

100% Essential Editing and Proofreading Skills for Selective Writing

A comprehensive guide to mastering editing and proofreading skills for selective and academic writing, with practice opportunities for every skill

Aligned with the Australian Curriculum

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Introduction

Writing is a multi-layered skill, requiring a blend of creativity and technical proficiency. While drafting reveals our ideas, editing and proofreading are what transform those ideas into clear, compelling, and correct communication. This ebook will provide you with the knowledge and practice you need to sharpen your editing and proofreading skills—crucial competencies for achieving excellence in selective and academic writing.

Aligned with the Australian Curriculum for Years 5–9, this resource offers easy-to-understand guidance, key strategies, and ample practice. Each section contains at least 10 targeted examples or exercises, enabling you to hone your skills progressively.

Editing vs. Proofreading

It's important to understand the distinct roles of editing and proofreading:

- **Editing** focuses on improving the overall quality of your writing—ideas, organisation, word choice, sentence structure, and flow.
- **Proofreading** addresses surface-level errors—spelling, punctuation, grammar, and formatting.

Practice: Identifying Editing or Proofreading Tasks

For each statement below, decide whether it is an editing task or a proofreading task.

1. Correcting the spelling of “neccessary” to “necessary”
2. Replacing repetitive words to expand vocabulary
3. Improving transitions between paragraphs
4. Reordering sentences for better flow
5. Ensuring the subject and verb agree in a sentence
6. Finding and removing punctuation mistakes
7. Strengthening thesis statement clarity
8. Changing “there” to “their” after finding it misused
9. Breaking long sentences into shorter, clearer ones
10. Checking for consistent formatting of titles and headings

Answers: 1. Proofreading, 2. Editing, 3. Editing, 4. Editing, 5. Editing, 6. Proofreading, 7. Editing, 8. Proofreading, 9. Editing, 10. Proofreading

Grammar Mastery

Solid grammar is the backbone of effective writing. Below are ten areas for you to practise and improve your grammar skills, each with an example to analyse:

Practice: Correct the Grammar in Each Sentence

1. The books on the shelf was dusty.
2. She don't like carrots.
3. If I was taller, I would play basketball.
4. None of the students have finished their work.
5. The team are winning every match.
6. Every child need encouragement.
7. I didn't saw the movie yesterday.
8. Between you and I, this is our secret.
9. Neither of the answers are correct.
10. My family are going on holiday.

Answers: 1. books ... were, 2. doesn't, 3. If I were taller, 4. ... students has finished, 5. team is winning, 6. child needs, 7. didn't see, 8. Between you and me, 9. answers is correct, 10. family is going

99 Punctuation Excellence

Punctuation brings clarity and rhythm to your writing. Practise correcting these sentences by adding or adjusting punctuation as needed:

Practice: Insert the Correct Punctuation

1. Can you please pass the salt
2. After the lesson we packed our bags and left
3. Mum said Im going to the shops
4. The dog barked loudly but the baby slept
5. My favourite subjects are English maths and history
6. Its raining outside
7. Yes I would love to come
8. The sign said No entry beyond this point
9. Jonahs bike was stolen from the school
10. I have read Harry Potter the Hobbit and Matilda

Answers:

Can you please pass the salt?
After the lesson, we packed our bags and left.
Mum said, "I'm going to the shops."
The dog barked loudly, but the baby slept.
My favourite subjects are English, maths, and history.
It's raining outside.
Yes, I would love to come.
The sign said, "No entry beyond this point."
Jonah's bike was stolen from the school.
I have read Harry Potter, The Hobbit, and Matilda.

≡ Sentence Structure & Variety

Using a mix of sentence types keeps your writing engaging. Practise rewriting these sentences for improved structure and variety:

Practice: Rewrite for Clarity and Variety

1. He went to the park. He played football. He ate a sandwich.
2. The book was interesting. The book was long.
3. It was raining. We decided to go hiking.
4. The dog ran quickly. The cat slept peacefully.

5. Emily studied. She completed her homework. She revised her notes.
6. The sun rose. The birds sang. The town awoke.
7. Jack was tired. Jack went to bed.
8. I like reading books. I like drawing. I like swimming.
9. The shop was closed. We left.
10. He forgot his bag. He was late for school.

Example Answers:

He went to the park, played football, and ate a sandwich.

The book was long but interesting.

Although it was raining, we decided to go hiking.

The dog ran quickly while the cat slept peacefully.

After Emily studied, she completed her homework and revised her notes.

The sun rose, birds sang, and the town awoke.

Jack was tired, so he went to bed.

I like reading books, drawing, and swimming.

Because the shop was closed, we left.

He was late for school because he forgot his bag.

≡ Paragraph Coherence & Flow

Strong paragraphs are logically organised and clearly linked. Practise using connectives and transitions:

Practice: Choose the Best Connective or Transition

Select an appropriate linking word (e.g., however, therefore, moreover, meanwhile) to fill each blank:

1. The train was delayed. _____, we missed our meeting.
2. She loves playing tennis. _____, she enjoys swimming.
3. This solution works well. _____, it is too expensive.
4. Tom finished his homework. _____, Sally started hers.
5. The roads were icy. _____, we drove slowly.
6. The new library is popular. _____, it has free internet access.
7. He studied hard. _____, he still found the test difficult.
8. The cat slept all day. _____, the dog barked outside.
9. We were hungry. _____, we ordered pizza.
10. The storm passed. _____, we went outside to play.

Answers (examples):

Therefore

Additionally / moreover

However

Meanwhile

Therefore / as a result

Because / as / since

However / nevertheless

Meanwhile

So / therefore
Then / afterwards

Academic Vocabulary

Using precise and formal vocabulary strengthens your writing. Practise substituting simple words with more sophisticated options:

Practice: Replace the Underlined Word with a More Formal Equivalent

1. It is good to exercise daily.
2. The movie was really interesting.
3. This solution is easy to understand.
4. We got the results quickly.
5. The city is big and busy.
6. The task was hard for many students.
7. She says she will help.
8. We began the experiment on Monday.
9. The teacher helped us solve the problem.
10. The results were bad.

Example Answers:

beneficial
extremely / very / genuinely
straightforward / clear
received / obtained
large / expansive / bustling
difficult / challenging
states / claims / asserts
commenced / initiated
assisted / supported
poor / unsatisfactory

Self-Editing Techniques

Self-editing requires a methodical approach. Practise applying these editing strategies to the sentences below:

Practice: Edit to Improve

For each sentence, suggest at least one improvement.

1. This essay is about volcanoes they are very dangerous.
2. I think that this story is fun and nice.
3. There is lots of things to learn in this topic.
4. People shouldn't cut trees because it's bad.

5. Doing exercise is good health.
6. I am writing to tell you about my day my day was fun.
7. We should help animals they need us.
8. Her explanation was gooder than his.
9. Some birds are beautiful their songs are pleasant.
10. Studying hard is important you can get better marks.

Example Answers:

This essay is about volcanoes, which are very dangerous.

This story is enjoyable and engaging.

There are many things to learn in this topic.

Trees should not be cut down because it harms the environment.

Exercising regularly benefits your health.

I am writing to tell you about my day, which was enjoyable.

We should help animals because they need our protection.

Her explanation was better than his.

Some birds are beautiful, and their songs are pleasant.

Studying hard is important as it can lead to better marks.

Proofreading Checklists

Proofreading checklists help you systematically identify errors before submitting work. Practise using the checklist for these samples.

Practice: Use the Proofreading Checklist

- Check for spelling errors
- Check punctuation
- Ensure correct grammar
- Check capitalisation
- Ensure sentence completeness
- Review word choice
- Ensure consistency
- Check formatting
- Review for readability
- Verify that all requirements are met

1. the Explorer's found a cave it was Terifying
2. In the summer We went swimming at the lake
3. She enjoy's painting reading and cooking
4. Mount Everest are the tallest mountain in the world
5. James forgot bring his notebook to class
6. thier teacher congratulated them on effort.
7. Tom run quickly but Mary walked slow
8. i am happy to meet you.
9. They bought apple's, oranges and bananas

10. The computer does not function proper.

Example Corrections:

The explorers found a cave. It was terrifying.
In the summer, we went swimming at the lake.
She enjoys painting, reading, and cooking.
Mount Everest is the tallest mountain in the world.
James forgot to bring his notebook to class.
Their teacher congratulated them on their effort.
Tom ran quickly, but Mary walked slowly.
I am happy to meet you.
They bought apples, oranges, and bananas.
The computer does not function properly.

Common Errors in Selective Writing

Avoid typical pitfalls to impress markers. Practise identifying the error in each of the following sentences:

Practice: Spot the Error

1. Each of the boys have a textbook.
2. I should of finished my homework last night.
3. The company are opening a new office.
4. Both Sarah or Ben will come to the party.
5. Their going to Sydney this weekend.
6. The reason is because it rained.
7. Neither the teacher nor the students was present.
8. She has less friends than him.
9. The two girls, they are sisters.
10. He explained me the problem.

Answers:

have → has
should of → should have
are → is
or → and
Their → They're
“the reason is because” → “the reason is that”
was → were
less → fewer
Remove “the two girls,” or “they are”
explained me → explained the problem to me

Comprehensive Practice Exercises

Test all your skills with these editing and proofreading challenges. Rewrite each sentence or passage to correct all errors and improve clarity, style, and cohesion.

Practice: Edit and Proofread

1. when we arrived at the museum it was close we waited for long time
2. Im going on a vaction with my freinds next weak.
3. She dont like the food but he still eats it.
4. The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog it is a test sentence.
5. reading books, is a good habbit
6. Though he studied hard, but he did not passed the test.
7. the car needs to be fix before we can use it
8. He given her the book.
9. The children plays at the park everyday after school.
10. This is the more funnest activity I've ever did.

Example Answers:

When we arrived at the museum, it was closed. We waited for a long time.

I'm going on a vacation with my friends next week.

She doesn't like the food, but she still eats it.

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. It is a test sentence.

Reading books is a good habit.

Though he studied hard, he did not pass the test.

The car needs to be fixed before we can use it.

He gave her the book.

The children play at the park every day after school.

This is the most fun activity I have ever done.

✔ Conclusion

By systematically applying editing and proofreading techniques, you can confidently elevate the standard of your writing. Return to the exercises in this ebook regularly to build a strong foundation in these vital skills. Clear, accurate, and expressive writing is crucial for success—not just in selective exams, but in all areas of study and life.