

# KEY STRATEGIES FOR EDITING

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## Key Strategies for Editing: A Lesson Plan

### LESSON OBJECTIVES:

- Make students aware of the necessity of editing.
- Provide background information for editing.
- Provide practice time for editing.

### LESSON 1: 20 COMMONLY MISUSED WORDS

- Read the quote to students. Discuss its meaning and the message the author is attempting to convey with the quote.
- Review 20 commonly misused words.
- Provide editing sheet for students to practise skills and knowledge.
- Review editing sheet with answer key.

### LESSON 2: TIPS FOR EDITING

- Read the quote to students. Discuss its meaning and the message the author is attempting to convey with the quote.
- Review editing tips sheet.
- Provide reflection sheet for students to discuss skills and knowledge related to their editing experiences.

*"I didn't have time to write a short letter, so I wrote a long one instead."*

— Mark Twain

When you are editing, you need to make sure you are using the proper word to explain an idea. In the English language, many words are similar to each other, and it can be confusing to know which one to use. Here is a list of some of most common errors.

### 20 COMMONLY MISUSED WORDS

Their (possessive form of *they*) vs. they're (contraction of *they are*)

Accept (meaning to *receive* or *to admit*) vs. except (meaning *but* or *only*)

Who's (contraction of *who is* or *who has*) vs. whose (possessive form of *who*)

Its (possessive form of *it*) vs. it's (contraction of *it is* or *it has*)

Your (possessive form of *you*) vs. you're (contraction of *you are*)

Affect (meaning to *influence*) vs. effect (meaning result)

Than (used in comparison) vs. then (refers to a time in the past)

Were (form of the verb *to be*) vs. we're (contraction of *we are*)

To (preposition) vs. too (meaning *also*)

Farther (refers to physical distance) vs. further (refers to an extension of time or degree)

## EDIT THE FOLLOWING PIECE OF WRITING...

Janice and George were very excited. They were going to the biggest party event in town. The two were excepted into the Tuesday Book Club as honorary members. The Tuesday Book Club was a group whose job was to purchase books for the local library. The club was holding its charity party to raise money for buying books. Janice and George would be helping out at the ticket booth, than they would get to take part in all the fun and games at the event the party was on Saturday, but the club members were going to be at the hall two days before the event, helping to set it up. George was in charge of lights. He wanted to have spotlights on the guests as they arrived. He thought this would have a nice affect on the entrance. Janice was setting up decorations but had a problem, she had too many balloons and could not fit all of them into the room. On Friday, the committee could work no farther until the tabels arrived.

As they waited for the tables, Janice told George, "Your too excited, George, Sit down, your making me nervous." Finally, the tables arrived but another problem arose, their were more tables then chairs. A quick phone call solved the problem, and more chairs were delivered. Everything was all ready accept for the flowers on the table, witch would arrive early Saturday morning.

## ANSWER KEY

Janice and George were very excited. They were going to the biggest party event in town. The two were accepted into the Tuesday Book Club as honorary members. The Tuesday Book Club was a group whose job was to purchase books for the local library. The club was holding its charity party to raise money for buying books. Janice and George would be helping out at the ticket booth, then they would get to take part in all the fun and games at the event. The party was on Saturday, but the club members were going to be at the hall two days before the event, helping to set it up. George was in charge of lights. He wanted to have spotlights on the guests as they arrived. He thought this would have a nice effect on the entrance. Janice was setting up decorations but had a problem; she had too many balloons and could not fit all of them into the room. On Friday, the committee could work no further until the tables arrived.

As they waited for the tables, Janice told George, "You're too excited, George. Sit down, you're making me nervous." Finally, the tables arrived but another problem arose there were more tables than chairs. A quick phone call solved the problem, and more chairs were delivered. Everything was all ready except for the flowers on the table, which would arrive early Saturday morning.

*"I have rewritten – often several times – every word I have ever written. My pencils outlast their erasers."*

— Vladimir Nabokov

## TIPS FOR EDITING

- Read your writing out loud as well as silently
- Reading sentences backwards helps some people focus on the spelling of words and not the meaning.
- Use a spell checker and grammar checker on the computer, but don't depend on them. Use dictionaries and other guides.
- Have others read your writing.
- Read slowly. It is easy to miss something.
- Use a blank sheet of paper to cover unedited writing. This will help you to focus on one part of the text at a time.
- Use your finger or a pencil to read one word at a time.
- Do not try to correct everything all at once—do editing for grammar, editing for spelling, and editing for punctuation at different times.
- Keep a record of your most common errors in a journal. The journal can become a reference guide for a future time.
- Double-check proper names.
- Double-check little words: *or*, *of*, *it*, and *is*. They can often be omitted, changing meaning.



## EDITING STRATEGIES

These are some of the editing strategies that I have used.

These are some of the editing strategies that I will try to use in the future.