

Correcting Mistakes in Punctuation, Spelling, and Grammar

Goal: The learner will apply strategies and skills to proofread and edit sentences.

Objectives: 4th and 5th Grades: 5.05 Spell most commonly used words accurately using a multi-strategy approach to the learning of new spellings. 5.06 Proofread for accuracy of spelling using appropriate strategies to confirm spelling and to correct errors. 5.07 Edit final product for grammar, language conventions, and format.

Advance Tutor Preparation:

Write three sentences about your tutee, yourself, or something your tutee is interested in, but include mistakes in spelling, capitalization, grammar, and punctuation. Write each on a separate piece of paper, using the provided worksheet, and print four but leave one blank.

Guided Practice:

Explain to the student that they will be learning how to find and correct as many mistakes as possible, so that they can do so with their own writing in class and on tests. In editing, it is easiest to look for one thing at a time, and you will not overlook as many mistakes. Tell your student that s/he is a “PSG Detective,” and will be searching for clues to make sentences strong in Punctuation, Spelling and Grammar. You will look at sentences and try to find mistakes—looking through once for punctuation, then once again for spelling (including capitalization), then once again for grammar. Let the student read the first of your sentences aloud, and lead him/her through the process by asking questions: “First be a punctuation detective—do you see any mistakes in punctuation?” Once the student has identified them, rewrite the sentence beside the “P” space with the punctuation corrections. Do the same for spelling and capitalization next, and then for grammar. If there are mistakes the student does not catch, use leading questions to guide him/her toward it: “I see one more. Have you thought about whether the comma should go right there?” For spelling, read the word as it might be pronounced if spelled the way the tutee has spelled it, or encourage the use of a dictionary.

Independent Practice:

Let the student complete the rest of the sentences, using the same strategy. If s/he has trouble, model the questions you should ask yourself when looking for corrections (“Did I start the sentence with a capital letter? Does it end with the right mark?”). With the blank worksheet, let the student write a sentence with purposeful mistakes for you to find.

Closure:

Explain to the student that s/he can be a PSG detective with all the writing s/he does, including longer stories and essays in class. Let the student explain the strategy to you in his/her own words as a summary of the lesson.