



Before Papers Come Paragraphs

Introductory Unit: Page One—The Very Beginning

Lesson 5: Understanding the Writing Process

Parent Guide

The Denim *Beret*
Writing Program

Notes on Lesson 5

As the last lesson of the introductory unit, lesson 5 gives students an overview of the remaining lessons in level 1. The course will coincide with this overview unit by unit, so that students finish with a clear understanding of how a composition is developed from beginning to end. The lesson 5 assignment will help ensure their general understanding of the various steps of the writing process, even though they don't yet know how to work through each step skillfully. These steps are listed below and should be followed for every essay, story, poem, and paper they will ever write:

1. Prewriting
2. Drafting
3. Revising
4. Editing
5. Proofreading
6. Publishing

Unit Note: This is the final lesson of the introductory unit. After grading your student's assignment according to the guide below, please consider completing the feedback form provided on onceuponapen.studio. This will help me improve the lessons for future parents and students.

Evaluation Guide

WARM-UP

In the lesson 2 parent guide, I explained writing warm-ups in detail—what they are and how to evaluate and score them. Please refer to that if you missed it. Briefly, check your student's warm-up for the following criteria only:

- continuous writing for a minimum of 10 minutes
- prompt was followed
- completion of approximately a half page (consider size of handwriting when judging this)
- evidence of effort

Record a completion grade on the page when you are satisfied with your student's work. The instructions for this warm-up are as follows:

Personal Response to Other Subjects:

Just as with literature, responding to other subjects you are studying can help you process and think about what you are learning. If you are studying astronomy, for example, you might reflect on how big the galaxy is compared to Earth. If you are studying the Civil War, you might discuss whether it was justified or how it changed the South. Anything you are studying can be a topic for a personal response, especially ideas, people, and events. Pick one and write for 10 minutes.

LESSON ASSIGNMENT

Part 1 of the assignment should be graded strictly, because it will be objectively right or wrong. If your student's definitions are not close to the answer key's definitions, please discuss the answers with him or have him re-read the relevant parts of the lesson. Part 2 should be graded much more gently, because your student has probably not yet learned how to move through each step of the writing process with skill. All you should look for when you grade this part is a general understanding of each step and an effort to follow instructions. Discuss any big mistakes with minimal criticism. Focus only on helping your student understand the goal of each step.

Part 1: Reading Check

Define each step of the writing process below using **blue**, **green**, or **purple**.

Prewriting— all brainstorming, outlining, notetaking, and other activities that help the writer plan the essay/paper

Drafting—the writer's first attempt at expressing all ideas and information in complete sentences and full paragraphs

Revising—subsequent drafts (as many as needed) that improve on the rough draft at the content level (what ideas and information are expressed); includes adding, deleting, rewriting, and changing content

Editing—improvements and corrections at the sentence level (how ideas and information are expressed); includes grammar, diction, rhythm, flow, and style

Proofreading—corrections at the word level; includes spelling, punctuation, capitalization, typographical errors, etc. (often completed in tandem with editing but more detailed)

Publishing—formatting and decorating the essay/paper in a way that is appropriate for the project's purpose and audience; includes labeling, titles, bylines, font, spacing, type size, cover page, illustrations, etc.

Part 2: Practicing the Writing Process

To get a feel for the writing process, you will complete a writing assignment in which you will complete all six steps as best you can at this point in your study. Show all your work, even your prewriting. You will write an essay of 2-3 paragraphs on one of the following topics:

1. your most cherished dream
2. your favorite memory
3. what you would like to be doing ten years from now
4. your favorite accomplishment
5. something that really bugs you (other than writing assignments ☺)

In the spaces below or on separate paper, show your work for each step of the writing process. If you type on this worksheet, add lines as needed.

I. At least one prewriting activity--again, you may type your prewriting here (notes, lists, outline, mind-mapping, etc.) or write it on separate paper.

(IF YOU CHOOSE TO TYPE YOUR PREWRITING, PLACE IT HERE.)

II. Rough draft—Remember, this can be messy and full of mistakes! Just get your thoughts down.

(IF YOU CHOOSE TO TYPE YOUR ROUGHT DRAFT, PLACE IT HERE.)

III. At least one revised draft with at least three improvements to the essay's content. Keep in mind the difference between revision and editing. Do not concern yourself with grammar, spelling, or other language issues—only content.

(PLACE YOUR REVISED DRAFT HERE.)

IV. A draft that clearly shows your editing *in highlighting* (different color, at least three improvements). Remember that this has to do with improvements at the sentence level—how you express your ideas.
(PLACE YOUR EDITED DRAFT HERE.)

V. A draft that clearly shows your proofreading *in highlighting* (different color, at least three corrections). Remember that this has to do with improvements at the word level—spelling errors and other minor flaws.
(PLACE YOUR PROOFREAD DRAFT HERE.)

VI. A “published” copy done any way you choose (fancy, plain, etc., but it must look presentable to a reader with clear formatting, a title, and your name as the author).
(PLACE YOUR PUBLISHED DRAFT *AFTER* THE BOX BELOW ON A FRESH PAGE, SO THAT YOUR FORMATTING IS EASY TO SEE.)

| |
|--|
| Note: You will be evaluated on how completely you follow instructions and on how well your parent can see that you understand the writing process. |
|--|