employee say? Share with students that they are going to role play ways to respond to customer complaints.

Write different customer complaints on strips of paper. Put the sentence strips in the middle of the table face down. Have a student select a sentence strip and read the sentence to the person on his/her left. Have that person respond to the complaint. Go around the whole circle giving each student a turn at reading and responding to a complaint.

The following are sample customer complaints to write on the sentence strips:

Excuse me, I didn't want cheese on my burger.

Your lawn edgers are worthless. This is the third one I've returned this month.

You're the third person I've talked with who can't do anything about finding out when my computer will be fixed.

I'm afraid that the can opener doesn't work. I'd like to return it for a different kind.

Don't you know how to work the cash register? I need for you to get your boss right now.

I'm sorry to have to terminate my policy with your company, but I have found a company who has a cheaper price for the same coverage.

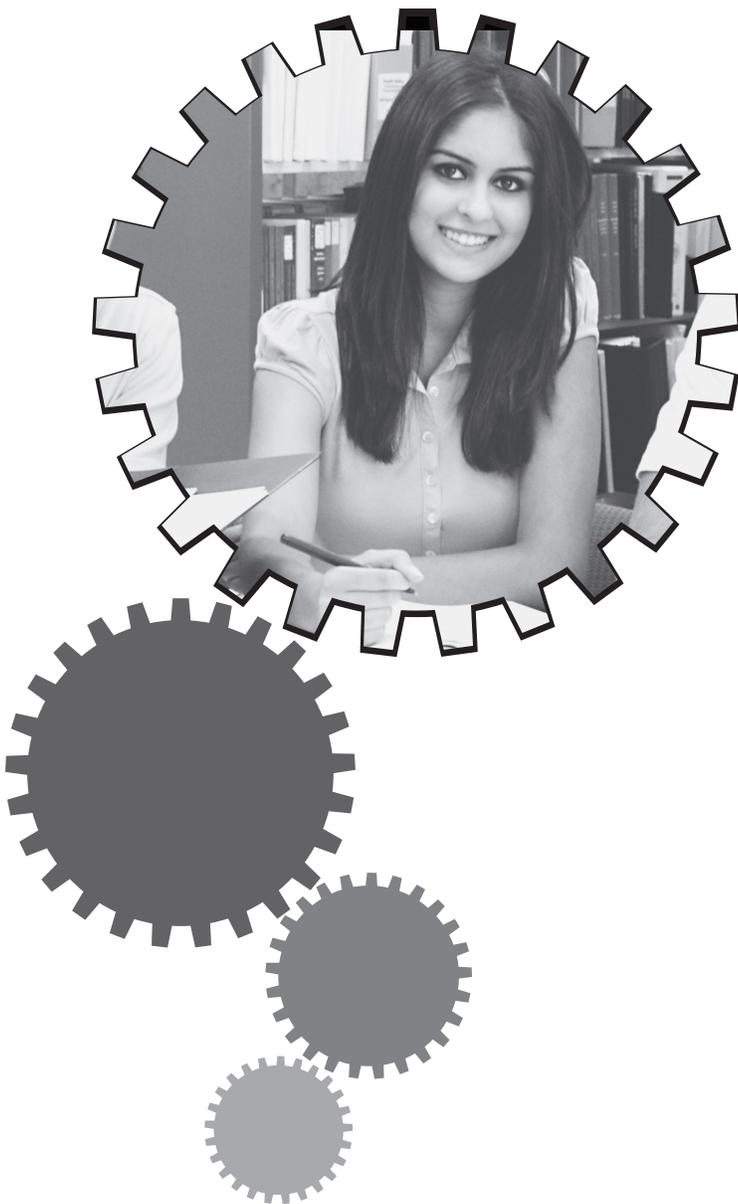
My family dined at your restaurant for the first time. The food was cold and we had to wait for half an hour to get service. We will not be dining again at your restaurant.

Mr. Bennett suggests this adjustment to the TG Activity:

“Instead of doing the little role-plays with the sentence strip complaints, it may be more appropriate to have students practice writing a letter modeling Cecil's in this example. Perhaps each student could pick a complaint and then write a letter or e-mail in response to this complaint and share it with the class. This activity will better promote a great example of writing in the workshop.”

Unit

Responsibility



- Take responsibility for completing one's own assignments on time, accurately and to a high standard of quality.
- Show initiative in carrying out work assignments.

2.1 They May Sound the Same, But They Don't Have the Same Meaning — Sally

Activity 1: Have students read the story. Discuss why misspelled words or incorrectly used words in an advertisement can be harmful to a business. Discuss how poorly written materials can harm the image of a company. Have students share their impressions of different companies and what types of information they use to make their decisions. Examples could include the use of famous people in advertisements, flashy looking advertisements, etc.

Have students locate the seven errors in the advertisement and rewrite the advertisement. Review with students the edits they made and why. Discuss that there are many words which are confusing because they are written differently, but sound the same such as to, two, and too.

Following is a corrected version of the advertisement.

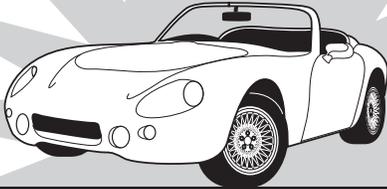


**Want to save money on
your next NEW CAR?**

**Come to the close-out sale at
D.C. DRIVES,
where everybody drives!**

**No reasonable offer will be refused.
It's too good to pass up!**

Come down today!
D.C. DRIVES
110 Park Street



Activity 2 — Commonly Misused Homophones: Review with students that the words homonym and homophone are often used interchangeably in books.

Homonyms are words that have the same spelling and pronunciation, but have different meanings. For example, rose (which refers to a kind of flower) and rose (which is the past form of rise) are spelled and pronounced the same way.

Homophones are words that sound the same, but may have different meanings and spellings. For example: ate and eight; to, too, and two; or it's and its.

There are many different homophones that are used incorrectly in all types of writing. The following are a few to review with your students. You may wish to have students add these words to their grammar dictionaries and use each correctly in a sentence.

Have students share with the group their crafted sentences that use each set of homophones correctly. You may wish to have students add homophones with which they have difficulty to the list.

Grammar Rule Review – Make These Homophones Your Own!		
Homophones	Definitions	My Sentences
Its It's	Its is a possessive; something belongs to "it". For example: "I know that its result will be positive." It's is a contraction of it is, such as "It's payday tomorrow."	
Know No	Know is to understand something, such as "I know how to do my job." No is a negative answer, the opposite of the word "yes". "No, I cannot work on Friday."	
Sale Sail	Sale is to sell something, such as "There is a yard sale in my neighborhood." Sail is what a boat does, such as "She wants to sail across the ocean."	
There Their They're	There means a location like "over there". Example: "I need to be there in the morning." Their is a possessive word; it belongs to them. Example: I am responsible for delivering their paychecks on Friday." They're is a contraction of "they are", such as "They're coming to the office."	
To Too Two	To is a simple preposition, such as: "I am going to work." Too is used to show agreement, such as "I want ice cream too." Two is a number, such as "I need to complete two orders."	
Which Witch	Which is a question, such as "Which line is working the fastest?" Witch is a woman on a broomstick.	
Your You're	Your means that it belongs to you, such as "It is your job." You're is a contraction of "you are", such as "You're in line for a promotion."	

2.2 Writing with a Purpose in Mind — Toni (Part One)

Review with students the different purposes of writing. The purpose of a business document is “why” it is written. Because people write different types of workplace documents, there are different reasons or purposes for each type of writing. Discuss that workplace writing may have more than one purpose. The primary purposes for workplace writing are:

- To give information – workplace writing tells, explains, or instructs the reader on something such as a memo on a new vacation policy.
- To obtain action – workplace writing may sell the reader on an idea or product such as an advertisement telling readers to buy something.
- To communicate appreciation – workplace writing may tell the reader that he/she is appreciated or that something good has happened such as a promotion.

Activity 1 — Begin with a Purpose in Mind: Collect samples of different types of writing from workplaces. You may wish to have samples of letters, memos, advertisements, emails, etc. Have students work in groups to identify the purpose of each document. Discuss whether or not each type of writing has more than one purpose. Students should complete the first two columns of the chart for each type of workplace writing:

Type of Workplace Writing	Purpose	Audience
Newspaper advertisement selling new cars	To get someone to buy a new car	

Activity 2 — Who’s the Audience: Discuss with students that when writing in the workplace, it is important to put yourself in the role of the reader. What does your reader need to know? What type of writing should you use? Have students brainstorm the different types of people or audiences that they write to in their daily lives and in the workplace. Examples may include: customers, supervisors, co-workers, the general public, etc.

Using the same workplace writing samples, have students identify the possible audience for each item.

2.3 What Form Do I Use?— Toni (Part Two)

Activity 1: Ask students what types of workplace writing that they use most often. Write the list on the board or on chart paper.

Discuss that the form of writing that is used (lists, letters, emails, directions, text messaging) is an important choice that helps the reader better understand why a document has been written.

Ask students how many of them use email or text messaging. Discuss that both of these types of communication are often used in the workplace. However, they are often used as an informal way to share ideas.

Extended Activity: Have students read the story. Divide the students into teams or small groups. Have each team or small group identify how Toni should best respond to the important guest. Have students share their ideas with the group. Students should provide reasons why they selected each type of writing.

2.4 Writing a Letter of Customer Appreciation —Toni (Part Three)

Activity 1: Have students read the story and the letter that Toni wrote. Have the students brainstorm the reasons Toni's boss was pleased with her writing. Examples may include: correct style for a business letter, correct grammar and spelling, typed rather than handwritten, made the reader feel important, etc. Write their reasons on the board or chart paper. Discuss what makes a good business letter and why it is important to the workplace.

Extended Activity: Have students bring in samples of business letters that they receive (often called junk mail). Divide the students into teams. Give each team a sample business letter, a pair of scissors, and the following template. Have each team cut out the correct part of their business letter that matches each of the following parts of a business letter. Discuss possible reasons why some letters do not follow a formal business letter style. Reasons may include: poorly written, non-workplace audience, different styles used by different workplaces, writer doesn't know the correct format, etc.

Business Letter Format

Letterhead

Date

Inside Address

Salutation

Body of the Letter

Closing

Writer's signature

Writer's name and title

2.5 I Can't Believe I Did That! — Fay

Activity 1: Begin the lesson by asking students the following question: “Have you ever made a mistake at work or in your daily life?” Discuss with students that we all make mistakes at some time in our lives. You may wish to have students share stories with each other regarding mistakes that have been made in the workplace.

Next ask students the following question: “What should you do when you make a mistake at work?” Record their ideas on the board or on chart paper. Discuss with students that often it is not why a mistake is made, but how a person deals with the mistake that is important.

Have students read the story. Have the students brainstorm what Fay should do next. List the students’ ideas on chart paper or on the board. Next, have students brainstorm what Mr. Ahmed should do. List the students’ ideas on chart paper or on the board.

Activity 2: Have students role play the meeting between Fay and Mr. Ahmed. You may wish to share with students the following steps for how to handle a mistake at work. Make sure that students identify the need for Fay to take responsibility for her mistake, rather than making excuses, and that all correspondence at the workplace should be checked (edited) before being mailed.

How to Handle Mistakes

- 1. Admit that you are responsible for the mistake.
- 2. Determine who needs to know that you made a mistake.
- 3. Share the error or mistake with person(s) who need to know.
- 4. Give the facts.
- 5. Don't make excuses.
- 6. Tell the person what happened and how you fixed the problem or plan to fix the problem.
- 7. Tell your employer how you will make sure that the mistake does not happen again.

2.6 Where Did It Go? — Clive (Part One)

Rachel Schrottenboer – GRCC Learning Center in reference to Scenario 2.6:

“I loved this reading because it is completely relevant to what is happening in Michigan and GRCC right now with the push to use wind energy and to create green jobs.

It was really helpful to use google images and look up wind turbines so my students could see what they look like and get a visual picture of the different parts of a turbine that would have to be manufactured. We were able to connect this manufacturing need to Michigan. We talked about how MI is really in a good position to service this need which would ultimately create more jobs. Maybe in the teaching manual you could suggest showing images of wind turbines. It helped our discussion.

To connect this lesson in a relevant writing way, this week my students are creating a draft email, editing it and THEN sending it. Maybe this is something that could be suggested in the teacher manual? I am finding that these lessons about email are meaningful because my students are actually emailing me every week. For example, a couple of students have accidentally hit send before they were finished with their messages to me, so they could completely relate to how Clive must have felt.”

Activity 1: Begin the lesson by discussing that the only difference between a typed letter and an email is how it is delivered. Writing a letter gives you more time to think about what you are writing and make changes before you send it. Writing an email is quicker. However, once a person clicks the “send” button, the message is gone and it’s too late to make changes.

Have students read the story. Have students share what they do prior to sending emails. Record their answers on chart paper or on the board.

Share with students the following steps to take before sending an email. See if students have included these ideas as part of their list.

Sending Emails

Before you click the “send” button:

Proofread — Read your email carefully and check for spelling mistakes, missing capital letters, commas, and end punctuation marks. Make sure that your email is “correctly” written.

Email address — Make sure that you have the correct email address of the person to whom you are writing in the “To:” box.

CC box — Make sure this box is empty unless you want someone else to get a copy of your email.

Subject box — This is where you write what your email is about.

Body — Make sure that the email text is complete, but concise. People do not like to read long email messages.

Now you are ready to click “send.”

Extended Activity: Have students bring in samples of emails that they have received with the sender’s email address removed. Have students discuss whether the emails follow the suggestions previously discussed.

2.7 Where Did It Go? Not to the Boss — Clive (Part Two)

Activity 1: Have students read the scenario and brainstorm the things that Clive “did right.” Record the ideas on chart paper or the board. Discuss that taking responsibility at work may have both positive and negative outcomes. Remind students that it is a necessary workplace skill to identify what steps one can do to ensure that a mistake is not repeated.

Activity 2: Have students practice writing an email using the following template. You may wish

to provide students with a sample scenario.

Examples of scenarios to use:

- Write an email to your boss requesting a week’s vacation.
- Write an email requesting staff attendance at a meeting. Make sure that you copy your boss on the email.
- Write an email thanking staff members for their attendance at a community fund raiser.

Send To:	Copy To:
Subject:	

2.8 Developing a Chart to Help with a Decision — Jorge

Jane Degroot – LCWM suggests supplying the following definitions to support Scenario 2.8:

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia:

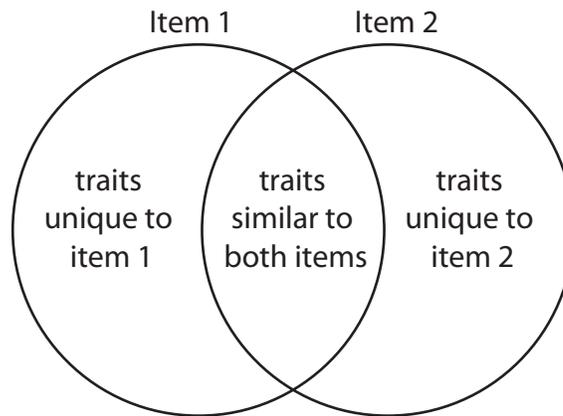
Swine Flu — The 2009 flu pandemic was a global outbreak of a new strain of H1N1 influenza virus, often referred to as “swine flu”. [3] The virus, first described in April 2009, appears to be a new strain of H1N1 which resulted when a previous triple reassortment of bird, pig, and human flu viruses further combined with a Eurasian pig flu virus.

MRSA — Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) is a bacterium responsible for several difficult-to-treat infections in humans. MRSA is especially troublesome in hospitals, where patients with open wounds, invasive devices and weakened immune systems are at greater risk of infection than the general public.

Activity 1 —Writing to Compare and Contrast: Have students read the story and then look at the chart. Explain that when you tell how things are alike, you compare. When you tell how things are different, you contrast. Using a chart is one way to easily gather the details in order to compare and contrast.

Introduce the Venn Diagram, which is another graphic organizer that is useful for comparing and contrasting. Explain that it is two overlapping circles. It can easily show how things are alike, different, or the same. It enables students to organize their thoughts while being able to see the similarities and differences visually.

Using a Venn Diagram, have the class compare two models of cars, finding the similarities and differences. The larger part of the intersecting circles will have information that is only unique to that particular car. The intersecting space will have characteristics shared by both cars.



Make sure students identify which details are similar, and which are different, and place them in the appropriate parts of the diagram.

Ask students to write a one or two sentence summary of the similarities and differences between the two cars.

Extended Activity: Have students divide up into small groups. In groups, students will choose two jobs that interest them that they can compare and contrast. Have students do a little research to find out about each job.

Then, using a graphic organizer (Venn Diagram, Chart, etc.), the students will compare and contrast the two jobs. Students will then write about the two jobs, listing at least two things that are similar and two things that are different.

2.9 Making Notes of Customer Requests — Laura

Activity 1 —Note Taking: Discuss the importance of taking notes. Emphasize that it can help a person concentrate on what is being said. It allows you to review what was said, keeps you accountable, and helps with not making mistakes. Ask students if they take notes during a lecture. Ask what they do with the notes to later help them in class.

Read a short paragraph to the students. Have them jot down notes about the paragraph that they thought were important. Have the students then summarize the paragraph from the notes they took. Share with the class. Have students compare notes and discuss what notes were taken and why.

Extended Activity: Read an article from the newspaper. Have students just listen to the article. Read the article again and have students write on an index card some of the main ideas or important facts from the article.

Give students a smaller index card or sticky note. Have students narrow down the notes to the most important.

Finally, give students a smaller sticky note to jot down the most important notes.

Discuss the article and then discuss what the students thought were the most important facts or details in the article.

2.10 Email Etiquette — Lela and Annabelle (Part One)

Rachel Schrotenboer – GRCC Learning Center writes in reference to Scenario 2.10:

“The first email example containing the abbreviations was excellent because it was indeed very confusing to my students. Until we read it out loud, they had no idea what the email was even about! We all laughed a lot about the abbreviations and this led to a great discussion about texting and informal versus formal electronic communication. It was really great!”

Activity 1: Have students discuss how they make a good impression when they meet someone. Then discuss how one would make a good impression when sending an email. Remind students that what they write, and what the reader reads, may not always be the same - the reader creates the meaning. Explain that when writing, there is no body language, or tone of voice, or facial expression, only words. These words should follow email etiquette.

Read the story again and discuss if Annabelle was courteous to Lela. Bring up discussion points to see if the email was respectful, appropriate, or professional. Make sure to include that an email should be concise, but in business it should not contain such things as abbreviations for words or emoticons (the little smiley faces). Have students, in small groups, list problems that Annabelle may have been experiencing at her job site. Have students then list Lela’s reaction to the email she received. Share the lists as a class and then rewrite Annabelle’s email.

Extended Activity: Put the following sentences on the board or chart paper.

Email: At lunch, I heard that you are always late for work.

Reply: I am never late for work.

Hand out index cards with the sentence written on each one. Have different students read the sentence, stressing the bold word.

1. **I** am never late for work.
2. I **am** never late for work.
3. I am **never** late for work.
4. I am never **late** for work.
5. I am never late **for** work.
6. I am never late for **work**.

Have students discuss the meaning and implication of each sentence with the different stressed word. After reading each statement, have students add an additional sentence for clarification. Again, remind students that in an email, the reader creates the meaning!

2.11 Email Etiquette — Lela and Annabelle (Part Two)

Activity 1: Discuss how often someone at work should respond to an email for regular correspondence. Talk also, about jobs that include sales, customer service, tech support, or other fields that expect a faster response. Have students think about problems that can occur if a timely response is not given, then list these on the board or chart paper.

Ask students if they think a business should educate employees as to what can and cannot be said in an email, and restrict employees from certain email activities. Remind students that a company email is not private. Most companies have someone that can monitor emails on company-owned servers.

Have students read the email from Annabelle. Ask if this would be a good apology for not responding earlier. Ask, “What makes this email sound angry?” Point out that all caps convey the message of shouting (SORRY). List other responses that might sound angry and what could be said instead.

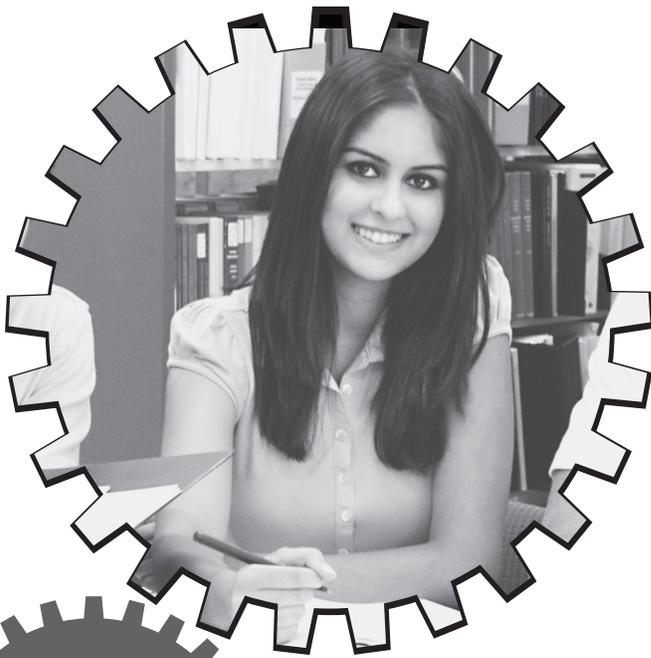
Extended Activity: Make sure all students have an email address. If someone does not, show them how to set up a gmail account. Explain that they can use a computer at the library to complete this assignment.

Prepare a practice paragraph with several mistakes and email it to the students. Explain to the students they are going to practice editing the paragraph. Go through the steps, if necessary, on how to edit and then send back the email. Explain they will be looking for grammar, spelling or structural mistakes. After they correct the mistakes they will email the paragraph back to you.

Discuss the revisions with the class.

Unit

Monitor and Correct Performance



- Accept and use constructive criticism for continuous improvement of own job performance.
- Monitor the quality of your own work.
- Keep track of changes within the organization and adapt to them.

3.1 Writing Complete Ideas That Don't Go On Forever! — Rory

Activity 1: Ask students the following question: “What is a sentence?” Record their ideas on the board or on chart paper.

Draw the following chart on the board or chart paper:

1.	Subject	The person, place, or thing performing or doing the action
2.	Verb/Predicate	The action
3.	Complete Idea	The reader understands what the writer is saying. He/she isn't left waiting for another word.

Share with students that a sentence consists of three things: the subject, the verb or predicate, and a complete idea. Have students provide an example of each of the parts of a sentence.

Example: “New computers will be installed today at 1:30 p.m.” The subject is “computers”. The verb or predicate is: “will be installed”. The sentence is complete because the reader is not waiting for additional information.

Activity 2: Have students read the story. Discuss as a group possible reasons for Rory having difficulty reading Angela's charting.

Place students into teams of two. Have them rewrite Angela's charting. When they are done, have them write their revised paragraph on chart paper. Have each team share their revised paragraph. Review selected sentences and ask students whether each has a subject, verb, and a complete idea.

Discuss with students that often people write run-on sentences because they feel that long sentences sound more important.

Jane DeGroot – LCWM in reference to Scenario 3.1 proposes an additional activity:

“I have been encouraging students to write email messages to me. It is obvious from that that they struggle with knowing how to compose sentences, and in fact write very much like Angela does in these chart notes. What I did was to give them some basics about sentence structure first, trying to identify the parts of the sentences. It wasn't easy for some students to decipher. Then I distributed a retyped version of the charting, with double spacing so that they could work on the piece itself, changing the beginning and ending of sentences and seeing the references to pronouns. I think it helped. It was a very valuable tool.”

(Note: Please see Handout for 3.1 Angela's Chart)

Sample Rewritten Paragraph

Mrs. Ellis was awake at 3:00 a.m. She requested a drink. Mrs. Ellis said she was cold, so another blanket was provided. Vital signs were normal and logged. Mrs. Ellis was checked again at 4:00 a.m. She was sleeping. Resident awoke at 6:30 a.m.

Olivia Destrades Mendoza – LCWM also refers to Scenario 3.1 with the following observation: *“One issue not dealt with in the scenario is the idea of unnecessary repetition, or “too much information.” The teacher’s manual sample of what Angela’s edited charting could read is very much pared down from the original version in the student book. We are not simply dealing with adding punctuation and taking out conjunction words in order to create solid, complete sentences; we are also dealing with removing information that is not necessary.”*

Grammar Rule Review – Make It Your Own!

Fixing Run-On Sentences

- Separate the sentence into two or more complete sentences using end punctuation.

“Jaylee will be the new supervisor of the evening shift beginning July 5th. She will also be responsible for setting up the new work schedule for evening duty nurses.”

- Separate two complete sentences using a semi-colon.

“Jaylee will be the new supervisor of the evening shift beginning July 5th; she will also be responsible for setting up the new work schedule for evening duty nurses.”

- Use a comma and a connecting word.

“Jaylee will be the new supervisor of the evening shift beginning July 5th, and she will also be responsible for setting up the new work schedule for evening duty nurses.”

Activity 3: Discuss that sometimes workplace writing contains sentences that are too long. They are difficult for the reader to understand. Write the following example on the board: “Jaylee will be the new supervisor of the evening shift beginning July 5th she will also be responsible for setting up the new work schedule for evening duty nurses.” Have a student read the run-on sentence. As a group, discuss how this very long sentence can be divided into three clearer sentences.

Review the following common ways to fix a run-on sentence. Students may wish to write these rules in their personal grammar journal.

Extended Activity: Divide students into teams. Have each person on the team create a run-on sentence. Then have each student give his/her sentence to the other teammate. Have each team divide the run-on sentence into one or more clearer and more concise sentences.

3.2 Don't Forget the Five Ws — Sharmilla

Introduce the lesson by writing Five Ws on the board. Ask students to identify the Five Ws of writing: Who, What, When, Where, and Why.

Have students read the story. Ask the students to locate which “Ws” were missing from Sharmila’s memo to the sales advisors. Students should respond that Sharmila did not include when (which Friday and at what time) and where (the room) the meeting would be held.

Have students discuss what they think happened because of the poorly written memo. Answers may include: few people showed up at the meeting, Ms. Lou was upset with Sharmila, the meeting had to be rescheduled, etc.

Extended Activity: Have students rewrite Sharmila’s memo to include the Five Ws. An example of a revised memo is as follows:

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Data Investment Sales Advisors
FROM: Camilo Lou, Office Manager
DATE: 5/29/2009
RE: Monthly Meeting

The monthly sales meeting will be held on Friday, June 12 at 8:00 a.m. The meeting will be conducted in Room 8 at the corporate office. It is important that everyone attend the meeting. Important new information on investments will be shared. Please be on time.

3.3 Putting Your Best Foot Forward — Mr. Dean, Sharon and Celia (Part One)

Activity 1: Begin the lesson by asking whether any students text message. Have students share different ways in which they shorten words when texting, such as CU (see you) or B4N (bye for now). Discuss how text messaging is a type of shorthand when writing. Rather than writing out full words, abbreviations are used. Discuss that because text messages use abbreviations, they are quick to write and generally short in length.

Have students read the story. Discuss whether or not Mr. Dean should interview Celia for the new position. Have students share their reasons.

Activity 2: Have students brainstorm when it is appropriate to text message. List the students’ ideas on chart paper. Discuss that text messaging is an important way to communicate with

others. Have students discuss why text messaging may not be the best method for writing in the workplace.

Extended Activity: Have students rewrite Celia’s letter of application using a more formal style. A sample letter is as follows:

Dear Mr. Dean:

I saw the new marketing job posted. I am very interested in the job and would like to apply. Please let me know a time to set up an interview with you. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Celia

3.4 Putting Your Best Foot Forward – Selecting the Right Person for the Job — Mr. Dean, Sharon and Celia (Part Two)

Activity 1: Have students read the story. Divide the class into teams. Have each team discuss who they would have selected for the job and why. Have the teams share their reasons with the group. Record the students’ reasons for their selection.

Activity 2: Supervisors often have to make decisions in the workplace which make employees unhappy. Divide the class into teams of two. Have each team develop a role play based on what they think happened in the meeting between Mr. Dean and Celia where Mr. Dean informed Celia she was not selected for the job.

Extended Activity: Write each of the following words on a piece of chart paper:

- Email
- Text message
- Business letter
- Memo
- Note
- Directions

Divide the class into small groups of four to five students. Have the students identify specific situations when each type of writing is appropriate to the workplace. Tell students to write their ideas on the appropriate piece of chart paper. Debrief the activity by reinforcing the need for different types of writing in the workplace and how each can be use effectively.

3.5 Picking the Right Person for the Job — Kaycee

Activity 1 — Writing About “Experience” on the Application: Have students read the story and the experiences of the two applicants. List the reasons why they would hire one applicant over the other. Inquire about what may lead to the decision to favor one applicant over the other.

Discuss why the sentences on Miguel’s application are, or are not, easy to understand. Then discuss Jose’s paragraph and compare the two..

Have students get a partner and rewrite Miguel’s paragraph. Share with the class the rewritten paragraph.

Extended Activity: Ask students if they have trouble with spelling. Explain that poor spelling sometimes creates a bad impression. It is usually the first thing a reader will notice and even though a computer will highlight a misspelling, sometimes a person must write on their own. Ask students what they do when they cannot spell a word.

Suggest some strategies that help to improve spelling.

- Create a spelling “dictionary” notebook of commonly misspelled words
- Keep a list of rules for spelling
- Learn only 5 to 10 of the most frequently misspelled words at a time
- Don’t try to spell correctly while you are thinking of what to write – check your spelling later
- Read what you have written, out loud
- Have someone check your spelling
- Keep a dictionary as a resource
- Practice daily

Have students create a spelling dictionary notebook for their own personal use.

3.6 A Note to a Supervisor — Shona

Activity 1 —Writing a Note for a Supervisor: Have students discuss notes they have written to either a supervisor or teacher because of an absence. Explain that this is a communication that serves as documentation that you notified work or the school of your absence.

Ask what should be included in the note.

Draw a rectangle on the board or chart paper. Ask students to identify different parts of the note as you fill in the rectangle as shown.

Date:

Addressee:

Body:

Who, When What, Why

Closing:

Signature:

Oct. 2, 2009

Dear Ms. Meyers,

This letter will confirm that I will be unable to come to work on October 5 due to an appointment with my doctor about a procedure at the hospital. I will return to work on the 6th.

Sincerely,

Discuss that the “date” is important to signify when the note was written and given to a supervisor. Then discuss the other parts of the note: the “addressee” is the person the note is being written to, the “body” states what you want your supervisor to know, and the “closing” and “signature” are self explanatory.

Have students practice writing a note stating when they will be absent, and when they will return.

Extended Activity: Ask students if they have read a note they did not completely understand due to an inexperienced writer. Explain that sometimes we start out with unfocused writing that does not have a clear message. Discuss that writing is never a one-step process, and to write clearly, involves several steps:

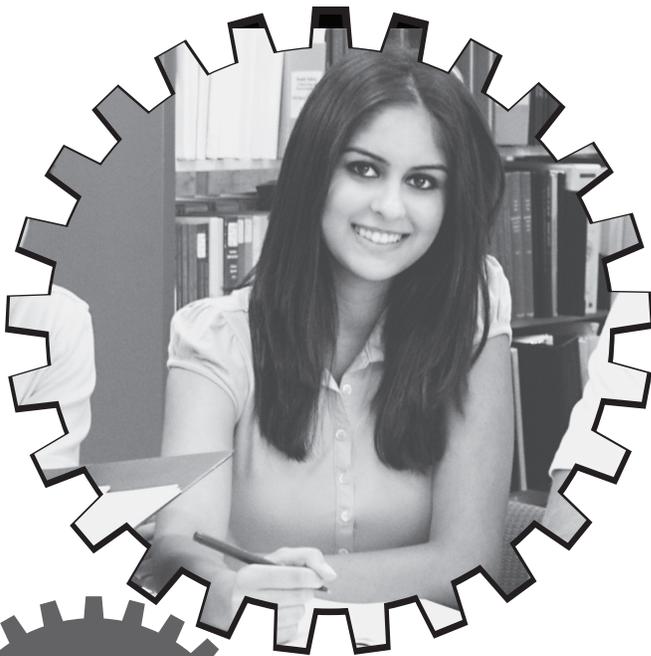
Discuss the steps followed in the process of writing.

1. Prewrite - identify the topic
2. Organize - put your ideas down on paper and put the ideas in a sequence
3. Write a first draft
4. Revise and Edit for a final product
 - a. Revise — make sure to check what you want to say and in the sequence it happened; proofread for spelling, punctuation and capitalization
 - b. Review — look at it again to check grammar and details
 - c. If not sure, have someone else check your writing
 - d. Write final copy

Have students write a short paragraph about their dream job, going through the four steps of the writing process.

Unit

Integrity, Solve Problems, Use Technology, Use Systems



- Maintain confidentiality as appropriate about matters encountered in the work setting.
- Cope with work situations or tasks that change frequently.
- Identify actual or potential problems related to one's own work and help fix them.
- Learn how to use appropriate computer-based technology to get the job done most efficiently..

4.1 Be Careful of What You Say and How You Say It — Theo and Mr. James

Rachel Schrottenboer – GRCC Learning Center Reference to Scenario 4.1:

“We had a fun time discussing tone. I used different tones of voice to say the same thing. The students in this class are all mothers. They could all relate to having their children use a “tone” that is inappropriate sometimes with them.

The students enjoyed learning about the slang, i.e. “head honcho and a real bummer.”

After this lesson, a couple students came back and told me they asked English speakers at their work about the term head honcho. One of my students has a great relationship with her boss. She asked him if he liked to be called the head honcho. He told her he did like it and kind of puffed up when he said so. This helped us connect to the idea of tone. Her boss liked the term because it was meant in fun. In the email Theo used the head honcho in a derogatory way. We were able to talk about sarcasm and how sometimes this seeps through in an email.

Again, I am having my students email me once a week in my class. This was a great lesson to help us again understand the importance of writing clearly, politely and professionally.”

Activity 1: Write the word “tone” on the board or chart paper. Ask students to define the word “tone.” Discuss that tone is a difficult thing to explain. Some students may remember their parents saying, “Don’t use that tone of voice with me, young lady (or young man)!” Share with students that your feelings come across by the way you say something. It is easy to change your tone when you’re speaking. However, when you’re writing it’s more difficult to change what your words “said” and the “tone” you used.

Have students read the story. Divide the students into two groups. Tell the students that they will be role playing the meeting between Theo and Mr. James. Have each group meet separately to discuss how their character should react in the meeting. Bring the two groups together. Select a member from each group to play Theo or Mr. James. Have the students role play the meeting and possible outcomes.

Discuss how a person’s choice of words and the person’s tone when writing are just as important as when speaking at work. If Theo apologizes to Mr. James using a sincere tone of voice, the result may be very different than if Theo says angrily that people should not be reading his personal email at work. Share with students that the employer “owns” the email in the workplace. It is not private, so never write in a tone that you’d be uncomfortable sharing with your boss. Well-chosen words create a professional tone in email.

Extended Activity: Share with students that misinterpreted messages often happen in the workplace, especially when the reader of a message cannot see the writer’s face or body language or hear the writer’s vocal tone.

Have students read the following sentences. Ask them to decide which message delivers a professional tone to the reader.

- I hope that you will contact me. I know that my qualifications are not very impressive, but I

do want the job.

OR

- My qualifications and willingness to work hard make me an excellent applicant for the position. You can reach me at 555-222-3333. I look forward to hearing from you.
- The new boss doesn't know anything about what we do.

OR

- Our new supervisor is working hard to learn everyone's job.
- It's not fair that I do more work than the other workers.

OR

- I would like to schedule a time to discuss with you my current responsibilities.

- Because you used the product incorrectly we will not refund your money

OR

- General Manufacturing cannot refund your money because the product was used incorrectly.

Emphasize that written communications rely on tone. The simplest way of checking your writing before you send it is to ask yourself, "How would I feel if I received this message?"

4.2 Advertising Your Product— Sergio

Activity 1: Ask students whether they have ever purchased something because of advertising. Have students identify their favorite advertisement or commercial and why. Write their reasons on the board or chart paper.

Have students read the story and discuss whether they would eat at Sergio's Family Restaurant. Ask students why or why not? Discuss the importance of effective advertising.

Activity 2: Have students bring in an advertisement from their local newspaper that they feel effectively sells a product. Have students identify words from each of the advertisements that help to sell the product. Discuss that when companies advertise, they try to describe the best features of their products or services. These descriptions are known to have audience appeal. Some words which are often used to help sell products or services are: best, better, discover, experience, grand, guaranteed, hurry, improved, perfect, proven, quality, results, satisfaction, special, successful, unique, valuable, warranty, well-known.

Make a master list of these advertising words.

Have the students select the advertisement that they feel best "sells a product." Students should name at least three reasons why the advertisement would make them purchase the product. You may wish to have students also identify "audience appeal" words in the advertisement.

Extended Activity: Have students create their own advertisement for a product. First have the students complete the following form. Then have each student create an advertisement. Have students refer to the list of "audience appeal" words that they found in previous advertisements.

Students may also wish to include drawings in their advertisements for better customer appeal. You may have students work in pairs or teams to complete the form.

Name of the product	
List three words that describe the product.	1. 2. 3.
What would a customer like about this product?	
Why would a customer buy this product?	
What would be a catchy headline to start your advertisement?	

4.3 Filling Out Forms — Aji

Activity 1: Discuss that forms are common types of documents in the workplace. Have students brainstorm the types of forms that they use or see used in the workplace. Write the different types of forms on the board or chart paper. Examples may include: invoices, shipping forms, order forms, time forms, or inventories.

Discuss that workplace forms may be either printed documents that are filled in by hand or computer forms that have spaces to fill in on the screen or that can be printed and then completed. Completing forms accurately is an important part of the workplace.

Have students read the story and the directions that Aji created. Have students brainstorm why the directions are easy to follow. Ideas may include: The directions are numbered. The directions are in order. The directions are written so that they are easily read. The information is accurate and concise.

Extended Activity: Share with students the following list on how to double check whether or not a form is complete. You may wish to bring a sample order form to class so that students can practice correctly filling in a workplace form. A sample sales form and scenario are also provided.

Have students check their work using the checklist.

Double Checking Your Form

- Are all of the spaces that need to be completed filled in correctly?
- Is the information accurate?
- Did you spell all of the words correctly?

- Did you capitalize correctly?
- Did you use correct punctuation?
- Is your writing clear so that others can easily read it?

Instructions for completing the order form: 2 black t-shirts, size L, item number 788, at a cost of \$9.95 each and 4 pairs of black shorts, size L, item number 888, at a cost of \$15.99 each. Make sure the entire form is complete.

Order Form				
Date				
Ship To		Name		
		Street Address		
		City, State, Zip Code		
		Phone		
Quantity	Item #	Description	Unit Price	Line Total
Total				
Shipping and Handling				\$6.25
Total				
Make all checks payable to Sports Goods for All				
Thank you for your business!				
Sports Goods for All – 99 Sports Way – Dearborn, MI 48129 – 888-888-8888				

4.4 Writing Clearly — James

Activity 1—Writing Specific Instructions: Explain to the students that a delivery note accompanies a shipment of goods listing the description and the quantity of the goods delivered. A copy of the delivery note, signed by the buyer is returned to the seller as proof of delivery.

Usually a company that makes deliveries writes down specific instructions for the personnel making the delivery. Discuss how a company could lose money if specific written delivery instructions are not followed or are not written clearly enough to be followed. Give several examples, and list the responses from the students showing how it could cost the company both time and money. Some examples might be:

- “Do not deliver on Friday. We will not be open for business on Friday.”
- “Our company requires a supervisor’s signature for all deliveries.” (a clerk signs the delivery form)
- “All deliveries go to Bldg. C.” (the directions are hard to read and looks like Bldg. G)

Then, discuss if specific written instructions are not followed, how it affects a customer. Ask the students the following questions and record the answers: Would this lead to a customer making a complaint? Again, how would this cost the company time and money? If this happened frequently, what do you think would happen?

Discuss who, in the company, could be responsible for the error, and give suggestions on how to prevent the problem.

Extended Activity: Have students divide up into small groups. Each group will write down why each of the following would be important delivery directions.

1. Delivery time (*specify no deliveries during lunch, specific day, etc.*)
2. Location of the office or room for the delivery (*floor, suite #, section*)
3. Use of elevator or stairs (*location, restrictions*)
4. Equipment (*available or might be needed*)

4.5 Keeping a Written Log — Len

Activity 1—Developing a log: Discuss that setting up a system to keep track of how you spend your time throughout the day is a great way to get organized. Discuss how keeping a log is a way to record and review what you do and how it can help you manage your time.

Discuss the many types of appointment books and calendars that are available to keep track of your appointments, things to do, activities completed, etc. Ask students if any have kept a log of their daily activities. Inform them that their assignment is to keep a log for one day, and to bring it back the next day.

This is an example of a log for students to fill out.

Date & Time:	Activity	Action Required	Action Completed
10/1: 8:00 – 9:00 AM	Listen to messages and access email	Respond to calls and emails	3 calls (Names of people) 6 emails (Names of people)

Explain that once they have completed a task, they should record the time and move on to a different task. By the end of a day, they will have a record of the time spent on each activity.

Extended Activity: Have students keep a log of their time for a week. They can then figure out what percentage of time is spent on the different activities they do during a week. They may find out they spend too much time or too little time accomplishing different tasks. As an example; they

may find that after lunch they do not accomplish as much as they do in the morning. They might try to adjust their activities in order to accomplish the most.

4.6 Planning Ahead, Following Procedure — Namatra

Activity 1—Careless Writing: Write on the board or overhead “Careless Mistakes in Writing”. Ask students to give examples of careless mistakes they have seen in print. You may also show some examples from the Jay Leno show “Headlines” taken from newspapers, flyers, magazines and advertisements

- “Dry cleaner working on the same spot for 15 years”
- “Staten Island ferry hits *pie*; 18 injured” [Instead of pier]
- “1/2 Sandwich (Choice of turkey, ham, tuna, BLT, or *Bat*)”

Discuss what reactions the students have when reading a sentence that is carelessly written (funny, confusing, misinformation, etc.). Explain that clear communication in writing is crucial for the correct transmission of information. Stress that arranging the information in a logical sequence along with proofreading and self-editing will result in writing that is more effective.

Prior to the activity, using index cards, prepare two sets of cards. Set A has sentences that have careless mistakes and Set B has the correct sentence. Give Set A cards to half of the students, and give Set B cards to the other half. Have students walk around until they have found their match.

Extended Activity: Divide students into small groups. Each group will receive a section from a newspaper to look for careless mistakes in articles, headlines or advertisements.

Students will then rewrite the mistake and share with the class.

What New Workers in Entry-Level Jobs Need to Be Able to Do

New workers need to be able to use these EFF* Skills...

Communication Skills

- 1 **Speak So Others Can Understand**
- 2 **Listen Actively**
- 3 **Read With Understanding**
- 4 **Observe Critically**

Interpersonal Skills

- ▲ **Cooperate With Others**
- ▲ **Resolve Conflict and Negotiate**

Decision-Making Skills

- 1 **Use Math to Solve Problems and Communicate**
- 2 **Solve Problems and Make Decisions**

Lifelong Learning Skills

- ◆ **Take Responsibility for Learning**

...well enough to successfully carry out these critical entry-level tasks:

Acquire and Use Information

- Acquire, use, and share information accurately and in a timely manner in order to: **1 2 3 4 ▲▲◆◆**
 - Get work done.
 - Identify appropriate procedures.
 - Respond to requests from internal and external customers.
- Read and understand information presented in written form well enough to get the job done. **2 3**
- Communicate in spoken English well enough to get the job done. **1 2 3**
- Ask for clarification or help from supervisor or appropriate others when needed. **1 2 4 ▲◆**

Use Technology

- Learn how to use appropriate computer-based technology to get the job done most efficiently. **3 4◆**
- Be able to use a telephone, pager, radio, or other device to handle and process communication. **1 2◆**
- Make sure that all equipment is in safe working order. **4 1◆**
- Use equipment properly to minimize damage to equipment or injury to oneself or others. **3 4◆**

Use Systems

- UNDERSTAND SYSTEMS**
- Understand how one's own performance can impact the success of the organization. **1 2 4 ▲◆**
 - Comply with organizational policies and procedures in a consistent manner. **2 3 4 ▲◆**
 - Pay attention to company guidelines regarding: **1 2 3 4 ▲◆**
 - Personal and professional interactions.
 - Appropriate dress.
 - Health and safety.
 - Follow established procedures for handling urgent situations or emergencies. **1 2 3 4◆**
 - Keep informed about quality and health standards set by external sources, including unions, OSHA, and other national and international organizations. **2 3 4 ▲◆**
 - Go to the appropriate person/source when approval is needed for work-related activities. **1 2 3 4 ▲◆**
- MONITOR AND CORRECT PERFORMANCE**
- Monitor quality of own work. **4 1◆◆**
 - Accept and use constructive criticism for continuous improvement of own job performance. **2 4 ▲◆◆**
 - Keep track of changes within the organization and adapt to them. **1 2 4 ▲◆**

Work With Others

- DIVERSITY**
- Work as part of a team to develop and achieve mutual goals and objectives. **1 2 4 ▲▲◆**
 - Develop and maintain good working relations with coworkers, supervisors, and others throughout the organization, regardless of background or position: **1 2 4 ▲▲◆**
 - Be respectful and open to the thoughts, opinions, and contributions of others.
 - Avoid use of language or comments that stereotype others.
- NEGOTIATE**
- Work through conflict constructively. **1 2 4 ▲▲◆**
- SERVE CLIENTS**
- Address customer comments, questions, concerns and objections with direct, accurate, and timely responses. **1 2 3 4 ▲▲◆◆**
 - Verify customer or client identification to validate forms, provide services, or carry out procedures. **1 2 3 4◆◆**

Integrity

- Demonstrate integrity. **1 2 4 ▲◆**
- Maintain confidentiality, as appropriate, about matters encountered in the work setting. **2 4 ▲**

Know How to Learn

- Accept help from supervisors and coworkers. **1 2 4 ▲◆**
- Learn new/additional skills related to your job. **2 3 4 ▲▲◆◆**
- Learn about the products/ services of the organization. **2 3 4◆**

Responsibility

- Demonstrate willingness to work. **1 2 ▲◆**
- Take responsibility for completing one's own work assignments: **2 3 4 ▲◆**
 - Accurately.
 - On time.
 - To a high standard of quality.
 - Even when the work is physically or mentally challenging.
 - As efficiently as possible, to minimize costs, rework, and production time.
- Show initiative in carrying out work assignments. **1 2 ▲◆**

Allocate Resources

- Use basic math well enough to get the job done. **3 1◆◆**
- Manage time effectively to: **2 3 4 ▲**
 - 1 Get the work done on schedule.
 - 2 Prioritize tasks.
 - 3 Make sure that urgent tasks are completed on time.
 - 4 Make sure that materials, tools, and equipment are available to do the job effectively. **4 1◆**

Solve Problems

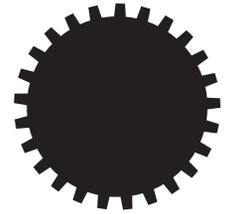
- Cope with a work situation or tasks that change frequently. **1 4 ▲▲◆◆**
 - Demonstrate flexibility.
 - Accept new or changed work responsibilities with a positive attitude.
 - Adjust to unexpected problems and situations by seeking advice from a supervisor or appropriate others.
- Identify actual or potential problems related to one's own work: **1 2 4 ▲▲◆◆**
 - Report them in a timely manner, according to company policy.
 - Help to fix them.

Self Management

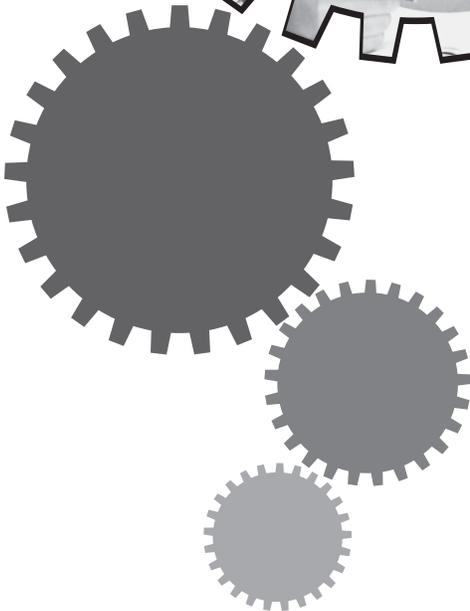
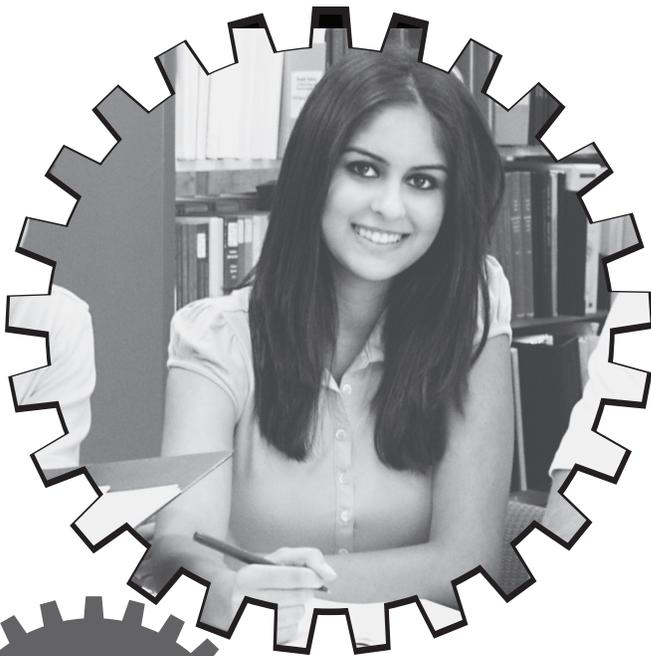
- Display responsible behaviors at work: **1 2 3 ▲▲◆◆**
 - Avoid absenteeism.
 - Demonstrate promptness.
 - Maintain appropriate grooming and hygiene.
 - Do not attend to personal business when on the job, except in emergencies.
 - Manage stressful situations effectively.



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Classroom Worksheets



- Student Grammar Journal
- 1.5: Writing Directions
- 1.5: Graphic Organizer
- 2.1: Homophones
- 2.2: Workplace Writing
- 2.5: How to Handle Mistakes
- 2.6: Sending Emails
- 3.1: Angela's Chart
- 3.6: Dream Job/Writing Process
- 4.1: Professional "Tone"
- 4.2: Creating an Advertisement
- 4.3: Filling Out Forms
- 4.5: Keeping a Written Log

Name: _____

Date: _____

Problem	Rule (in your own words)	Write a Sentence Using the Rule
Commas	Always put a comma after different words in a series	I will need to order more plates, napkins, and toothpicks.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Name of Task: _____

Step	Action
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
11.	
12.	
13.	
14.	
15.	

Name: _____

Date: _____

Name of Task _____

Step 1

then...

Step 2

then...

Step 3

then...

Step 4

then...

Step 5

then...

Grammar Rule Review – Make These Homophones Your Own!		
Homophones	Definitions	My Sentences
Its	Its is a possessive; something belongs to "it". For example: "I know that its result will be positive."	
It's	It's is a contraction of it is, such as "It's payday tomorrow."	
Know	Know is to understand something, such as "I know how to do my job."	
No	No is a negative answer, the opposite of the word "yes". "No, I cannot work on Friday."	
Sale	Sale is to sell something, such as "There is a yard sale in my neighborhood."	
Sail	Sail is what a boat does, such as "She wants to sail across the ocean."	
There	There means a location like "over there". Example: "I need to be there in the morning."	
Their	Their is a possessive word; it belongs to them. Example: I am responsible for delivering their paychecks on Friday."	
They're	They're is a contraction of "they are", such as "They're coming to the office."	
To	To is a simple preposition, such as: "I am going to work."	
Too	Too is used to show agreement, such as "I want ice cream too."	
Two	Two is a number, such as "I need to complete two orders."	
Which	Which is a question, such as "Which line is working the fastest?"	
Witch	Witch is a woman on a broomstick.	
Your	Your means that it belongs to you, such as "It is your job."	
You're	You're is a contraction of "you are", such as "You're in line for a promotion."	

Name: _____

Date: _____

Type of Workplace Writing	Purpose	Audience
Newspaper advertisement selling new cars	To get someone to buy a new car	

Name: _____

Date: _____

2.5

How to Handle Mistakes

- 1. Admit that you are responsible for the mistake.

- 2. Determine who needs to know that you made a mistake.

- 3. Share the error or mistake with person(s) who need to know.

- 4. Give the facts.

- 5. Don't make excuses.

- 6. Tell the person what happened and how you fixed the problem or plan to fix the problem.

- 7. Tell your employer how you will make sure that the mistake does not happen again.

Name: _____

Date: _____

2.5

How to Handle Mistakes

- 1. Admit that you are responsible for the mistake.

- 2. Determine who needs to know that you made a mistake.

- 3. Share the error or mistake with person(s) who need to know.

- 4. Give the facts.

- 5. Don't make excuses.

- 6. Tell the person what happened and how you fixed the problem or plan to fix the problem.

- 7. Tell your employer how you will make sure that the mistake does not happen again.

Name: _____

Date: _____

2.6

Sending Emails

Before you click the “send” button:

Proofread — Read your email carefully and check for spelling mistakes, missing capital letters, commas, and end punctuation marks. Make sure that your email is “correctly” written.

Email address — Make sure that you have the correct email address of the person to whom you are writing in the “To:” box.

CC box — Make sure this box is empty unless you want someone else to get a copy of your email.

Subject box — This is where you write what your email is about.

Body — Make sure that the email text is complete, but concise. People do not like to read long email messages.

Now you are ready to click “send.”

Name: _____

Date: _____

2.6

Sending Emails

Before you click the “send” button:

Proofread — Read your email carefully and check for spelling mistakes, missing capital letters, commas, and end punctuation marks. Make sure that your email is “correctly” written.

Email address — Make sure that you have the correct email address of the person to whom you are writing in the “To:” box.

CC box — Make sure this box is empty unless you want someone else to get a copy of your email.

Subject box — This is where you write what your email is about.

Body — Make sure that the email text is complete, but concise. People do not like to read long email messages.

Now you are ready to click “send.”

NAME: <i>Anne Ellis</i>	INSURANCE #: <i>XYZ1234567</i>
DOB/AGE: <i>09/09/1942 67 yrs</i>	CONTACT INFO:
VITAL SIGNS:	<i>Mrs. Ellis was awake at 3:00 in the morning because she was</i>
	<i>thirsty so I filled her water pitcher and gave her a glass of</i>
	<i>water which she drank and then Mrs. Ellis wanted a blanket</i>
	<i>because the room was cold so I got her a blanket from the</i>
	<i>nurse's storage room because there weren't any blankets in</i>
	<i>the room and then I checked her vital signs before I left her</i>
	<i>room and her vital signs were normal and I logged them into</i>
	<i>the front of the chart. I checked on Mrs. Ellis again at 4:00</i>
	<i>a.m. and found her sleeping soundly and Mrs. Ellis awoke at 6:30 a.m.</i>

Read the following pairs of sentences. Check the message that delivers a professional tone to the reader.

1.

I hope that you will contact me. I know that my qualifications are not very impressive, but I do want the job.

OR

My qualifications and willingness to work hard make me an excellent applicant for the position. You can reach me at 555-222-3333. I look forward to hearing from you.

2.

The new boss doesn't know anything about what we do.

OR

Our new supervisor is working hard to learn everyone's job.

3.

It's not fair that I do more work than the other workers.

OR

I would like to schedule a time to discuss with you my current responsibilities.

4.

Because you used the product incorrectly we will not refund your money

OR

General Manufacturing cannot refund your money because the product was used incorrectly.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Create an advertisement for a product. First, complete the following form. Then create a basic “sketch” of the advertisement in the space below.

Name of the product	
List three words that describe the product.	1. 2. 3.
What would a customer like about this product?	
Why would a customer buy this product?	
What would be a catchy headline to start your advertisement?	

Name: _____

Date: _____

Complete the sample sales form with the following information: 2 black t-shirts, size L, item number 788, at a cost of \$9.95 each and 4 pairs of black shorts, size L, item number 888, at a cost of \$15.99 each. Make sure the entire form is complete.

Order Form				
Date				
Ship To		Name		
		Street Address		
		City, State, Zip Code		
		Phone		
Quantity	Item #	Description	Unit Price	Line Total
			Total	
			Shipping and Handling	\$6.25
			Total	
Make all checks payable to Sports Goods for All				
Thank you for your business!				
Sports Goods for All – 99 Sports Way – Dearborn, MI 48129 – 888-888-8888				

Check your work using this checklist:

- Are all of the spaces that need to be completed filled in correctly?
- Is the information accurate?
- Did you spell all of the words correctly?
- Did you capitalize correctly?
- Did you use correct punctuation?
- Is your writing clear so that others can easily read it?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Date & Time:	Activity	Action Required	Action Completed
10/1: 8:00 – 9:00 AM	Listen to messages and access email	Respond to calls and emails	3 calls (Names of people) 6 emails (Names of people)

