

GRADE 8 English Language Arts Proofreading: Lesson 1

Read aloud to the students the material that is printed in **boldface type** inside the boxes. Information in regular type inside the boxes and all information outside the boxes should **not** be read to students. Possible student responses are included in parentheses after the questions.

Any directions that ask you to do something, such as to turn to a page or to hand out materials to students, will have an arrow symbol (\implies) by them.

Purpose of Lesson 1:

In this lesson, the tutor and students will

- examine the instructions for the proofreading section of the test;
- develop strategies to use in the proofreading section of the test; and
- find and correct errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics.

Equipment/Materials Needed:

- Student Worksheets Proofreading Lesson 1 - 1 and 1 - 2
- Pencils

LESSON 1: Proofreading

After your introductory remarks to students, say:

Today’s practice focuses on proofreading. You will read a passage that includes errors in sentence formation, usage, mechanics, and spelling. What does it mean to say that a passage has errors in “sentence formation, usage, mechanics, and spelling”?

Pause.

What kinds of errors are you looking for?

(Responses might include capital letters, punctuation marks (comma, apostrophe, colon, semicolon, quotation marks), spelling, subject/verb agreement.)

If no one responds, tell students the answers.

Yes, there’s a lot for you to remember. Let’s try to develop some tricks – your teacher may call them strategies or techniques – for doing well on proofreading.

Pretend you have super-duper, X-ray vision. That super-duper, X-ray vision helps you to see comma mistakes, capital letter mistakes, and spelling mistakes.

Pretend you own a handy, dandy magnifying glass that makes the mistakes appear HUGE. With the help of the magnifying glass, you won’t overlook any of the errors on the practice activity.

Some of these ideas may seem so silly to you; but if one of these tricks helps you be successful, don’t worry about it! To be truthful, you don’t even have to tell anybody your trick for being a good proofreader.

Now say:

Let’s practice some tricks or techniques that you might use when proofreading.

⇒ Distribute Student Worksheet Proofreading Lesson 1 – 1 and pencils.

Then say:

First, skim the selection. To *skim* means to read the selection quickly so you will have a general idea what the passage is about. You need to see how all of the sentences are related and connected. Skim this selection now.

Pause to allow time for students to skim the selection.

What is this selection about?

(Response: a sunburn)

Yes, a sunburn. You need to have a general idea about the passage before working with the underlined parts.

⇒ Distribute Student Worksheet Proofreading Lesson 1 – 2.

Now, look at the questions. Pause.

What do the questions all have in common?

(Response: The questions are all worded the same.)

Yes. They all say, “How should you correct the error in number ___?”

In question 1, what is answer Choice D?

Ask for a volunteer or call on a student.

(Response: “There is no error.”)

Look at question 2, what is answer Choice D?

(Response: “There is no error.”)

Look at question 3, what is answer Choice D?”

(Response: “There is no error.”)

In fact, answer Choice D is the same throughout the proofreading activities.

You may think the Proofreading section is easy because it is only two pages, but remember to give it your full concentration. It is easy to overlook a mistake here, if you are not paying very close

Now, let's practice some techniques to use when proofreading. Earlier you read the passage quickly to get a general idea. Now you are ready to examine the first underlined part: "Me and my sister." Ask yourself: is this passage correct or not? Pause.

(Response: It is not correct.)

Look at question number one. "How should you correct the error in number 1?"

Answer Choice A: change Me and my sister to My sister and me.

Answer Choice B: change Me and my sister to My sister and I.

Answer Choice C: change Me and my sister to Me and my Sister.

I know the answer isn't Choice D. I know there is an error in the sentence.

It is a good idea to read all the answer choices before marking one. Examine each answer choice to see what's different or special in each one.

Then say:

For instance, in Choice A how is it changed?

(Response: *Me and my sister* becomes *my sister and me*; switched them around.)

What change was made in Choice B?

(Response: The *me* was changed to *I*.)

What change was made in Choice C?

(Response: capitalized *sister*)

Did sister need to be capitalized?

(Response: no)

No, *sister* does not need to be capitalized; therefore, I can eliminate or discard answer C. Now, go back and review answers A and B.

Think about the two choices. Which one makes the sentence correct? Pause.

(Response: Choice B)

Now say:

Yes, Choice B, my sister and I. This sentence needs the subject pronoun, I. Even if you didn't know the exact grammar rule, you can still select the correct answer.

Our brain stores or keeps information for us. Often on an activity sheet or on a test when we “think” or “feel” an answer is correct, we do so because the answer is somewhere in our brains. Let your brain get the information out of storage. Go with your instinct and mark the answer. Providing an answer is better than leaving the space blank.

Now say:

Let's use the same steps and do number two.

Look at the underlined part for number two “didn't never expect.” Is this part correct or not?

(Response: It is not correct.)

Now look at the answer sheet, question 2. “How should you correct the error in number 2?”

Answer Choice A: change didn't never expect to did not never expect.

Answer Choice B: change didn't never expect to did not never accept.

Answer Choice C: change didn't never expect to didn't ever expect.

We have already said the correct answer isn't choice D.

What's the next step I should take?

(Response: reread the answer choices; look to see what's different in each answer choice)

What change was made in Choice A?

(Response: *Didn't* is changed to *did not*.)

What change was made in Choice B?

(Response: *Didnot* is written as one word; *expect* is changed to *accept*.)

What change was made in Choice C?

(Response: changed *never* to *ever*)

Notice how careful I am each time. I don't want to make a careless mistake. Look at the answer choices. Tell me an answer we can discard or throw away?

(Possible responses: A or B.)

Students may respond with one discard choice or two discard choices. Ask students to explain the reasons.

Why did you get rid of this answer choice?

Possible responses:

Choice A has not really changed. The contraction *didn't* was replaced with the two words *did not*. The error of the double negative still exists.

Choice B actually has two errors. There is no such word as *didnot* and *accept* is used incorrectly.

I am now ready to mark the correct response on my answer sheet, Choice C. The correct sentence should read "We didn't ever expect to hurt so much."

Your teacher would call the mistake in this sentence a double negative. Use of more than one negative word is called a double negative. *Not* and *never* are negative words. Double negatives are not considered a part of standard English.

Look at the third underlined part for number three: doctor, and he give us. Is this part correct or not?

(Response: It is not correct.)

Now, look at your answer sheet, question 3. "How should you correct the error in number 3?"

Answer Choice A: "change doctor, and he give us to doctor, and he gave us."

Answer Choice B: "change doctor, and he give us to doctor, and he gives us."

Answer Choice C: "change doctor, and he gave us to doctor and he gave us"

Since you said there was a mistake in this one, you know the answer is not D.

Now look at the answer choices to see what's different or special in each one.

What change was made in Choice A?

(Response: *Give* was changed to *gave*.)

Some students may immediately recognize this response as the correct answer. That's fine, but encourage them to check out Choices B and C just to be safe.)

What change was made in answer B?

(Response: *Give* was changed to *gives*.)

Some students may say this verb/predicate is correct because *gives* agrees with the pronoun *he*. However, the error in this sentence is in the verb tense.

What change was made in answer C?

(Response: The comma was removed after *doctor*.)

Say:

What answer can we discard or throw out?

(Possible response: B or C)

Students will find it difficult to explain *why*. You may need to prompt students or just give the answers in this situation.

Why did you discard this answer?

Possible responses:

Choice B is not in the correct tense. A past tense verb is needed for this sentence.

Choice C may appear to be correct, since the verb *gave* is past tense. However, there is no comma for the compound sentence.

Now you are ready to mark the correct response on the answer sheet, Choice A. The correct sentence should read, "Our mother took us to the doctor, and he gave us a lecture and some medicine."

Now say:

Do number four by yourself and mark your answer on the answer sheet.

Pause to allow time for students to work.

How should you correct the error in number four?

(Response: There is no error.)

Right. There is no error in number four. You had to look very carefully at the answer choices.

D-i-d-n-apostrophe-t is a contraction for did not. The apostrophe indicates that the letter “o” has been left out.

Now do the last one by yourself. Look at the underlined part for number five and then mark your answer sheet.

Pause to allow time for students to work.

How should you correct the error in number five?

(Response: A comma is needed after summer. A comma is used after an introductory adverbial clause.)

Students can tell you the correct response is B, but they cannot tell you why. Tell them the reason, even though you do not *explain* it in detail.

An introductory adverbial clause must be followed by a comma to give the reader a place to pause and to prevent ambiguity.

Say:

You have done a great job of reviewing the tricks and techniques used in proofreading. It is very important to look carefully and closely at each possible answer.

Student Worksheet Proofreading Lesson 1 – 1

The story below is a draft of a student’s narrative composition. Read “The Sunburn” and then answer the questions that follow.

The Sunburn

Me and my sister got sunburned when we went to the beach last
1
summer. We were not at the beach very long. After about three hours, our
parents took us back to the hotel. Then we saw how sunburned we
were! We didn’t never expect to hurt so much. I could not stand to have any-
2
thing touch my skin. My sister even had a fever. Our mother took us to the
doctor, and he give us a lecture and some medicine. I didn’t realize how
3 4
dangerous a sunburn could be. The doctor told us that we must always wear
sunscreen when we go out in the sun. When I go to the beach next summer I
5
will be more careful.

Student Worksheet Proofreading Lesson 1 – 2

NAME _____

1. How should you correct the error in number 1?
 - A. change **Me and my sister** to **My sister and me**
 - B. change **Me and my sister** to **My sister and I**
 - C. change **Me and my sister** to **Me and my Sister**
 - D. There is no error.

2. How should you correct the error in number 2?
 - A. change **didn't never expect** to **did not never expect**
 - B. change **didn't never expect** to **didnot never accept**
 - C. change **didn't never expect** to **didn't ever expect**
 - D. There is no error.

3. How should you correct the error in number 3?
 - A. change **doctor, and he give us** to **doctor, and he gave us**
 - B. change **doctor, and he give us** to **doctor, and he gives us**
 - C. change **doctor, and he give us** to **doctor and he gave us**
 - D. There is no error.

4. How should you correct the error in number 4?
 - A. change **didn't** to **did 'nt**
 - B. change **didn't** to **don't**
 - C. change **didn't** to **doesn't**
 - D. There is no error.

5. How should you correct the error in number 5?
 - A. change **the beach next summer** to **the beach next Summer,**
 - B. change **the beach next summer** to **the beach next summer,**
 - C. change **the beach next summer** to **the beach next Summer**
 - D. There is no error.