How I Teach... with the Language Arts Lady

Teacher's Notebook Episode Sheets

The Color-Coded Checklist Challenge for Revising Papers From Third Grade On! (part I of II)

HIT #17

from Tools & Tricks Level II

Broadcasts/Podcasts

LanguageArtsLadyBlog.com

From Donna

Introduction

Welcome to your Teacher's Notebook!

These sheets will provide you with tangible resources about each week's How I Teach.... episode that you can keep for yourself and often use with your students.

Here is what you need to know:

1) Each weekly set of sheets will be available at languageartsladyblog.com/howiteach with that week's episode, description, audio and video.

2) You can download the weekly sheets, print off anything to use in your classroom or with your students, and use in any non-commercial way you desire. (They are the intellectual property of Language Arts Lady.)

3) You can find more materials that coincide with that episode's topic at the end of each set of weekly sheets under the header Materials About This Topic to Purchase. These are mostly downloads that you can purchase inexpensively and use to teach skills you are learning from Language Arts Lady!

4) You may also desire to print off the entire Teacher's Notebook booklet (updated each month) so that you have all the sheets from the episodes to date all together (rather than a few sheets at a time). You can access the whole Teacher's Notebook booklet here: languageartsladyblog.com/teachersnotebook

Language Arts Lady

I want so many good things for you and your students!

Love and hope,

Donna

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How I Teach....

Projects 3 & 4: How to Complete the Checklist Challenge

Checklist Challenge Over Elves and Shoemaker

Overview of Checklist Challenge Lesson

You will complete a step-by-step lesson this week on "How to Complete the Checklist Challenge."

The Checklist Challenge is a "challenging checklist" of editing items that you should do to your paragraphs to make them better.

You will learn step by step how to do each of these items by doing them to paragraphs provided for you in this lesson (or by doing the revisions to your own report from earlier).

I. TOPIC OF ESSAY
You will be completing a Checklist Challenge via a "How to Checklist Challenge" lesson.

II. NUMBER OF PARAGRAPHS IN THE BODY OF YOUR ESSAY
All students will complete the Checklist Challenge on **3 paragraphs** of the body (P'soB)--a 3 paragraph paper.

III. OPENING PARAGRAPH
You will **not** complete the Checklist Challenge over an Opening Paragraph.

IV. CLOSING PARAGRAPH
You will **not** complete the Checklist Challenge over a Closing Paragraph.

Note: The CC provided in this lesson has three check boxes for items done one time per paragraph since the essay provided contains three paragraphs.

Note: This Overview Box, which is provided at the beginning of each project, is here to give students (and teachers) an at-a-glance look at the entire composition assignment. Each step of each lesson is assigned and detailed throughout the week(s).

How I Teach....

Teacher's Note: This weekly lesson is not divided up into mini-lessons (numbered one, two, three, etc). It flows better as one unified lesson. You may complete it however you desire over the course of one week.

Writing paragraphs and essays is only half of the writing process.

The other half---which is just as important as writing---is editing. You must learn how to check your own work, find errors, correct mistakes, add words and sentences that make things clearer and more interesting, and many more editing and revising items.

You already know how to edit more things than you may realize. Think back to the last time you wrote something and read it aloud for your teacher or family.

While you were reading it aloud, did you see an error and want to just "correct it real quick"? Did mistakes stand out to you while you were sharing your writing? Then you are already an editor-in-training!

There are a few key things that you must always do when you write sentences, paragraphs, or essays. These items will improve your writing dramatically.

In a few weeks, when you write essays and reports containing a few paragraphs, you will need to know many editing skills. You will learn these by learning how to complete what is called the Checklist Challenge. Sometimes this book will call the Checklist Challenge CC for short.

The Checklist Challenge is a challenging checklist of editing items that you should do to your paragraphs to make them better.

You will learn step by step how to do each of these items by doing them to paragraphs pro-vided for you in this lesson (or by doing the revisions to your own report).

<> 1a. Week 3: Study the sample (color-coded) Checklist Challenge Chart and sample (color-coded) essay provided near the end of the book) that goes with it to see how to insert changes onto a paper document of a report, essay, or story.

<> 1b. Week 3: Choose one essay or report that you have already written (or use the one provided), and pull it out of your notebook (or photocopy it), so you can make changes to it with the Checklist Challenge. (Be sure the paper you choose is double-spaced in order to insert the CC changes.)

How I Teach....

Optional: Checklist Challenge Coding

Your teacher may desire for you to code your CC for her so that she can grade it/check it more easily. The following steps will help you learn to code your CC for your teacher.

1. Use **colored pencil** or **colored pens** or **highlighters**.
2. **Print off your** double spaced **rough draft report or essay** (or use your handwritten rough draft).
3. **With your CC on one side and your paper on your dominant side** (right hand side for right handed students), complete the first CC task.
4. **Place a check mark in the check boxes for the items that say "read" or "look for errors,"** etc., with a pen as you complete them.
5. For items that involve inserting things or omitting something and adding something else, code in one of two ways:
   a. **Insert the change or addition with a pen or pencil on your paper and use a highlighter to mark it in your paper** in a distinguishing way--highlight the addition with an orange highlighter, circle the change with blue highlighter, double underline the title with a pink highlighter, etc. (choosing whatever colors you desire without repeating the exact same marking). **OR**
   b. **Insert the change or addition with a colored pencil or colored pen** (choosing whatever colors you desire with out repeating the exact same marking). (In this method, you will eventually need to add the change AND circle it or underline it so that your exact same marking is not repeated. For example, you might add verbs with a blue pen but add the title with a blue pen and underline the title with that same blue pen--two different markings, one written in blue pen and one written in blue pen *and* underlined with the blue pen.)
6. **Whatever you do to the insertion on your paper should be done to the CC check boxes for that item.**
   a. For example, if you highlight your new verbs with an orange highlighter in your paper, you will color in the check box with orange highlighter.
   b. If you underline your title with purple highlighter in your paper, you should underline the check box with purple highlighter.
   c. If you write your new verbs in green colored pencil in your paper, make a check mark in the check box with that same green colored pencil.
7. **If your teacher gives you permission to skip a CC task** (or you and she do not think a change will improve a paragraph), **place an NC** (no change) **in the check box for that paragraph,** so your teacher will not look for it.
8. If you skip a task altogether (without your teacher's permission), place an X in the task box(es), so your teacher will know not to search for the revisions. Obviously, it is always preferred that you do all of your assignments, but it would be better to indicate that you skipped something than to leave the box(es) blank.

The point is that **the coding you put into the paper copy of your composition should be identical to what you do to (or above, beneath, around, etc.) the CC check boxes for that task.** This method will allow your teacher to have your CC chart on one side and your "colorful paper" (with the CC revisions inserted with colors) on the other. She can check at a glance to find your new insertions, title, Thesis Statement, and more.

Note: Some students prefer to do the CC on their paper on the electronic document on the computer with the colored shading tool provided in word processing programs. This is fine, too, but the student should still do the same marking/coding on the CC chart as he did on the electronic document--or write beside the tasks what color each task is. For example, if the student shades the verbs he replaced in pink shading, he should write PINK beside the CC task for the verbs on the chart. Then when he prints this "colorful" version, the teacher can still check his revisions easily.

[Three Paragraph Sample Story for Student to Do CC On]

A poor shoemaker had enough leather to make only one more pair of shoes. So, he cut out the leather that evening and fell asleep. In the morning, he surprisingly saw two shoes on his table! He looked at them and found that they were made perfectly. Later that day, the shoemaker sold them for a great price. With the money, he bought enough leather for two pairs of shoes.

The next morning, the shoemaker found two more beautiful pairs of shoes on his table. This went on until the shoemaker was wealthy from selling so many shoes. One evening around Christmastime, the man and his wife wanted to learn who was helping them. So, they hid behind some hanging clothes in the corner of the room. At midnight, two dwarves in old clothes came inside. These small men started sewing the shoes very fast. The shoemaker and his wife watched with shock.

After the men left, the shoemaker and his wife felt sorry for them. They made new clothes and shoes for them. When they finished the gifts, the shoemaker and his wife hid and waited. When the men came in, they liked the clothes and shoes. They put them on and left the shop singing and dancing. They never came back, but the shoemaker still prospered.

How I Teach....

All All All	Read your composition to your teacher or an older sibling. Together, listen for sentences that sound unclear. **Be sure to read aloud.** You will "hear" errors you would otherwise not find. **Place a check mark in each CC box with a pen or pencil when this step is completed.** **Focus on content errors at this time.**

The first item of the CC has to do with **listening for errors.**

When you read your writing "in your head," you often miss errors because you read what you think you wrote, not what is really there. You may skip errors that you would find if you were reading it aloud.

Thus, the first item in the CC is to **read your composition aloud** (hopefully to someone else) and **listen for things that do not sound correct.**

You may also see errors at this time--maybe something that needs capitalized or something that is misspelled--and that is fine (correct those!), but the real focus of this item is to **hear** mistakes. You will be surprised how many errors can be **heard**!

<> 2. Week 3: Do the first task (reading aloud and listening for errors) with your teacher for the paper you have chosen to edit in this lesson. Place check marks in the boxes with a pen or pencil when you have completed it.

Note: The CC provided in this lesson has three check boxes for items done one time per paragraph since the essay provided contains three paragraphs. If you did an Opening Paragraph and Closing Paragraph (or you are using a longer essay or report), you will have more paragraphs than three. Just go ahead and do the CC over three of the paragraphs of the body of your paper (even if the body of your paper is longer) for this week's assignments.

How I Teach....

☐ All Check every sentence in one paragraph (or more, according to the check boxes) to make sure that each one is a complete sentence--**CAVES**. **Place a check mark in each CC box with a pen or pencil when this step is completed.**

- **C**apital at beginning
- **A**ll make sense
- **V**erb
- **E**nd mark
- **S**ubject

You have probably learned earlier in your language arts studies what a sentence must contain in order to be a sentence.

To help you remember what a sentence contains, LFAM* uses CAVES.

When you are first learning to write, it is good to check your sentences sometimes to be sure they are real sentences. You can do this easily if you use CAVES from the box above.

<> 3. Week 3: Check the sentences of one of your paragraphs for CAVES, and check off the box with a pen or pencil when you are finished. Be sure to change any sentences that are not real sentences to make them into sentences.

*Learn for a Month (LFAM)

How I Teach....

All Check to make sure one paragraph (or more, according to the check boxes) contains all five parts of a paragraph--**OCCTI**. **Place a check mark in each CC box with a pen or pencil when this step is completed.**

- **O**pening sentence
- **C**losing sentence
- **C**ontent is all the same
- **T**hree or more sentences
- **I**ndented

OCCTI will help you learn what a paragraph contains.

When you are first learning to write, it is good to check your paragraphs sometimes to be sure they are real paragraphs. You may use OCCTI to help you do this.

A paragraph is said to be a "real," complete paragraph when it has the five elements of OCCTI:

- **O**pening sentence
- **C**losing sentence
- **C**ontent is all the same
- **T**hree or more sentences+
- **I**ndented

+If a paragraph is **dialogue (people talking to each other), it may not contain three or more sentences.** Remember, **in dialogue, each time the speaker changes, a new paragraph is begun**--regardless of how many sentences were spoken.

<> 4. Week 3: Check one of your paragraphs using OCCTI, and check off the box when you are finished. If something is wrong, be sure to change anything that keeps your paragraph from being a real paragraph.

How I Teach....

All All All Circle each **verb** with a light colored highlighter. This will make it easier to change your verbs and to add adverbs (*ly* words and others) as further directed. **"Code" the CC boxes in the same way that you coded the located verbs in your paper.**

Be sure to circle all of the following verbs (not just the sentence's main verb):
- Action verbs--show what the subject *does*
- Be, a Helper, Link verbs (BHL)--being, helping, and linking verbs (is, are, am, was, were, has, had, do, does, etc.)
- Infinitives--to + verb (to +action verb [to run] or to + BHL verb [to be])

🗝 **Be sure you circle the verbs in your writings as this step is crucial later in the Checklist Challenge. However, do not get discouraged if you miss some. You do not need to labor over each word, fearful of missing a verb. The more you look for the verbs, the better you will get at finding them--and the better you will get at the verb-related CC items.**

Memorize the Be, a Helper, Link verbs song (to the tune of the Alphabet Song):

ABCDEFG
Be, a Helper, Link verbs,
HIJKLMNOP
Is, Are, Am, Was, & Were.
QRSTUV
Be, & Being, Been, Become,
WXYZ
Has, & Had, & Have are ones.
Now I said my ABC's
Can, Could, Shall, Should—they are fun
Next time won't you sing with me?
Will, Would, Do, Did, Does, & Done
ABCDEFG
May, Might, Must—they are some as well,
HIJKLMNOP
Appear, Look, Seem, Remain, Taste, Feel, & Smell

Box 5b-3

When you do this CC item, do not worry about finding every verb---or accidentally marking a word as a verb when it is not one. This task is not a "test" to see if you can find all verbs. It is an exercise that will help you later.

The more verbs you find and circle, the easier it will be to complete other CC items.

At first it may be hard for you to find the verbs---especially the BHL (Be, a Helper, Link) verbs. (These are being, helping, and linking verbs.)

Do not let that bother you. Just find as many as you can. You will get better and better at this as you complete the CC on your compositions.

Note: Be sure you circle (not highlight) and use a light color for verbs in this task. When you complete the entire Checklist Challenge, you will have many words, phrases, and sentences coded. If you highlight all of your verbs (instead of circling them), your additions will be difficult to see when you put them into your final copy due to too much highlighting (and your paper will look too "cluttered" for your teacher to check quickly).

<> 5a. Week 3: Complete the "circling verb" task from above. It might be easier for you to have your teacher read your essay aloud, and you stop her when you hear a verb (or the other way around). It also might be easier for you if you do all of the action verbs first, then do the BHL verbs. You may want to look back in the BHL verb song for help. Be sure to "code" the CC boxes and the additions(s) in your paper.

<> 5b. Week 3: Optional- -Memorize Being, Helping, and Linking verbs by learning the BHL verb song provided in the box (Box 5b-3).

How I Teach....

All All All Change one of the "**boring**" **verbs** in each paragraph to a "**strong**" **verb**. You may select one from the list below or choose one of your own. **"Code" the CC boxes in the same way that you coded the added verbs in your paper.**

Instead of	Use	Instead of	Use	Instead of	Use
found	discovered	looking	appearing	run	sprint
coming	visiting	sit	recline	talk	communicate
go	hasten to	asked	interrogated	lay	recline
said	announced	write	pen	lie	deceive
look	examine	answered	responded	play	frolic
walk	saunter	lie	stretch out	talk	proclaim
list	enumerate	become	develop	work	toil
look	scan	see	determine	add	enhance
help	assist	teach	instruct		

Be sure you add or delete words in the sentence when inserting your new verb, as needed for clarity.

Sometimes we get stuck in "writing ruts." We just keep using the same words over and over again without thinking of any new words. This item will get you thinking about new words!

Verbs are the forward motion of your sentences. Verbs make your sentences sing. If you have all boring verbs in your paragraph, your paragraph will be boring!

For this revision, you will look at those verbs you circled earlier and try to find a boring one to change to something more interesting.

One way to do this is to say the sentence containing your boring verb aloud. Then try some other verbs that mean the same or almost the same---also reading it aloud with those in place of the boring one. See which one sounds best and means what you wanted your sentence to mean.

You may also refer to a thesaurus for this item, if desired.

<> 6. Week 3: Do the "change the boring verb" task. Be sure to "code" the CC boxes and the addition(s) in your paper when you have completed this item.

How I Teach....

All All All Add an **adverb** (*ly* word or other) to each paragraph. You may select one from the list below or choose one of your own. **"Code" the CC boxes in the same way that you coded the added adverbs in your paper.**

Examples

only	totally	joyfully	willingly	completely	never
practically	significantly	closely	finally	diligently	seldom
cheerfully	carefully	laboriously	gladly	slowly	later
extremely	gratefully	curiously	sometimes	always	tomorrow
fully	thoughtfully	interestingly	apparently	cautiously	repeatedly

An adverb is a describer that describes or modifies a verb, adjective, or other adverb. An adverb tells *where, when*, *how*, or *to what extent.*

Ad**verb** has the word **verb** in it, so what kind of word do you think an adverb describes? If you said verb, you are right!

An adverb describes a verb. It tells *how*, *to what extent*, *when*, and *where*.

You can usually place an adverb before your verb or after your verb. Read your sentence aloud with your chosen adverb before it, then after it. See which one sounds better.

<> 7. Week 3: Do the adverb task. Be sure to "code" the CC boxes and the addition(s) in your paper when you have completed this item.

How I Teach....

All All All Add one descriptive **adjective** to each paragraph. You may select one from the list below or choose one of your own. **"Code" the CC boxes in the same way that you coded the added adjectives in your paper.**

Examples

stringent	gracious	lengthy	trusted	courteous	infallible
meek	meager	valiant	understanding	trustworthy	horrendous
courageous	fulfilling	preoccupied	horrific	incapable	significant
presumptuous					

An adjective is a describer that describes a noun or a pronoun. It tells *whose, which one, how many,* or *what kind.* You should add descriptive adjectives--those that tell *what kind.*

Is your paragraph starting to sound more interesting?

Besides adverbs, you have probably also learned about another describer called adjectives. Adjectives describe nouns.

Adjectives tell *what kind*, *how many*, and *which* one.

The best kind of adjectives to use are the ones that tell **what kind**. These are more interesting adjectives.

<> 8. Week 3: Do the adjective task. Be sure to "code" the CC boxes and the addition(s) in your paper when you have completed this item.

How I Teach....

All Create a **title**, and put it at the top of the your paper. ***If you have already done this,*** **you should still "code" the CC check box and the title in your paper as directed by your teacher.**

Consider the following ideas:

- Something catchy
- Something comical
- Something bold
- A song title or line
- A Scripture
- Something biblical
- Something about character
- Something informative
- Other

Tips:

- **Center your title at the top of the first page of your composition.**
- **Capitalize the first letter of the first and last word.**
- **Capitalize all the words within the title that are important--but not three-letter-or-fewer articles, pronouns, or prepositions.**
- **Do not italicize your title, though you may treat it like a minor work and surround it with quotation marks (regular ones, not single ones), if desired.**

When you write longer essays and reports---and even oftentimes when you write one paragraph compositions, you will want your writings to have titles. A title tells the reader what he will be reading. It whets his appetite to read the entire paper. It makes the writing sound interesting to others. Titles are fun!

Making up titles for your compositions is an activity many students like. It is fun to call your paper whatever you want--and whatever you think will best interest your readers.

You can think of various categories of titles by looking at the list provided below. For example, for the Elves & Shoemaker story, you could possibly give it one of the titles listed below:

- Something catchy: **"Secret Service"**
- Something comical: **"The Super Sharing Story"**
- Something bold: **"Nighttime Visitors"**
- A song title or line: **"Thankful for You"**
- Something biblical: **"Be Kind One to Another"**
- Something about character: **"Be Kind and Thankful"**
- A Scripture: **"Enter His Gates with Thanksgiving"**
- Something informative: **"Saved by the Supernatural"**
- Other: **"One Good Turn Deserves Another"**

<> 9. Week 3: Do the title task above. Be sure to "code" the CC box and the addition(s) in your paper when you have completed this item.

How I Teach....

All All All From the **Banned Words List** below, select one word (or form of that word) that you have in one of your paragraphs, omit it, and substitute a similar, but stronger, word. **If you do not have any Banned Words, just "code" the CC check box(es) as directed by your teacher (or place a check mark in each one that represents a paragraph with no Banned Words).**

Banned Word List

very	big	really	good	great	fine	slow
say	bad	little	want	see	look	such
ask	lot	find	walk	said	go	become
sit	think	soft	fast	many	find	

*like (*Like* is only banned when it is a verb. When used as a preposition, *like* often creates a simile–and is not a Banned Word.)

🗝 **Advanced students should omit as many Banned Words as possible throughout all paragraphs.**

You have already learned how to change your boring verbs into stronger verbs. Besides weak verbs, you might have other words in your writing that are also boring and could be changed.

The next item you will be doing in the Checklist Challenge is looking for a word that is called a Banned Word.

Banned Words are words that you should try not to use in your writing because people use them too much. You should also try not to use them because they are boring!

To do this item, you will need to look through your paragraph carefully to see if you have any of the words that are "banned" in your paragraph.

If you find more than one, just choose the one that you think is the most boring (or the easiest to change), and change it.

<> 10. Week 3: Do the Banned Word task above. Be sure to "code" the CC boxes and the addition(s) in your paper when you have completed this item.

How I Teach....

All Add a sentence to the beginning of your paper that describes the whole piece. This is called the **Thesis Statement**. ***If you have already done this,*** **you should still "code" the CC check box and the Thesis Statement in your paper as directed by your teacher.**

Examples:

- Report about raccoons: Ever wonder how that furry bandit known as a raccoon manages to get into your coolers while you sleep in your tent at night?
- Essay about an experience: When I just turned thirteen years old, I found out the challenging way how important siblings truly are.

Tips

- **Write a sentence that describes your paper without telling the reader exactly what it is about.**
- **Do not say: *In this paper you will learn about . . .***
- **Be sure this Thesis Statement is truly representative of the content of your *entire* composition.**
- **Your Thesis Statement is your commitment to write about that topic. It should cleverly introduce your composition's subject.-**
- **Do not italicize your title, though you may treat it like a minor work and surround it with quotation marks (regular ones, not single ones), if desired.**

In the essay you are editing today, a Thesis Statement might already be present. However, if you do not feel that a sentence within the first paragraph tells the reader exactly what your entire paper contains, you may want to add a new thesis statement.

Remember, the Thesis Statement is a sentence or two in your first paragraph that tells your readers what your essay is about.

<> 11. Week 3: Do the Thesis Statement task. Be sure to "code" the CC box and the addition(s) in your paper when you have completed this item or if you already have one in your paper.

How I Teach....

All Add a sentence to the very end of your writing that **restates your Thesis Statement** in some way. This is called the **Thesis Statement "Reloaded"** and should conclude your paper. ***If you have already done this,*** **you should still "code" the CC check box and the Thesis Statement "Reloaded" as directed by your teacher.**

You may choose to include Thesis Statement "Reloaded" that restates the title of your paper rather than the Thesis Statement--this would be the Title "Reloaded."

If you are not assigned a Closing Paragraph (or if your Closing Paragraph is not one that "wraps" up your essay, but more of a continuing paragraph), you will want to add a closing statement (or statements) to your essay.

You do not want your reader to be left hanging--wondering where the ending to your essay is.

One way you can add a closing statement that is a lot of fun--and brings your report back around to the title--is to somehow restate the title in it.

For example, if your title was "Nighttime Visitors," you could close your essay with a sentence like the following: *Because of his generous nighttime visitors and his kindness to them, the shoemaker achieved great wealth.*

<> 12. Week 3: Do the closing sentence task from above. Be sure to "code" the CC box and the addition(s) in your paper when you have completed this item (or if you already have one in your paper).

[Three Paragraph Sample Story With Completed CC]

Help will come to those who are diligent and grateful.

The Midnight Shoemaking Service

A poor shoemaker had enough leather to make only one more pair of shoes. So, he cut out the ~~leather~~ material that evening and fell asleep. In the morning, he surprisingly ~~saw~~ spotted two shoes on his table! ~~He looked at~~ inspected them and ~~found~~ discovered that they were ~~made~~ fabricated perfectly. The man was joyfully confused, grateful! Later that day, the shoemaker sold them for a great price. With the money, he happily bought enough leather for two pairs of shoes.

The next morning, the shoemaker ~~found~~ encountered two more beautiful pairs of shoes on his table. This ~~went on~~ continued until the ~~shoemaker~~ penniless tradesman was wealthy from selling so many quality, stylish shoes. One evening around Christmastime, the man and his wife wanted to learn who was secretly helping them. So, they hid behind some hanging clothes in the corner of the room. At midnight, ~~two dwarves in old clothes came inside~~ entered. These small men started sewing the shoes ~~very~~ incredibly fast. The shoemaker and his wife watched with shock.

After the ~~men left~~ magical exited, the shoemaker and his wife felt sorry for them (so) they quickly made new clothes and shoes for them. When they finished the ~~gifts~~, the ~~shoemaker~~ and his wife hid and waited. When the men ~~came in~~ entered, they ~~liked~~ loved the clothes and shoes. They put them on and left the shop singing and dancing; they never ~~came back~~ returned, but the shoemaker still prospered. This man's diligence and gratefulness brought him success in multiple ways.

Checklist Challenge for Lessons 3 & 4: Original Expository Essay--The Elves and the Shoemaker

The Elves and the Shoemaker

Complete the Checklist Challenge by using these guides:

- Determine which check boxes apply to your level.
- Each box will indicate the number of changes that need to be completed (normally one box for each paragraph).

All ALL LEVELS

B BASIC LEVEL only

E EXTENSION only

Optional OPTIONAL -- Your teacher will decide whether you should complete this task or not, based on your grammar/usage level.

Read your composition to your teacher or an older sibling. Together, listen for sentences that sound unclear. **Be sure to read aloud.** You will "hear" errors you would otherwise not find. **Place a check mark in each CC box with a pen or pencil when this step is completed.**

Focus on content errors at this time.

Circle each **verb** with a light colored highlighter. This will make it easier to change your verbs and to add adverbs (*ly* words and others) as further directed. **"Code" the CC boxes in the same way that you coded your located verbs in your paper.**

Be sure to circle all of the following verbs:

- Action verbs--show what the subject *does*
- Be, a Helper, Link verbs (BHL)--being, helping, and linking verbs (is, are, am, was, were, has, had, do, does, etc.)
- Infinitives--to + verb (to +action verb or to + BHL verb)

Be sure you circle the verbs in your writings as this step is crucial later in the Checklist Challenge. However, do not get discouraged if you miss some. You do not need to labor over each word, fearful of missing a verb. The more you look for the verbs, the better you will get at finding them--and the better you will get at the verb-related CC items.

Change one of the "**boring**" **verbs** in each paragraph to a "**strong**" **verb**. You may select one from the list below or choose one of your own. **"Code" the CC boxes in the same way that you coded the added verbs in your paper.**

Instead of	Use	Instead of	Use	Instead of	Use
found	discovered	looking	appearing	run	sprint
coming	visiting	sit	recline	talk	communicate
go	hasten to	asked	interrogated	lay	recline
said	announced	write	pen	lie	deceive
look	examine	answered	responded	play	frolic
walk	saunter	lie	stretch out	talk	proclaim
list	enumerate	become	develop	work	toil
look	scan	see	determine	add	enhance
help	assist	teach	instruct		

Be sure you add or delete words in the sentence when inserting your new verb, as needed for clarity.

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How I Teach....

Add an **adverb** (*ly* word or other) to each paragraph. You may select one from the list below or choose one of your own. **"Code" the CC boxes in the same way that you coded your added adverbs in your paper.**

Examples:

only	totally	joyfully	willingly	completely	never
practically	significantly	closely	finally	diligently	seldom
cheerfully	carefully	laboriously	gladly	slowly	later
extremely	gratefully	happily	sometimes	always	tomorrow
fully	thoughtfully	interestingly	apparently	cautiously	repeatedly

An adverb is a describer that describes or modifies a verb, adjective, or other adverb. An adverb tells *where, when, how,* or *to what extent.*

Add one descriptive **adjective** to each paragraph. You may select one from the list below or choose one of your own. **"Code" the CC boxes in the same way that you coded your added adjectives in your paper.**

Examples:

stringent	gracious	lengthy	trusted	courteous	infallible
meek	meager	valiant	understanding	trustworthy	horrendous
courageous	fulfilling	preoccupied	terrible	incapable	presumptuous

An adjective is a describer that describes a noun or pronoun. It tells *whose, which one, how many,* or *what kind*. You should add descriptive adjectives--those that tell *what kind*.

Create a **title**, and put it at the top of the your paper. ***If you have already done this,* you should still "code" the CC check box and the title in your paper as directed by your teacher.**

Consider the following ideas:

- Something catchy: **"The Surprised Shoemaker"**
- Something comical: **"The Spontaneous Shoemaker"**
- Something bold: **"Help in the Darkness"**
- A song title or line: **"Silent Night"**
- A Scripture: **"Work with Your Hands"**
- Something biblical: **"Diligence Will Be Rewarded"**
- Something about character: **"The Beauty of Character"**
- Something informative: **"The Shoemaking Elves"**
- Other: **"Secret Shoemakers"**

Tips:

- **Center your title at the top of the first page of your composition.**
- **Capitalize the first letter of the first and last word.**
- **Capitalize all the words within the title that are important--but not three-letter-or-fewer articles, pronouns, or prepositions.**
- **Do not italicize your title, though you may treat it like a minor work and surround it with quotation marks (regular ones, not single ones), if desired.**

From the **Banned Words List** below, select one word (or form of that word) that you have in one of your paragraphs, omit it, and substitute a similar, but stronger, word. ***If you do not have any Banned Words, just "code" the CC check box(es) as directed by your teacher (or place a check mark in each one that represents a paragraph with no Banned Words).***

Banned Word List

very	big	really	good	great	fine	slow
say	bad	little	want	see	look	such
ask	lot	find	walk	said	go	become
sit	think	soft	fast	many	find	

*like (*Like* is only banned when it is a verb. When used as a preposition, *like* often creates a simile--and is not a Banned Word.)

Advanced students should omit as many Banned Words as possible throughout all paragraphs.

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Add a sentence to the beginning of your paper that describes the whole piece. This is called the **Thesis Statement**. ***If you have already done this,*** **you should still "code" the CC check box and the Thesis Statement in your paper as directed by your teacher.**

Examples:
- Report about raccoons: Ever wonder how that furry bandit known as a raccoon manages to get into your coolers while you sleep in your tent at night?
- Report about an experience: When I just turned thirteen years old, I found out the challenging way how important siblings truly are.

Tips
- **Write a sentence that describes your paper without telling the reader exactly what it is about.**
- **Do not say: *In this paper you will learn about . . .***
- **Be sure this Thesis Statement is truly representative of the content of your *entire* composition.**
- **Your Thesis Statement is your commitment to write about that topic. It should cleverly introduce your composition's subject.**
- **If your paper does not have a separate Opening Paragraph, you will want to add an Opening Thesis Statement-Plus--a sentence or two introducing your topic that contains the Thesis Statement--to the beginning of your paper.**

Add a sentence to the very end of your writing that **restates your Thesis Statement** in some way. This is called the **Thesis Statement "Reloaded"** and should conclude your paper. ***If you have already done this,**** **you should still "code" the CC check box and the Thesis Statement "Reloaded" as directed by your teacher.**

You may choose to include Thesis Statement "Reloaded" that restates the title of your paper rather than the Thesis Statement.

Add one **word you have never used before in writing** (or more than one, according to your level), if you and your teacher think it is appropriate. ***If you have already done this,*** **you should still "code" the CC check box(es) and these words in your paper as directed by your teacher.**

A word you have never used in writing might be one you use in speaking but not in your compositions. Do not be afraid to use words you cannot spell! Use spell check on the computer or a dictionary to spell these challenging words (or ask your teacher for spelling help).

Check each paragraph carefully to be sure that your **transition from one paragraph to another** is smooth.If not, add transition sentences as needed. ***If your transition sentences are adequate,*** **you should still "code" the CC check box(es) and thetransition sentence(s) in your paper as directed by your teacher.**

Your transition from one topic to another topic may come at the end of a paragraph (telling the next paragraph's topic) or at the beginning of a paragraph (telling that paragraph's topic).

Add one **SSS5—Super Short Sentence** of five words or fewer. ***If you have already done this,*** **you should still "code" the CC check box and the SSS5 in your paper as directed by your teacher.**

Examples:
- **They display extraordinary stealth.**
- **Then, they are trapped!**
- **And soon it happened.**

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How I Teach....

Using a thesaurus, if needed, change one word in each paragraph to a **more advanced or distinct word.** ***If you and your teacher feel that your vocabulary is advanced enough,*** **you should still "code" the CC check box(es) and the advanced words in your paper as directed by your teacher.**

Instead of:	Use:	Instead of:	Use:
tree	maple	deep	bottomless
kind	compassionate	turn	swerve
grass	blades	loud	obnoxious

This may be any type of word--noun, verb, describer, etc. When choosing the new word, select one that paints a more vivid picture, gives better detail, is more distinct, etc. Do not just randomly select a word. Your new word choice should be *intentional*.

Add an **adverb** (*ly* word or other) that does **not modify a verb.** ***If you have already done this,*** **you should still "code" the CC check box and the adverb in your paper as directed by your teacher.**

Example

- **Modifies** an *adjective*: Some **uncharacteristically** *sneaky* predators use subtle methods.
- **Modifies** an *adverb*: Some predators are **actually** *more* subtle

An adverb will modify an adjective or another adverb and will usually answer the question *To what extent*?

Choose a word (or forms of a word) that you used more than one time within each paragraph. If the word sounds **redundant**, change that word, at least once, to a word with a similar meaning. ***If you do not have any redundancy,*** **just "code" the CC check box(es) as directed by your teacher.**

Examples:

- If *joyful* is redundant, substitute *elated* the next time.
- If *drove* is redundant, substitute *careened* the next time.
- If *answered* is redundant. substitute *retorted* the next time.

Note: Advanced level students should omit as much redundancy as possible throughout all paragraphs.

Do not change insignificant words such as *was, it, and*, etc.

Add different sentence openers (also known as **introductory material or non-essential information**). ***If you have already done these,*** **you should still "code" the CC check boxes and the sentence openers in your paper as directed by your teacher.**

Examples:

- A subordinate clause opener: **When the spider's victims are in these challenging positions,** those critters are dinner for sure! **(Sub Clause + Subordinator + subject + verb)**
- A prepositional phrase opener: **From these traps and snares,** their prey seldom escape.
- An *ing* opener: **Acting via traps and snares,** spiders trap prey easily.
- An *ed* opener: **Designed individually for each family of spider,** a web is truly a work of art.
- A short PP that requires a comma: **From this,** the prey cannot get loose.
- A transition word or phrase: **Next,** the spider designs a temporary spiral of non-sticky silk to act as basting.
- An *ly* word (adverb): **Amazingly,** the spider produces silk threads from special glands in its abdomen.
- An *ly* phrase or clause followed by a comma: **Slowly backtracking,** the spider creates a spiral of sticky silk.
- A conjunctive adverb: **Henceforth,** the victim cannot escape.
- An interjection: **Yes,** the spider is a stealthy creature.
- Other non-essential material of your choice: **Once there,** the "dinner" has no way of escape.

Upper level students should choose various ones -- preferably without much repeating.

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Add one **coordinating conjunction** (cc) with a complete sentence on both sides (or more than one, according to your level). Be sure to put a comma before the cc. ***If you have already done this,*** **you should still "code" the CC check box(es) and the "*,cc* compound sentence(s)" in your paper as directed by your teacher.**

Examples:

- Some predators do not catch their prey by assailing them directly, **for** these sneaky ones use far more subtle methods. **(CS , cc CS)**
- It steps into the trap, **for** the trap was hidden from view. **(CS , cc CS)**

A "comma cc" in the middle of two complete sentences (CS) is one way of creating a compound sentence--two sentences joined together as one –CS , cc CS). When you are instructed concerning this compound sentence creation, you may see this combination as CS, cc CS (Complete Sentence "comma coordinating conjunction" Complete Sentence).

Combine two related complete, sentences (CS) with a semicolon. ***If you have already done this,*** **you should still "code" the CC check box(es) and the CS ; CS in your paper as directed by your teacher.**

Examples:

- Some predators do not catch their prey by assailing them directly; these sneaky ones use far more subtle methods. **(CS; CS)**
- They act via traps and snares; they put their victims in challenging positions. **(CS; CS)**

A semicolon in the middle of two Complete Sentences (CS) is one way of creating a compound sentence--two sentences joined together as one. When you are instructed concerning this compound sentence creation, you may see this combination as CS ; CS (Complete Sentence semicolon Complete Sentence).

Add one set (or more according to check boxes) of **descriptive double adjectives** separated with *and* or a comma. ***If you have already done this,*** **you should still "code" the CC check box(es) and the double adjectives in your paper as directed by your teacher.**

Examples:

- Joined by *and*: The **crafty** and **ingenious** spider nearly always catches its prey.
- Joined by a comma: The **crafty, ingenious** spider nearly always catches its prey.

Remember, double adjectives need *and* or a comma between them if they can be placed in reverse order and still sound correct (i.e. *crafty and ingenious* or *ingenious and crafty*; *crafty, ingenious* or *ingenious, crafty*). Another benchmark for comma use with two adjectives is if you could place an *and* instead of a comma--and your adjectives still sound correct--use a comma..

Edit each paragraph with your teacher, and correct any **usage or spelling errors**. **Place a check mark in each CC box with a pen or pencil when this step is completed.**

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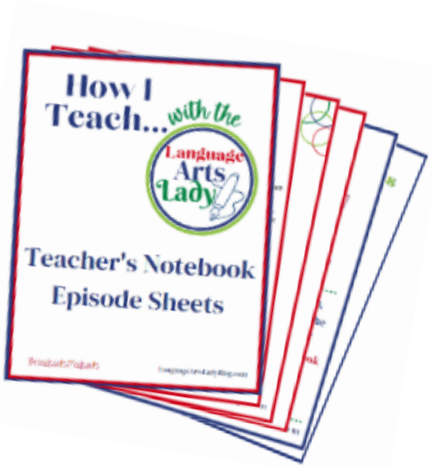

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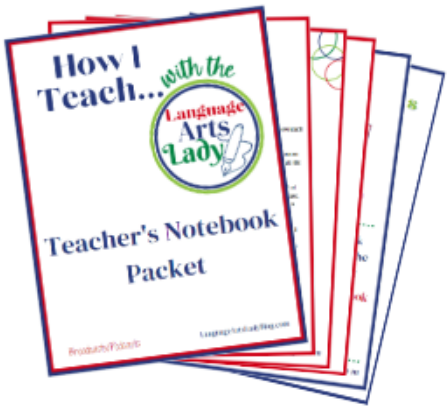

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