Level A

SADLIER

Writing Workshop

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

CONTENTS

The Writing Process 8

Chapter 1: Writers at Work 9

Lesson 1: Prewriting. 9

Lesson 2: Drafting 13

Lesson 3: Revising. 15

Lesson 4: Editing and Proofreading 18

Lesson 5: Publishing and Presenting. 21

Chapter 2: Focusing on Word Choice. 23

Lesson 1: Be Exact. 23

Lesson 2: Choose the Correct Word. 26

Lesson 3: Decide on the Adjective or Adverb. 29

Lesson 4: Compare Correctly 31

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

Chapter 3: Writing Correct Sentences. 34

Lesson 1: Fix Fragments 34

Lesson 2: Fix Run-on Sentences. 38

Lesson 3: Make Subjects and Verbs Agree. 41

Lesson 4: Use the Right Verb Form. 44

Chapter 4: Shaping Sentences 47

Lesson 1: Avoid Choppiness. 47

Lesson 2: Avoid Wordiness 50

Lesson 3: Use Sentence Variety 52

Chapter 5: Building a Paragraph 56

Lesson 1: Write a Topic Sentence 56

Lesson 2: Unify Your Paragraph 59

Lesson 3: Give Enough Support. 62

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

CONTENTS *continued*

Chapter 6: Organizing Ideas in a Paragraph 64

Lesson 1: Use Patterns of Organization 64

Lesson 2: Use Transitions 66

Lesson 3: Write a Description 68

Chapter 7: Writing a How-to Essay. 71

Lesson 1: Develop Ideas 71

Lesson 2: Write an Introduction 74

Lesson 3: Explain the Process. 76

Lesson 4: Write a Conclusion. 78

Writing Model 79

Chapter 8: Writing an Autobiographical Incident 81

Lesson 1: Analyze a Model 81

Lesson 2: Choose an Experience to Convey 84

Lesson 3: Think About the Reader 86

Writing Model 88

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

Chapter 9: Writing a Persuasive Essay 90

Lesson 1: Open with a Thesis Statement 90

Lesson 2: Develop Strong Support 92

Lesson 3: Persuade Your Audience 95

Writing Model 98

Chapter 10: Strategies for School Success . . .100

Lesson 1: Take Notes. 100

Lesson 2: Summarize 105

Lesson 3: Prepare a Research Paper 108

Lesson 4: Answer Essay Questions 112

Writing Model 115

Writer's Handbook 116

Index 126

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

THE WRITING PROCESS

PREWRITING

Finding an Idea

- Freewrite or brainstorm ideas for a topic.
- Choose and narrow a topic.
- Gather details in a list or a graphic organizer.

Making a Plan

- Define your purpose.
- Know your audience.
- Put your details in order.

DRAFTING

- Concentrate on getting your ideas down—*not* on fixing errors!
- Keep your reader in mind as you write.
- Write a complete beginning, middle, and end.

REVISING

- Review your draft, looking for ways to improve it.
- As you review your draft, focus on five of the six traits of good writing (ideas and content, organization, sentence fluency, word choice, and voice).
- Ask a peer reviewer to give feedback on your draft.

EDITING AND PROOFREADING

- Look for mistakes in the sixth trait of good writing, conventions (grammar, usage, mechanics, and spelling).
- Proofread your draft one last time.

PUBLISHING AND PRESENTING

- Write a final version of your paper.
- Share your writing with your audience.

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

Chapter 1

Writers at Work

This chapter will help you make your writing clear, correct, and interesting. Effective writing will help you at school, at work, and at home. When you write for others, use the five steps of the writing process: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing and proofreading, and publishing and presenting.

LESSON 1 Prewriting

In the first step of the process, prewriting, you think about what you are writing, why you are writing, and for whom you are writing. Then you choose a topic and gather details.

During prewriting, think about. . .

- ✔ Your **task,** or what you are creating. Is it a story, a speech, a paragraph, an essay, a report, an e-mail, a poem, or something else? How long is it? Are you writing for school, work, or fun?
- ✔ Your **purpose,** or what you want your writing to do. Do you want to describe a place, entertain someone with a story, explain a process or event, persuade someone to do something, or convey an experience?
- ✔ Your **audience,** or the people who will read your writing. What does your audience already know about your topic? How might they feel about it? Are there certain terms or details that you will need to explain?

When you are searching for a **topic** for your paper, see where your interests lead you. Pick a topic that you truly want to write about. If you are having trouble thinking of the right topic, try using the techniques on the next page.

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

Ways of Coming Up with Possible Topics

- freewriting
- keeping a writer's notebook
- making a cluster diagram or other graphic organizer
- making a list
- talking with friends or classmates

When you **freewrite,** write anything that comes into your head for a short period of time (about three minutes). Don't worry about grammar or spelling.

Freewriting Model

Notice how the writer doesn't have to use correct grammar or show connections between thoughts.

What can I write about?—school, school, school, let's see—I like vacations but if there were no school I'd be bored—friends, best friends—schoolwork, homework, hate studying for tests—teachers—teachers who are funny—funny classmates—classmates who are hard to get along with—fitting in—wanting respect, hating being laughed at—teachers always talking about peer pressure—Do I experience peer pressure?

Ideas for topics can come any time from anywhere, such as news items, conversations, and observations. Keep a writer's notebook to collect ideas for future reference.

Sample Writer's Notebook Page

4/12/09
I read an article in the newspaper about foreign elections. How are foreign elections different from U.S. elections?

4/20/09
I had a dream about being deep underwater but still able to breathe. Good idea for a story.

5/02/09
I can't go to an amusement park because I have to babysit for my brother. I'd like to write a speech about how unfair it is.

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

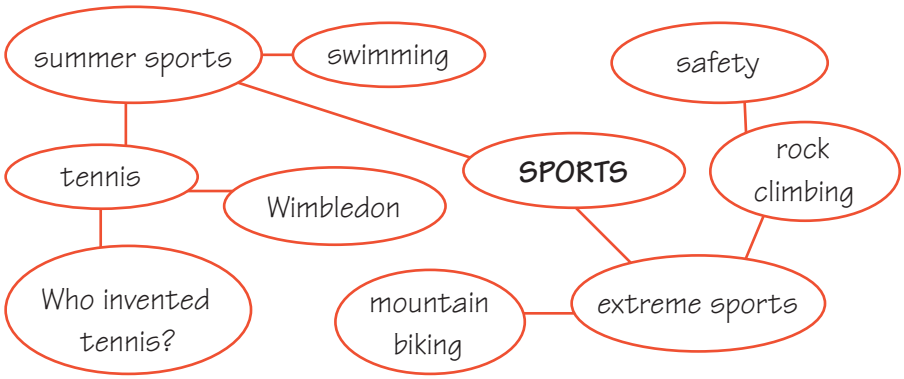
Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

When you **cluster,** you use a graphic organizer to record whatever thoughts and ideas come to mind. Cluster diagrams can help you see connections among your ideas as you explore topics. If you don't want to make a graphic organizer, you can simply list your ideas.

Tip

Narrow your topic to make it more specific and manageable. Notice how the writer starts with a broad topic and increasingly narrows it.

A Cluster on the Subject of "Sports"



After you narrow your topic, gather details by. . .

- clustering or listing what you already know about your topic
- clustering or listing what you think people would want to know about your topic
- finding more information on your topic by going to the library to research, checking an encyclopedia, accessing the Internet, or talking with an expert

Before you go further in the writing process, ask yourself the following questions. If you have trouble answering any of them, revise your topic or choose a new one.

✔ Have I decided exactly what my topic is? Can I sum it up in one sentence?
✔ Do I know what my purpose is?
✔ Do I know who my audience is?
✔ Do I know what form my writing will take—essay, poem, presentation, something else?
✔ Is the topic appropriate for the length of the assignment I am writing?
✔ Am I truly interested in this topic?

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

Activity A

With a partner, use one of the methods given in this lesson to come up with possible topics for each situation given below. Show your work on a separate sheet of paper. Remember to narrow your topic as you prewrite.

1. **Situation:** Your English teacher wants you to write an essay that describes your favorite vacation.

2. **Situation:** Your science teacher wants you to write a research report about an animal.

3. **Situation:** Your social studies teacher wants you to make a brochure that persuades people to visit a historic site.

Activity B

Imagine you are going to write a paragraph informing your teacher of your views on a particular topic. Choose one of the broad subjects listed below. Decide on a narrower topic that interests you, write it below, and explain why you chose it.

- games
- computers/technology
- the environment
- health

Narrow topic: _____

_____

Why I chose it: _____

_____

_____

_____

Activity C

Now gather details about the topic you chose in Activity B. Use the methods described in this lesson to gather the information you would use in writing your paragraph.

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

LESSON 2 Drafting

Your goal in writing a first draft is to take your ideas from the prewriting stage and write them down in a way that is organized enough to make sense to readers.

Starting to put your thoughts down on paper can seem a bit scary. That's why it's helpful to remember that a first draft is only an attempt to get your ideas down.

Before you write your first draft, ask yourself. . .

- ✔ Do I know enough about my topic to begin writing? (If not, you should research more before you begin.)
- ✔ What is the focus of my writing? What am I talking about, and what do I want to do?
- ✔ Who do I think will read my writing?
- ✔ What background information might my reader need?
- ✔ How can I best present the information I have?

Try to present your details in a way that you think will be effective, but remember that you can always change your organization later. Your work will be very different by the time it is ready to be turned in. Be sure, though, that you write a complete essay when you draft.

Tip

You will make changes to your draft in the next stage of writing, so write on every other line and leave wide margins. This will let you make corrections.

A complete essay includes

- an **introduction,** which gets your readers' attention and tells them what your essay will be about and your opinion on that topic (your thesis)
- a **body** made up of middle paragraphs that support your thesis
- a **conclusion** that restates the major ideas from your essay and leaves the reader with something to think about

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

Drafting DOs and DON'Ts

- ✔ DO consider going back to the prewriting stage if you find that your topic is too broad, too narrow, not a good fit for the task, or not something you want to spend time writing about.
- ✔ DO write down every thought you have, even if you might not end up using all of them.
- ✔ DO jump from idea to idea. Only you have to be able to follow your train of thought. You can improve organization when you revise.
- ✔ DON'T worry about correct spelling, grammar, and usage. In the next stages—revising and editing—you will fix any errors you might have made.
- ✔ DON'T feel that you have to write the beginning first. Begin by writing whatever is easiest and clearest for you, no matter if it's the middle or even the end.
- ✔ DON'T try to imitate anyone when you write. Use a tone appropriate to your task and audience, but write in your own voice.

Activity A **Imagine that you want to persuade your family to get a dog. Below are some notes. Use them to write a persuasive paragraph. Arrange the ideas in a sensible order. Then, on a separate sheet of paper, write a paragraph that states your case. When you have finished, trade papers with a peer and see if he or she finds your paragraph convincing.**

- I'm old enough now to be responsible for a pet.
- Dogs can guard the house and protect kids.
- Dogs are very friendly and affectionate.
- In shelters, many abandoned dogs are kept in small cages.
- We'd be saving a dog's life if we adopted one.
- I would learn about being grown up and having to take care of someone else.

Activity B **On a separate sheet of paper, write a first draft of a paragraph based on the topic and details you gathered in Activities B and C of Lesson 1.**

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

LESSON 3 Revising

Revising is the most important step in the writing process. When you revise, you evaluate, or judge, your draft based on five of the six traits of good writing. You make changes to improve your draft.

Tip

*The sixth writing trait, **conventions,** includes grammar, usage, mechanics, punctuation, and spelling. You'll check for these things during the next stage of the writing process (editing and proofreading). Be prepared to make major changes. The revising stage is the only chance you'll have to significantly improve your paper.*

During revision, you should focus on the **five traits of good writing.**

Trait	General Questions to Ask as You Revise
Ideas and Content	• Does my writing focus on the topic? • What information does my reader need? • Could I give more specific details? • Are all of my points related to my topic?
Organization	• Can I use transition words to make clear connections between my ideas? • Do I present my ideas in a logical order? • Does my writing have a beginning, middle, and end?
Voice	• Have I tried to sound like anyone else? • How can I make my writing sound more like me?
Word Choice	• Can I add precise words that reduce confusion? • Can I use words that better express my meaning?
Sentence Fluency	• How can I make my writing easier to read? • How can I make my writing more interesting to read?

The kinds of changes you make while revising depend on your purpose, your audience, and the form of your writing.

Specific Questions for Narrative Writing

- How natural does the dialogue sound?
- How clearly have I connected each piece of action to the next?
- How detailed are my descriptions of characters and setting?

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

Specific Questions for Persuasive Writing

- How clearly have I stated my opinion on the topic?
- How convincing are the reasons I give to take the action I recommend?
- What might someone who disagrees with my opinion say? How can I address or disprove that person's arguments?

Specific Questions for Expository Writing

- How interesting is my introduction?
- How many main ideas do I have in each paragraph?
- How many details support each main idea?
- Could I do more research to explain something better?
- Can I write a stronger conclusion?

Below is an example of a revised paragraph that explains how to get a horse ready to ride.

Leave room between lines to make additions, notes, and changes.

Delete unrelated details.

Add details.

¶You have to follow several steps when getting a horse ready to ride.
The first thing you do is comb out the horse's coat with a round brush. ~~A horse's coat gets matted with dirt.~~ Then you brush the coat again with a soft brush to make it shine. ~~It's a good idea to wash off the horse after you ride if it's very hot outside.~~ After brushing, you can put on the blanket ~~on its back.~~ tighten so the saddle stays in place. Finally, Then put the saddle on and the girth ~~which is tightened.~~ You put on the bridle. Get in the saddle, and away you go!

Peer reviewing is a tool you can use during the revising step. You can exchange your papers.

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

Activity A

The following paragraph was written for a school newspaper. Revise it to add more specific information and to correct any other problems. You may use the information from the notes below, or you can create more details to include. Start your revision on this page. Copy your revised paragraph onto a clean sheet of paper.

Recycling is a pretty good idea for a lot of reasons. What can we do at school? There are home recycling programs. Students can collect things. We can put recycling bins in places around school. What should we collect? Someone should be in charge of the project, it could be a teacher or a student. Or maybe a committee.

Notes

- Reasons for recycling—saves resources, keeps Earth cleaner
- Plan of action: First, decide what to recycle. Glass, aluminum, paper
- Recycling bins in cafeteria, hallway next to the principal's office, outside the school
- Appoint student and teacher in charge of recycling project, or a committee of volunteers to work with teacher
- What those in charge will do: request weekly pickup from recycling truck, figure out who will empty recycling bins and where and how to store recycled material

Activity B

Compare your revised paragraph to those of other students. Discuss the similarities and the differences in the revisions each of you made. What revisions did you make? Why did you make those revisions?

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

LESSON 4 Editing and Proofreading

When you edit and proofread, you check for errors in the sixth writing trait, conventions. First edit your paper for usage, making changes to confirm that all your sentences are correct and clear. Then proofread your work to correct any mistakes in spelling, punctuation, mechanics, and grammar.

Tip

The editing and proofreading stage of the writing process makes your writing error free, polished, and readable. Error-free writing always makes a good impression.

Tips for Editing

- Read your work aloud. If any of your sentences read awkwardly, edit to make them smoother.
- Have a friend or family member read your work. Ask him or her to tell you if any of your sentences seem incorrect or unclear.
- Check each pronoun in a sentence (*he*, *she*, *it*, *they*) to be sure it clearly refers to the specific noun you want it to.
- Make sure all your sentences are complete. Each should have at least one noun and one verb and should express a complete thought.

Proofreading Symbols

mississippi river	Capitalize.
the River	Make lowercase.
went to bed. The next day,	Start a new paragraph.
has been dificult	Add.
inside of the cabin	Delete.
Dr Payne is here	Add a period.
Sincerely yours	Add a comma.
The bell rang the class left.	Add a semicolon.
here come wierd	Switch order.
icecream	Add a space.
a base ball cap	Close up space.

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

The inside back cover of this book shows even more proofreading marks. For capitalization and punctuation rules, see the Writer's Handbook at the back of this book.

Tips for Proofreading

- Edit your work line by line or sentence by sentence. This practice will help you spot errors you might have missed previously.
- Take some time between editing and proofreading. If you set your work aside for a day, you will be able to see mistakes more easily.
- Have a classmate read your work and mark any mistakes. A fresh set of eyes will catch mistakes you might have missed.

Tech Tip

Your teacher will probably ask you to double-space your work. This will give you enough room to mark corrections in your work. You can change spacing under your "Format" menu.

Example of a Proofread Paragraph

At the Movies

You ~~has~~ have to judge just the right time to get to the movies. If you get there too early, ~~theirs~~ there's too much time to wait for the show to start if you get there ~~to~~ too late, ~~then~~ the line is too long at the popcorn and candy concession, ~~and~~ so you have to hold all your friend's places ~~for them~~ in line while they race off to play the video games ~~and~~ you don't get to play any at all. ~~And~~ even if ~~your~~ you are the championship player and play really ~~good,~~ well, you don't even ~~got~~ get a chance to try. So my advice is to get there just about fifteen minutes before the show starts ~~and~~ a good idea is to take along a little brother or sister to hold you place in line for popcorn!

After you have finished editing and proofreading, make a clean final copy, with no corrections remaining.

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

Proofreading Checklist

- ✔ Check for misspelled words, including words your computer's spell-checker might have missed.
- ✔ Make sure all your paragraphs are indented.
- ✔ Check that each of your sentences starts with a capital letter.
- ✔ Make sure each sentence ends in an end punctuation mark (a period, a question mark, or an exclamation point).

Activity A

Now it's your turn. Below is the retelling of an ancient Roman myth about the origin of spiders. The paragraph is filled with mistakes in grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. Use the proofreading symbols to mark corrections.

Arachne Spins Her Web

There once lived a beautiful girl named Arachne who could weave better than anyone else in her village. Unfortunately, she also loved to boaste about the beauty of her work One day the goddess Athena, dressed as an old woman, came to see them and Athena challenged arachne to a weaving contest. Both women begans to weave at once. Though Athena judged the girls cloth to be even more beautifull than his, she knew Arachne needed to be taught a lessen. the goddess sentenced Arachne to be turned into a spider. Ever after, because of Arachne's pride, all spiders has had to live inside its web.

Activity B

Now make a clean copy of your proofread, edited version of the paragraph. Exchange paragraphs with a partner and discuss the changes you made while editing and proofreading.

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

LESSON 5 Publishing and Presenting

After you have finished your writing, you publish and present it, which means sharing it with an audience. You should also keep a writer's portfolio for yourself.

Often, you will publish your assigned work by turning it in to your teacher. You should know, however, that you can publish or present your writing in many places besides class. Try searching online for contests for writers of your age or for magazines, e-zines, or blogs that accept young people's writing.

Publishing Ideas for Student Writers

- Make a class presentation of your paper.
- Submit an editorial to the school newspaper.
- Submit a story or poem to the class literary magazine.
- Post an interview on a website.
- Enter essay contests sponsored by newspapers and business organizations.
- Send your work to a young writer's conference.
- Publish your own book; have it bound and give it to family and friends.
- Make your own blog.
- Compile and send out a family newsletter.
- Post your work on a library bulletin board.
- Assemble a cast to perform a story or play you wrote.

Keep a **writer's portfolio** with samples of your work. Along with finished, polished pieces, you should include early and incomplete works to show the progress you have made as a writer.

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.

Many times, you will have to present your work to a group of people, such as your class. Use the tips below to prepare you for presentations.

Presenting Tips

- ✔ Practice reading your work out loud several times before presenting it.
- ✔ Have all visual aids, such as photographs, charts, or illustrations, ready before presenting.
- ✔ Speak clearly so that your audience can understand everything you say.
- ✔ Speak slowly so that your audience can follow your thoughts.
- ✔ Do not spend your entire presentation looking at note cards. Look up at your audience as often as you can.
- ✔ Use effective body language. Stand up straight, and make eye contact with audience members.

Activity A **Put together a portfolio of your writing. It can be from this class, from other classes such as social studies and science, or from outside of school. Then answer the questions below, writing your responses on a separate sheet of paper.**

1. Which is your favorite piece? Why?
2. Which piece got the most positive reaction from its audience? Why?
3. Which piece would benefit from revision? How would you revise it?

Activity B **Look at your writing portfolio. For each piece you included, brainstorm a way you could publish it. You can use the list of publishing ideas, search online, consult a resource in a library, or come up with your own ideas.**

Activity C **Choose your favorite idea for publishing a piece from your portfolio and carry it out. It can take some courage to share your work, but one of the most important parts of writing is having an audience read what you write.**

Copyright © 2009 by William H. Sadlier, Inc. All rights reserved.