

You're the Editor

Purpose

Students will edit a written manuscript to ensure that correct grammar is used.

Materials

For the teacher: chalk, chalkboard

For the students: copies of Black Line Masters (BLMs) *The Latest News* and *Editing Checklist* pen or pencil, paper

Activity

A. Pre-Activity Discussion

1. Explain that people often make grammatical errors when they write. Ask students to give examples of *grammatical errors*.
2. Ask students to name their favorite magazines. Ask them if they ever notice grammatical problems in the magazine stories.
3. Explain that the magazines hire editors to make sure the stories are grammatically correct before they go into print.
4. Explain that students will be editors of a publication about UFOs. Have students imagine that a writer has just turned in a story that has grammatical problems.

B. Edit the Story

1. Distribute the BLMs *The Latest News* and *Editing Checklist*.
2. Remind students that they should focus on grammatical problems.
3. Warn students that some of the problems are not obvious errors – a sentence might make sense, but it should be rewritten to make the article read more smoothly.
4. Have students work alone or in pairs to edit the story, referring to the editing checklist for ideas.
5. Direct students to write the corrected article on a piece of blank paper as they edit.

C. Review the Edits

1. As a class, go over the changes that students made.
2. Ask students to identify what each error is (e.g., the first sentence has a problem with verb tense).
3. Remind students that there is often more than one way to fix an error. Ask students to volunteer different ways to solve some problems.

(continued)

connecting across the curriculum



Music

Have students bring in the lyrics to an inoffensive popular song. Have students rewrite the lyrics into standard English, changing the grammar as necessary.

MEETING INDIVIDUAL NEEDS



Have new English speakers examine the role of *have* and use it grammatically in several different tenses (e.g., I had gone, I have gone, I will have gone, I would have gone).

Standards Links
8.6.2, 8.6.5

Activity (continued)




D. Close the Activity

1. Ask students which errors were the hardest to find or fix.
2. Review these errors along with any that students seemed to miss.

Classroom Assessment

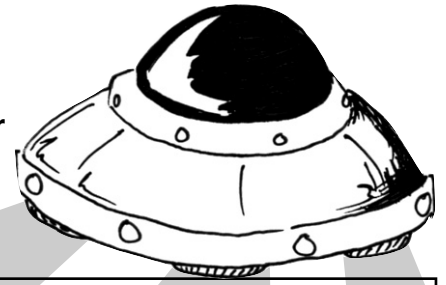
Basic Concepts and Processes

After students complete the BLM, ask them the following questions:

-  What is an example of a grammatical error?
 -  Are some grammatical errors worse than others?
 -  How did you fix the last sentence of the article?
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The Latest News

You are the editor of a newsletter about UFOs. One of your writers has just submitted this story. It has grammatical problems, but everything else is fine. Edit the story to fix the grammar and make it read more smoothly.



A leading astronomer has said that people who claim to see UFOs are mistaken.

Dr. Jacqueline Mitton of the Royal Astronomical Society in England said that each sighting has a reasonable explanation. A UFO could really be a flock of geese, a cloud, or maybe the person saw a planet twinkling.

Dr. Mitton said it all began in 1947. When an American pilot saw a flock of geese and said they flew like a saucer would if you skipped it across water. That's why we call them "flying saucers" now.

Since then, people have claimed to see saucers and other types of superstitiously alien aircraft. Dr. Mitton said these people "do experience something," but she thinks it is in their mind, it is not in reality. Dr. Mitton gave some of the scientific explanations behind UFO reports.

Meteors. Large meteors entering the atmosphere they might burn up, creating bright colored lights.

Sun dogs. Bright spots of light on clouds that are caused by illuminated ice crystals, these are called sun dogs.

Lenticular clouds. A lenticular cloud is shaped like a lens – and like a flying saucer.

Planets. For example, Venus can be bright and it can twinkle like it is coming and going.

However, Dr. Mitton said, this does not eliminate the possibility of life on other worlds and aliens might visit us one day, but the chances are small because other life is probably very scattered and unlikely to find Earth due to the great distances involved, she said.

The Latest News

Teacher Directions

Have the students correct the grammar only. Remind students that while some punctuation might need to be changed to correct the grammar, everything else in the story is all right.

As you go over the corrections in class, ask the students to identify the problem with each sentence. For example, the last sentence of the first paragraph isn't parallel – it has two nouns and a verb phrase. Other errors include comma splices, sentence fragments, run-on sentences, and problems with verb tense.

Answer Key

Answers will vary. Some suggestions for editing the text are underlined below.

A leading astronomer has said that people who claim to have seen UFOs are mistaken. Dr. Jacqueline Mitton of the Royal Astronomical Society in England said that each sighting has a reasonable explanation. A UFO could really be a flock of geese, a cloud, or a twinkling planet.

Dr. Mitton said the UFO sighting craze began in 1947, when an American pilot saw a flock of geese and said they flew like a saucer would if you skipped it across water. That is why we call UFOs “flying saucers” now. Since then, people have claimed to see saucers and other types of alien aircraft. Dr. Mitton said these people “do experience something,” but she thinks it is in their mind, not in reality. (new paragraph division)

Dr. Mitton gave some of the scientific explanations behind UFO reports including: large meteors that enter the atmosphere and burn up, creating bright colored lights; sun dogs, bright spots of light that are caused by illuminated ice crystals on clouds; lenticular clouds, which are shaped like a lens – and like a flying saucer; and planets – like Venus which shines and twinkles, as if it is coming and going.

However, Dr. Mitton said, there could be life on other worlds. She said that aliens might visit us one day, but the chances are small because other life is probably very scattered and unlikely to find Earth due to the great distances involved.

Editing Checklist

_____ **Verb agreement is correct within the context of the sentence**

Example of errors: I seen a truck like that headed this way!
We was on our way to the store.

_____ **Vocabulary is corrected**

Example of error: My younger sister obstacly refused my request.

_____ **Run-on sentences are corrected**

Example of error: My favorite candy is lime wombats I like them
because they explode in your hand.

_____ **Lists have parallel structure**

Make sure that all of the items in a list follow the same pattern
(nouns go with nouns, verbs with verbs, etc.)

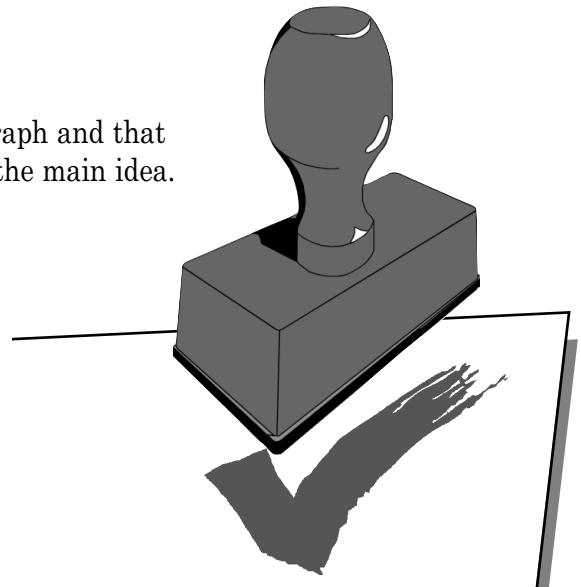
_____ **Pronouns refer to specific words in the sentence, so that the meaning is clear**

Example of error: They said that it is definitely true.

_____ **Paragraphs are divided correctly**

Make sure there is one main idea per paragraph and that
the information in that paragraph supports the main idea.

_____ **Other corrections to make**



Editing Checklist

Teacher Directions

Distribute a copy of BLM *Editing Checklist* to students along with BLM *The Latest News*. Allow students to refer to the editing checklist for ideas when correcting the passage on the BLM *The Latest News*.

Tell students that the passage contains more errors than those that are specified on the checklist. Allow students to write the other types of corrections they have made in the “other corrections” section of the checklist.

Answer Key

Not applicable.