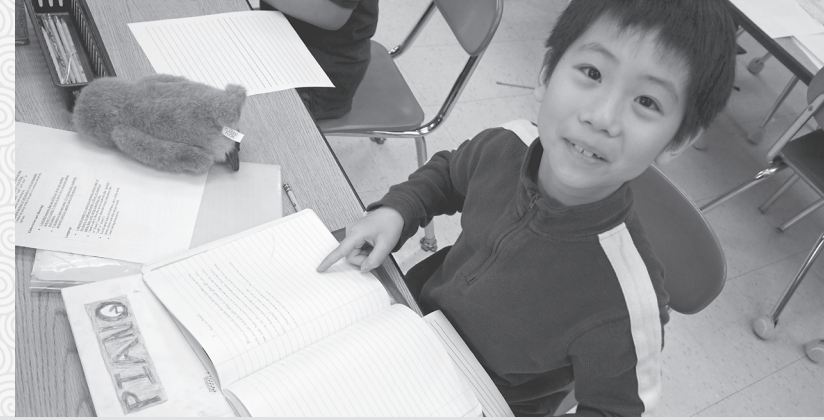


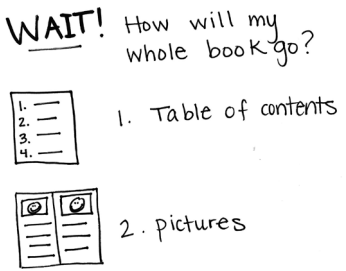


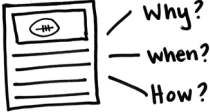
Information Writing



If ...	After acknowledging what the child is doing well, you might say ...	Leave the writer with ...
Structure and Cohesion		
<p>The writer is new to this particular genre.</p> <p>This writer may actually write in another genre. Instead of writing an information book about her topic (“All About Dogs”), she may end up writing a narrative about her topic (“One day I took my dog for a walk”).</p>	<p>You’ve got a nice start to a story here. You are telling one thing that happened—you took your dog for a walk.</p> <p>But actually, right now we are writing all-about pieces. The pieces we are writing now aren’t stories, they are all-about nonfiction books that teach people true stuff about a topic. One thing that you want to do as a writer is to teach your reader the information about the topic, rather than tell them a story about one time when something happened to you. To do this, one thing you might do is name the topic and the information that you can teach your reader. Say the list across your fingers, and then you can draw and write it across pages.</p>	<p>Teaching Book:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name a topic • Teach information <p>(You may leave the writer a couple of nonfiction books from the leveled library to help her remember what an information book is.)</p> <p>Teaching Book:</p> <p> Name a topic.</p> <p> Teach information</p>

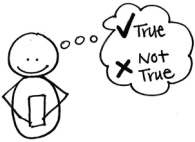
If ...	After acknowledging what the child is doing well, you might say ...	Leave the writer with ...
<p>The writer has not established a clear organization for his book.</p> <p>This writer is struggling with organization. It is likely that his book is a jumble of information about a larger topic, with no clear subheadings or internal organization. The writer may have a table of contents but the chapters actually contain a whole bunch of stuff unrelated to the chapter titles or the writer may have skipped this part of the process all together.</p>	<p>One of the most important things information writers do is organize their writing. Making chapters or headings is one way to make it easier for your readers learn about your topic. It's like creating little signs that say, "Hey, reader, I'm about to start talking about a new part of my topic!"</p> <p>It helps to name what the upcoming part of your writing will be about and then to write about just that thing.</p> <p>When information writers notice they are about to start writing about something new, they often create a new heading that tells the reader what the next part will be about.</p>	<p><u>One thing</u> About that thing About that thing About that thing <u>Another thing</u> About that next thing About that next thing Something else Something else <u>Another thing</u> Not: One thing Another thing The first thing A whole other thing</p>
<p>The writer does not have a clear beginning and/or ending to her text.</p> <p>This writer tends to start (and possibly end as well) her books with an information page that seems as if it is just randomly chosen.</p>	<p>I want to ask you to do something. Pretend the phone is ringing, and lift up the receiver, okay? "Ring ring."</p> <p>The child says: "Hello?"</p> <p>"And then he stopped seeing his patients. He just wrote them letters and said he was too old to be their Goodbye."</p> <p>I stopped. How would that be as a phone conversation? Pretty weird, right? I agree. It would be weird because there wasn't any start to it, or any finish. There was no introduction, no overview, and there was no closing.</p> <p>I am telling you this because your writing seems to go like that a lot. Your book just starts in teaching something about your topic. There isn't any place where you talk to the reader and you tell the reader what the whole book will be about and why you have written it, that sort of thing.</p> <p>Do you want to study the way other people start books and see if you want to begin starting your books in a more usual way? If you decide to change the way you start books so it is more usual, who knows, you might end up thinking about the way you end books as well.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">* * *</p> <p>One thing that writers do to end their information book is they think about the topic and why it is important to know and learn about. Sometimes writers tell their readers what they hope for in the future.</p>	<p>Starts and Endings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What am I writing about? • Why is this important? • What do I hope you learn, think, feel?


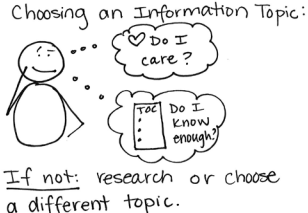
If ...	After acknowledging what the child is doing well, you might say ...	Leave the writer with ...
<p>Information is overlapping in various sections.</p> <p>This writer attempted to organize his piece, but has various sections that overlap. The writer may have repeated similar information in several parts of his piece or may have attempted to give the same information worded differently. Often he has sections and subsections that are too closely related and therefore struggles to find different information for different parts.</p>	<p>It is great that you have a system for organizing things. It is sort of like this page is a drawer and you just put things about (XYZ) in it. And this chapter is a drawer and you just put stuff about (ABC) in it.</p> <p>There are a few mess ups—places where you have some whole other things scattered in, or some things that are in two places. That always happens. You got to expect it.</p> <p>So what writers do is just what you have done. They write organized pieces. But then, when they are done writing, they ...</p> <p>Do you know?</p> <p>They reread to check. Just like you can reread to check your spelling, you can reread to check that the right things are in the right drawers, the right sections.</p>	<p>Writers reread to check that things are in the right drawers.</p>
<p>The writer has included facts as she thinks about them.</p> <p>This writer tends to write without planning. She starts writing any information that comes to mind and in any order. The result is a text with information that is not grouped together on a page or in a chapter.</p>	<p>You know what I think is happening? You have so much to say that when you pick up your pen, you just start writing right away, without thinking, "Wait. How will my book go?" I'm glad you have a lot to teach, but now that you are getting to be almost six years old, I think you are old enough to do what professional writers do—the people who write the books in our library. When they sit down to write a book, instead of just starting by writing one thing that comes to mind, they say, "Wait a minute. How will my whole book go?" and then they plan out what they will write about on one page, and on another page.</p> <p>Are you willing to try that planning while I am here to help? Yes?! Great. And after this, whenever you go to write a book, remember to do like the pros and to say, "Wait. How will my whole book go?"</p> <p>Then you can plan by making a Table of Contents, or by sketching what goes on each page.</p>	<p>WAIT! How will my whole book go?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Table of Contents 2. Pictures  <p>The sketches show a hand-drawn table of contents with four numbered lines and a page with two picture icons and two lines of text.</p>


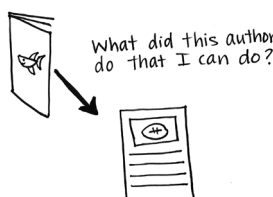
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Elaboration		
<p>The writer provides information in vague or broad ways.</p> <p>This writer's books are list-like, with broad terms and few supporting details. "Dogs play. Dogs eat. Dogs sleep."</p>	<p>When you are teaching information, it is important to teach your reader lots of information—on every page, you teach the reader some information.</p> <p>One way that writers think up details to teach is by thinking, "What would readers want to know about my topic? What questions would they ask?" Then writers answer those questions.</p>	<p>Page 1: information Page 2: information Page 3: Information</p> <p>Ask and Answer Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why? • When? • How? 
<p>Each section is short and needs to be elaborated upon.</p> <p>This writer has attempted to group her information, but each section is short. For example, she may have listed one or two facts related to a specific subsection but is stuck for what to add next.</p>	<p>Information writers need to be able to say a lot about each part of their topic, or to elaborate. There are a few things you can do to make each part of your book chock-full of information.</p> <p>One thing that helps is to write in partner sentences. This means that instead of writing one sentence about each thing, you can push yourself to write two sentences (or more) about each thing. So if I said, "George sits at a desk when he is at school" and I wanted to write with partner sentences, what else might I say about George sitting at his desk?</p> <p>You are right. It can help to fill in stuff about why, kinds of, where, how many, and so on.</p> <p>A whole other thing you can do to get yourself to say more is you can use prompts like, "It's also important to know this because ..."; "Also ..."; and "What this means is ..."</p>	<p>Writers Elaborate</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They check to make sure they have at least four or five pieces of information for each subtopic. If not, they consider cutting that section and starting a new one. 2. Writers elaborate by creating partner sentences. 3. They use prompts like "It's also important to know ..."; "Also ..."; and "What this means is ..." to say more about a particular piece of information.

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<p>The writer goes off on tangents when elaborating.</p> <p>This writer has tried to elaborate on information but tends to get into personal and tangential details (“Dogs really are great pets. I have a dog, too. I had a cat, too, but she peed on the counter so my Dad got rid of her.”). Or by repeating the same information again and again. Or by being chit-chatty (“And I love LOVE that and think it is really funny, so so funny.”).</p>	<p>You are working hard to say a lot about your topic, aren't you?</p> <p>I have to give you a tip, though. Sometimes, in your hard work to say a lot, you are doing things that don't really work that well. Let me give you an example of things that don't work when writers are writing information books, and will you see if you do those things some of the time?</p> <p>Pretend I was writing about dogs, so I wrote that there are many kinds of dogs, and the kinds of dogs are divided into groups, like spaniels, retrievers, toy dogs, and so forth. If I then said, “And I have a dog and a cat, too, and the cat's name is Barney ... ” would that go in my report?</p> <p>You are right. It wouldn't go because it isn't really teaching information and ideas about the topic—and it might not even be about the topic.</p> <p>If I wrote “And I Love Love LOVE dogs,” would that go?</p> <p>And if I said, “Some dogs are spaniels, some are retrievers,” would that go?</p> <p>You see, there are things people do when they are trying to elaborate, to say more, that just don't work that well. So what writers do is they cross them out and try other ways to elaborate. You will want to reread your writing and to have the courage to say no sometimes.</p> <p>or</p> <p>Today, I want to teach you that information writers revise by checking to make sure all their information is important and new. They cut out parts where they started to talk about their own life too much and got off topic, parts where they included information that doesn't go with what they were writing about, or parts where they repeat the same thing more than once.</p>	<p>Information writers cut parts where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They started talking about their life too much and got off topic. • They included information that doesn't fit with what the rest of the paragraph is about. • They repeated something they'd already written.

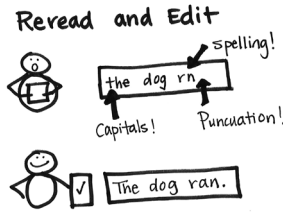
If ...	After acknowledging what the child is doing well, you might say ...	Leave the writer with ...
<p>The writer uses only one way to elaborate in her writing.</p> <p>This writer has one strategy that she overuses to elaborate. For example, she makes comparisons for <i>every</i> fact that she writes.</p>	<p>You have gotten really good at comparing, haven't you? You compared here, here, here, here. I am glad you have learned to do that, and you are right that practicing so much has made it so you will always, after this, remember that one way to elaborate on a fact when you are writing an all-about book is to make readers really think about that fact by comparing it to something else.</p> <p>But here is the thing. You are actually doing that one thing—comparing—too much. In fact, you are doing it <i>way</i> too much.</p> <p>As you become sort of like a professional writer, you are going to want to go from writing like a kid to writing like a pro. You know how little kids, when they learn to use exclamation points, start using them all the time ... Yeah, they sometimes use whole lines of exclamation points. Well, you are sort of doing the same thing with comparing. You are overusing it.</p> <p>But you are right to want to elaborate, to say more, about a fact before moving on. It's just that the best way to elaborate is to have a little list of different ways you can do that, and then to draw on that whole list of ways. Would you and your partner be willing to work together and start a short list of different ways to elaborate, and then we'll share this list with the rest of the class and get their ideas, too.</p>	<p>A mini-chart from the classroom to help her remember and think about how she can say more in her writing.</p> <p>You may decide to leave the writer with a Post-it that says, "How else can I describe or teach about my information?" You will want to tell the writer to use the chart in the classroom.</p>
<p>The writer writes with lots of good information but it is in helter-skelter order.</p> <p>This writer may have written about two, three, or even four different topics in one book. Or, he may not know how to organize his information.</p>	<p>You know what, your writing hops back and forth from one topic to another to the first again ... like it is about bears, then dogs, then bears again, then dogs, then rabbits, then bears ... it is sort of <i>crazy!</i> Usually what a writer does is she puts all the pages that are about one thing together, with a title, and all the pages about something different together, with a title.</p> <p>Maybe you want to use jaws (the staple remover) to take your book apart and see if it can get divided into three books. And another time, when you are writing a book and you think of a whole different topic to write about—get another book. Don't smush it all together in one.</p>	<p>(One topic) (one topic) (one topic)</p>

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<p>The writer invents or makes up information about the topic to elaborate.</p> <p>This writer may invent facts. Usually this information is made-up. It is not rooted in personal experience or any sort of research from books or photographs or other artifacts.</p>	<p>When writers write fiction stories, they make up stuff that isn't true. But you are writing NON-fiction now, or true books. After you write a book, you can reread it and think, "Is this all true?" And if some of it isn't true, then you take it out.</p>	<p>Reread:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • True information? <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NOT true? 
Language		
<p>The writer does not use a variety of end punctuation in her text.</p> <p>When you read this writer's texts, you see that she mostly uses periods as end punctuation. She may sometimes use a question mark and rarely an exclamation point. She has not reread her writing or considered what end punctuation is needed for each sentence she writes.</p>	<p>As you are writing, will you think more about how you are using end punctuation to talk to your readers? Reread your writing and think which end punctuation you need. You are tending to use only periods, and actually you could be using exclamation points and question marks as well.</p>	<p>Reread and Edit for Punctuation:</p> <p>. Period</p> <p>! Exclamation Point</p> <p>? Question Mark</p>
<p>The writer does not use all that he knows about letter sounds/vowel patterns to write words.</p> <p>When you read the writer's work you see that he has one or two letter sounds in his labels. You know from your letter name/sound ID assessment that he knows the other letters and sounds that he is not putting onto the page.</p> <p>When you read the writer's work you see that he has a few words misspelled with vowel work that he is working on in word study. From your spelling assessment, for example, you know the writer knows or is working on short vowel patterns. In his work, though, he does not write with short vowel patterns.</p>	<p>When you write, you want to use all that you know about writing words. Using <i>all</i> that you know will help you as well as your reader to read back what you have written and taught in your book.</p> <p>One way that you can help make your writing even more readable is to work on getting more sounds in your words. After you put a letter down for your word, keep saying the word slowly. Listen for the next sound. Slide your finger under the letter you wrote as you listen to the next sound. Keep your alphabet chart here to think about what other letters you hear.</p>	<p>You may decide to have your student use his word sorts to help him study his spelling. Remind the writer to take out his sorts to remind him about the features of phonics that he is studying and working on. These could be in an envelope that he keeps in his writing folder if you make him a set.</p>

If ...	After acknowledging what the child is doing well, you might say ...	Leave the writer with ...
<p>The writer does not use domain-specific vocabulary.</p> <p>This writer has not included specialized words that fit with his topic. For example, if he is writing about dogs, he might say, "This is a dog. You need to walk your dog. Dogs need food. Dogs have babies." The writer does not specify what kind of a dog (a Spaniel or a Maltese), the type of food that dogs eat, or what you call baby dogs—puppies.</p>	<p>When you are teaching information in your books, remember that the reader <i>also</i> wants to be an expert. Usually experts know really important words that have to do with their topics. As a nonfiction writer you want to use these words and also teach them to your readers, so that they too can be experts.</p> <p>As you are writing, one way that you can do this is to reread and think about the information and ask yourself, "Did I use all the special words that fit with this information? Is there a better word or a more specific word that fits with this topic that I can use?"</p>	<p>A Post-it with a few key words to reread and think about.</p> <p>You may write on the Post-it, "Look for places to use special words. Think about what important words fit with this topic."</p> 
The Process of Generating Ideas		
<p>The writer chooses topics about which he has little expertise.</p> <p>This writer may choose polar bears, for example, and then end up with almost nothing to say.</p>	<p>Writers need to ask:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do I care about this topic? (You are already doing this!) 2. Do I know enough to imagine a possible table of contents? <p>If not, they pick a different topic.</p> <p>If you have picked a topic that you care about but you don't know about, you either need to say no, and go to a topic you know better, or you need to do some research. Watching a video tape or reading a book on the topic REALLY help.</p>	<p>When Choosing a Topic, Information Writers Ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do I care about this topic? • Do I know enough to imagine a possible table of contents? <p>If not: give up the topic, or do some research.</p> 
The Process of Drafting		
<p>The first draft is not organized.</p> <p>This writer has written a first draft that is disorganized. It may be that there is an underlying organizational structure (e.g., the writer grouped similar information together), but she did not use new pages, section titles, or transitions to let the reader in on this structure. Alternatively, the writer may have simply "written a draft," compiling all the information she collected into one ongoing piece of writing.</p>	<p>One of the most important things information writers do is organize. It can be hard for a reader to learn a lot of new information about, say, sharks. But when a writer organizes the information into sections, then it becomes easier for the reader to take it in. The reader knows that one part will be about sharks' bodies, another will be about what they eat, and another will be about their family life. As a writer, it's important to look at your draft and make sure that you've organized it in a way that will make sense to the reader. This usually means taking all the information or facts about one part of a topic (like sharks' bodies) and putting that together. Then, taking all the information about another topic (like what sharks eat) and putting that together. Then using section headings to make it clear what each part is about.</p>	<p>Information Writers Organize Their Writing!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divide your topic into sections (you may have already done this while planning). • Put the information about one section together with a heading. • Put the information about another section together with a heading. • And so on ... <p>(Sometimes it helps to cut up your draft and tape different parts together!)</p>

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<p>The writer has some sections that have more writing and information than others.</p> <p>This writer seems to begin with a head of steam and then to peter out so that by the middle of a book, pages often hold only a single sentence.</p>	<p>You seem to always start your books by writing these lovely full pages that teach so much, but then after a bit, your pages get to be like this, and this.</p> <p>One thing that can help is to set a goal for how much you will write on a page. Make an X at the bottom of the page. See if you can write to that X. When you get there, set a new goal! This will help you get more and more ideas down on the page!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step 1: Set a goal. Make a star or an X on the page. • Step 2: Write to the goal as fast as you can. • Step 3: Set a new goal. 
The Process of Revision		
<p>The writer is “done” before revising.</p> <p>This writer is perfectly pleased with his first draft and declares, “I’m done” soon after completing it. Your revision minilessons do little to help inspire this writer to revise, and you feel you must constantly sit by his side and point out parts to revise for him to do the work.</p>	<p>I’ve noticed that you often have trouble thinking of ways to revise your piece. You write a draft and then it feels done. Sometimes when it is hard to come up with ideas for improving your writing, it helps to have a published writer help. You just look at a published book that you love and notice cool things that the author has done, then you revise to do those same things in your writing.</p>	<p>When writers feel done, they study a few mentor texts asking, “What has this writer done that I could try as well?”</p>
<p>The writer does not have a large repertoire of strategies to draw from.</p> <p>This writer lives off of each day’s minilesson. She is task-oriented and generally applies (or attempts to apply) what you teach each day. This student is living on your day-to-day teaching as if it is all she has, rather than drawing on a large repertoire of known writing techniques and strategies.</p>	<p>Whenever I teach something, I love to see kids like you go off and give it a go. It means they are pushing themselves to try new things. But I also hope that isn’t <i>all</i> kids do. We’ve talked about how writers carry invisible backpacks full of strategies. When I teach a minilesson, I give you something new to add to your backpack, but it is important to use everything else you have in there too! Today, I want to teach you one way writers remind themselves of what they already know about revision. They look at artifacts like classroom charts and our Information Writing Checklist and look back at old entries to remind themselves of the strategies they know. Then, they write an action plan.</p>	<p>Take Action!</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Look at charts, your notebook, and the Information Writing Checklist. 2. Make a list of the ways you could revise. 3. Create an action plan for yourself.
<p>The writer is unsure how to revise her writing and does not use the tools available in the classroom.</p> <p>When this writer gets to the last page in her book, she may stop and get another booklet to begin a new text. The writer does not go back and try to add to her piece. She may or may not be aware of the charts, checklists, and mentor texts that she could use to help her decide how to revise her text.</p>	<p>Information writers revise as well. They use the same types of tools as other writers to help them revise their piece.</p> <p>Sometimes, studying a mentor text can help you find and think about what you may want to add or change in your own writing. One thing that I want to teach you is that you can study books and think, “What did this author do that was powerful in his writing? Can I do the same thing with my topic?”</p>	<p>A mentor text to help remind her to study books to find ideas for her writing. On a Post-it, write, “What did this author do that I can do?”</p> 

If ...	After acknowledging what the child is doing well, you might say ...	Leave the writer with ...
<p>The writer tends to revise by elaborating, rather than narrowing and finding the focus of the text or chapter.</p> <p>When this writer revises, he may always revise to add information to his piece. Rarely will he think to take out something that doesn't go or to improve the way he has said something.</p>	<p>You are really good at adding things as you revise. Sometimes you add details, and sometimes you add things that will help make it so your writing makes sense. That's great. Congratulations.</p> <p>Now—can I teach you the next step? The next step as a reviser is to reread your writing, knowing that sometimes what the writing needs is for you to add, and sometimes the writing needs you to subtract! Like, if the book is called <i>My Hamster</i> and you get to a part that goes on and on about your turtle ... what would you need to do? You are right! Subtract. And what if you say "My hamster has a tiny tail" at the start of your book and then at the very end you say, "My hamster has a tiny tail." What if you repeated yourself by mistake? You are right! You'd subtract.</p> <p>Writers even do one more thing when they revise, they sometimes try to write the same thing with better words, or more excitement—revising not to add or subtract but to improve. If you ever do that, would you call me over?</p>	<p><u>Writers revise by:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + adding (details, answers to readers questions) – subtracting (parts that don't belong, repetition ...) * improving (making the words better, making writing interesting)
The Process of Editing		
<p>The student has edited but has missed several mistakes or would otherwise benefit from learning to partner-edit.</p> <p>This writer often thinks she has written what she intended to say, and therefore she overlooks many mistakes. She would benefit from learning to edit with a partner before publishing her writing.</p>	<p>I know that you have worked hard to use many of the editing strategies you know and have made many changes to your piece. As a result, it is clearer and more readable. Sometimes as a writer, though, you know so clearly what you <i>wanted</i> to say that you miss places where you may have said something in a confusing or incorrect way. That's why most writers have editors that look at their writing once it's done. Today, I want to teach you a few things you and your writing partner can do together. You can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read your piece aloud and ask your partner to check to make sure what you say matches what he or she sees. • Circle words you think are misspelled and try to figure them out together. • Use the class editing checklist together. 	<p>A Few Things You and Your Writing Partner Might Say to Each Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Reread your piece, and I'll make sure what you say matches what I see." • "Let's circle the words that we think are misspelled and try them again." • "Let's use our class editing checklist to proof-read your piece."

If ...	After acknowledging what the child is doing well, you might say ...	Leave the writer with ...
<p>The writer edits quickly and feels done, missing many errors.</p> <p>This writer tends to miss many errors because he does not reread his writing.</p>	<p>When you reread and edit your writing, it should take a little bit of time. You shouldn't feel like it was super fast. Editors are detectives, looking for mistakes that are hiding!</p> <p>One way to edit really carefully, like a detective, is to reread your writing <i>many</i> times, out loud, and slowly. Place your pen right under the words as you are reading. You might even reread a page a couple of times, just to be sure that no mistakes are hiding. Use the checklist in our room to help remind you of what kinds of things to be looking for as you are rereading.</p>	<p>Reread and Edit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spelling • Punctuation • Capitals  <p>The diagram shows a person reading the sentence 'the dog rn'. Three arrows point to different parts of the sentence: one to 'spelling!' (pointing to 'rn'), one to 'Capitals!' (pointing to 'the'), and one to 'Punctuation!' (pointing to the end of the sentence). Below this, a person is shown with a checkmark and the corrected sentence 'The dog ran.'</p>
<p>The writer has used an abundance of end punctuation marks throughout the text that do not make sense.</p> <p>This writer has end punctuation, such as periods, in strange and unusual places throughout the piece. For example, the writer might have end punctuation written down the page at the end of each line, regardless of whether that is the end of the sentence.</p>	<p>Writers reread and think carefully about where to place end punctuation. They think, "Does that sound right? Can I understand what I am teaching?" Sometimes reading it to a partner can help uncover the errors.</p> <p>After you find a mistake, you can change it.</p> <p>When you change it, though, check it the same way, "Does it sound right? Do I understand what I am teaching?"</p>	<p>Check End Punctuation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does that sound right? • Can I understand what I am teaching?