

WRITING WITH EASE, REVISED EDITION

Level Three

part of *The Complete Writer*

INSTRUCTOR GUIDE

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NOTE TO THE REVISED EDITION: HOW TO USE THE NEW CREATIVE WRITING LESSONS

At the end of each week, there is a bonus lesson. These lessons provide prompts to spark a young writer's imagination. They will satisfy the needs of students who could benefit from a creative writing outlet, while reinforcing concepts and skills students have practiced throughout the week.

These lessons are completely optional! If you skipped each one, your child would not be behind. The first four assignments each week cover everything students need to develop their writing skills.

In this second edition, we want to account for the fact that children think and learn in different ways. At this age, some students are not ready for creative writing, and there is nothing to be gained in forcing them to do it. Meanwhile, other students crave opportunities to practice their new skills in a creative way. You know your child best, and can decide whether or not your student will benefit from this extra practice.

If you decide to use the bonus lessons, be sure to read these parameters first:

The creative writing lessons typically consist of a single writing prompt (exceptions are noted within the lessons). Some students will be able to write their answers to the prompt without additional help. If your student wants to complete the exercise but still struggles to get words down on paper, follow these three steps:

- 1. Verbal Narration:** Read the prompt and have your student narrate her answer to you.
- 2. Model Sentence:** Write down the first sentence of their narration (modifying when necessary to simplify or shorten).
- 3. Dictation:** (1) read the student's sentence back to her and (2) have her repeat it back to you. (3) Have her write the sentence down on her own, without access to the written model. Repeat steps 1-2 if necessary until the student has written the full sentence.

The prompts in these lessons are designed to awaken a student's creativity. After completing the first sentence, some students may want to draw a picture or write additional sentences on their own. Encourage this, but do not require it. While the first sentence should be checked and edited for grammar and spelling, do not require students to correct or edit any additional writing. Just encourage them!

WEEK 1

DAY ONE: Narration Exercise

Student Workbook pages 1–3

Focus: *Identifying the central narrative thread in a passage*

Pull out Student Workbook pages 1–2 and Student Workbook page 3. Ask the student to write her name and the date on Student Workbook page 3.

Allow the student to read the story on Student Workbook pages 1–2, either silently or aloud.

This fable is a more difficult narrative than the Level Two narratives. Help the student begin to identify the central elements in the narrative by asking the following questions. She should try to answer these questions without looking back at the story, but if she cannot remember an answer after thinking for a few minutes, allow her to reread. Remind her to answer in complete sentences.

Instructor: How did the bean escape from the old woman?

Student: *It dropped out of the pan.*

Instructor: How did the coal escape from the fire?

Student: *It leaped out.*

Instructor: What else escaped the fire?

Student: *The straw escaped.*

Instructor: What did the bean, the coal, and the straw decide to do together?

Student: *They decided to go on a journey to a foreign country.*

Instructor: What was the first obstacle they ran into?

Student: *They came to a brook with no bridge across it.*

Instructor: What solution did the straw come up with?

Student: *The straw laid herself across the water.*

Instructor: Who tried to cross the straw?

Student: *The coal tried to cross.*

Instructor: What happened then?

Student: *The coal burned through the straw and fell into the water.*

Instructor: How did the bean react?

Student: *She laughed until she split.*

Instructor: Who fixed her?

Student: *A tailor sewed her back together.*

Instructor: This fairy tale is a particular kind of story called a “pourquoi [por-kwa] tale.” *Pourquoi* is French for “why,” and pourquoi tales give imaginative explanations for *why* something is the way it is. What does this tale try to explain?

Student: *It tries to explain why beans have a black seam.*

Now ask the student the general question, “Can you give me a brief summary of this passage?” The student should answer by summarizing the plot, rather than listing details. Her answer should be no more than three sentences and should resemble one of the following:

“A coal, a straw, and a bean escaped from an old woman. They set out on a journey, but the straw was burnt, the coal fell into water, and the bean split herself laughing. A tailor sewed up the bean with black thread.”

“A coal, a straw, and a bean set out on a journey. When they got to a brook, the straw lay down across it as a bridge. The coal went across the straw, but the straw burned, the coal fell into the water, and the bean burst herself laughing.”

“A coal, a straw, and a bean came to a brook. The straw tried to become a bridge, but the coal burned the bridge in half and fell in the water. Then the bean split open laughing.”

The student will probably attempt to put too much information into the summary. If she has difficulty condensing the story, ask the following three questions:

Who are the three main characters?

What problem did they run into? [“They escaped from an old woman” **OR** “They came to a brook they could not cross” are both acceptable answers.]

What happened to each one?

Then have the student repeat her answers in order; this will form her brief summary.

Write down the student’s narration on Student Workbook page 3 as she watches.

When done, set the workbook page aside for the next lesson, which is on the back of it.

DAY TWO: Dictation Exercise

Student Workbook page 4

Focus: *Comma use, capitalization of proper names*

Pull out Student Workbook page 4. Ask the student to write her name and the date.

Tell the student that today’s dictation sentence is from another one of the Grimms’ fairy tales, called “Little Red Cap.” It is one of the earliest versions of the story we now know as “Little Red Riding Hood.”

Dictate the following sentence to the student two times. Before you read, tell the student that you will pause at the commas. Be sure to indicate the commas in the sentence by pausing significantly at each one.

The grandmother lived out in the wood, half a mile from the village, and just as Little Red Cap entered the wood, a wolf met her.

Tell the student that since “Little Red Cap” is used as the girl’s proper name, all three words should be capitalized. Now ask the student to repeat the sentence back to you before she writes. Remind her to pause, as you did, to indicate the commas. If she cannot remember the entire sentence, you may repeat it additional times.

Watch the student as she writes, and correct her at once if she begins to make a mistake. When she is finished, point out each comma and tell her that these commas are used to avoid misunderstanding. Without the commas, a reader might think that the grandmother lived in a “wood half a mile,” or that Little Red Cap “entered the wood a wolf.”

DAY THREE: Narration and Dictation

Student Workbook pages 5–7

Focus: *Identifying the central narrative thread in a passage and writing original sentences from dictation*

Pull out Student Workbook pages 5–6 and 7. Ask the student to write her name and the date on Student Workbook page 7.

Today’s exercise will combine narration and dictation. Allow the student to read the story on Student Workbook pages 5–6, either silently or aloud.

If the student is not familiar with the custom of “christening,” you may want to explain that this is a church ceremony during which babies are baptized and named.

Help the student begin to identify the central elements in the narrative by asking the following questions. She should try to answer these questions without looking back at the story, but if she cannot remember an answer after thinking for a few minutes, allow her to reread. Remind her to answer in complete sentences.

Instructor: What did the cat and the mouse buy for the winter?

Student: *They bought a pot of bacon fat.*

Instructor: Where did they decide to keep it?

Student: *They kept it in the church.*

Instructor: What excuse did the cat give for going out and eating the fat?

Student: *She said that she had to go to christenings.*

Instructor: How many times did she do this?

Student: *She did it three times.*

Instructor: She told the mouse that the three babies had three strange names. What were they?

Student: *The names were Top-off, Half-done, and All-gone.*

Instructor: When the mouse found out what the cat had done, what happened?

Student: *The cat ate the mouse.*

Instructor: “That is the way of the world” means that the strong will always take advantage of the weak. In what two ways did the cat take advantage of the mouse?

Student: *She ate the bacon fat that they both bought, and then she ate the mouse.*

Now ask the student the general question, “Can you give me a brief summary of this passage?” The student should answer by summarizing the plot, rather than listing details. Her answer should be no more than three sentences and should resemble one of the following:

“A cat and a mouse set up house together. They bought a pot of fat for the winter, but the cat pretended to go to christenings and ate the entire thing. When the mouse found out, the cat ate her.”

“A cat and a mouse bought a pot of fat and hid it in a church. The cat told the mouse that she had to go to three christenings. Each time she went out, she ate some of the fat, until it was all gone.”

“The cat told the mouse that she was going to the christenings of three babies. She said that they were named Top-off, Half-done, and All-gone. But she had really eaten the pot of fat—first the top, then half, then the rest of it.”

If she has difficulty condensing the story, ask the following three questions:

What did the cat and the mouse do together?

In one sentence, how did the cat trick the mouse?

What happened at the end of the story?

Then have the student repeat her answers in order; this will form her brief summary. Write down the student’s narration on the lines below, but do not allow her to watch.

Then choose one or two sentences (about 12–15 words) to dictate back to the student. Repeat the sentences twice and ask the student to repeat them back to you before she writes on Student Workbook page 7. If she cannot repeat the sentences, read them again until she is able to keep them in mind.

Give all necessary help in spelling and punctuation.

When done, set the workbook page aside for the next lesson, which is on the back of it.

DAY FOUR: Dictation Exercise*Student Workbook page 8***Focus:** *Comma and period use*

Pull out Student Workbook page 8. Ask the student to write her name and the date.

Tell the student that today's dictation sentences are from the Grimms' fairy tale called "Hansel and Gretel." In "Hansel and Gretel," two children lost in the wood stumble into a clearing—and see a house all made out of candy and cake. They are so hungry that they decide to taste it!

Dictate the following sentences to the student two times. Before you read, tell the student that you will indicate commas by pausing, and the period by pausing for a longer time. When you read, be sure to let your voice drop to indicate the end of each sentence.

Hansel broke off a piece of the roof, which was made of cake. Gretel nibbled on a pane of sugar glass.

Ask the student to repeat the sentences back to you before she writes. Remind her to pause at the commas and periods. If she cannot remember the entire selection, you may repeat it additional times.

Watch the student as she writes, and correct her at once if she begins to make a mistake. You may need to help her spell the proper names.

DAY FIVE (optional): Creative Writing*Student Workbook page 9*

As discussed in the introduction, the fifth lesson of each week is an optional creative writing lesson/prompt. Please refer to page vii for detailed instructions on how to use these prompts.

For creative writing activities in weeks 1-10, student responses to the prompt should be one sentence of roughly 12-15 words. If your student's verbal response is longer than 15 words, shorten it before writing it down.

Pull out Student Workbook page 9. Write the student's name and the date for him as he watches, or ask him to write the name and date independently. Before providing the prompt, reread the pourquoi tale on Student Workbook pages 1–2.

Instructor: Imagine that you meet the Straw, the Coal, and the Bean while they are on their journey. How would you help them get across the river without getting hurt? (You can answer this question for all three characters, or for just one if you prefer!) Remember to capitalize proper names when writing down your answer. If you like, draw a picture of the Straw, the Coal, and the Bean to illustrate your story.

WEEK 2

DAY ONE: Narration Exercise

Student pages 11–13

Focus: *Identifying the central theme in a selection*

Pull out Student pages 11–12 and 13. Ask the student to write his name and the date on Student page 13.

Allow the student to read the story on Student pages 11–12, either silently or aloud. Before he begins, pronounce the name Scheherazade for him (Shu-hair-ah-zahd).

After the student reads, you may want to explain that the names of three of the ships in the story are jokes. Use the following information:

Implacable is a good name for a ship; an “implacable” enemy is an enemy who cannot be soothed or made less hostile. “Placable” comes from the Latin word *placare*, which means “to appease”—to make peace with. You can make peace with a placable enemy, but not with an implacable enemy; adding “im” to “placable” makes the word mean the opposite.

Incapable is a joke. Someone who is “capable” is *able* to do things. If you tell a capable person to clean up the dishes after dinner, the dishes will be washed, dried, and put neatly away. But adding “in,” just like adding “im,” makes the word mean the opposite. Naming a ship *Incapable* is like naming it “Useless.”

If something is “possible,” it can be done. Something “impossible” is the opposite—it can’t be done.

Plausible means “believable, reasonable, apparently true.” An “implausible” story is fanciful and unlikely.

Now help the student begin to identify the central theme in the selection by asking the following questions. He should try to answer these questions without looking back at the story, but if he cannot remember an answer after thinking for a few minutes, allow him to reread. Remind him to answer in complete sentences.

Instructor: Did Scheherazade have a good journey in the hold of the *Glorious*?

Student: *No, it was a very bad journey.*

Instructor: Tell me three things that were terrible about the ship’s hold.

Student: *There was no light or air; the hay was moldy and the grain was filled with bugs; the water was bad; rats ate the food and nibbled the horses’ hooves; the stalls were never cleaned; the horses were never brushed.*

Instructor: Where did the horses’ grooms come from?

Student: *They came from jails and prisons.*

Instructor: Why did the troops (the soldiers) have to be watched carefully when they were allowed to go on deck?

Student: *They tended to jump overboard.*

Instructor: Scheherazade says that by the time the ship anchored, she didn't even care that the journey was over. Why?

Student: *She was too sick and weary.*

Now say to the student, "Try to tell me, in one sentence, what Scheherazade thought of her journey to Boston." The student should respond, "The journey to Boston was horrible," OR "It was a very bad journey," OR "The journey made Scheherazade sick." Prompt the student, if he seems uncertain, by asking the first comprehension question again.

Once the student has come up with this sentence, say, "Now give me two more sentences with specific details in them about *how* the journey was horrible." The purpose of this exercise is to guide the student into stating the central theme of the passage and supporting that theme with specifics.

The answer should resemble one of the following:

"Scheherazade had a horrible journey to Boston. The ship was dark and filled with rats. Her grain and hay were spoiled."

"The journey in the ships was very bad. The horses were never cleaned or brushed, and they weren't properly fed. All of the grooms came from jails and prisons."

"The journey made Scheherazade sick. She didn't have enough food, light, or air. The journey was so awful that some of the soldiers jumped overboard."

Write down the student's narration on Student page 13 as he watches.

When done, set the workbook page aside for the next lesson, which is on the back of it.

DAY TWO: Dictation Exercise

Student page 14

Focus: *Formation of plural nouns*

Pull out Student page 14. Ask the student to write his name and the date.

Tell the student that today's dictation sentence is from the book *Mr. Revere and I*. When Scheherazade first comes from England, she believes that the American rebels are simple farmers who aren't very intelligent, and who certainly know nothing about proper fighting.

Before you read the sentence, tell the student that the sentence has a *semicolon* in it. Remind him that a semicolon is used to separate two complete sentences. It acts like a period, but unlike a period, a semicolon tells you that the second sentence will be so closely related to the first sentence that they belong together. The first word that comes after the semicolon isn't capitalized (unlike the first word that comes after a period). Tell the student to listen for the end of the first complete sentence, where you will pause to indicate the semicolon.

As you read, be sure to let your voice fall slightly to indicate the ending of the complete sentence that comes before the semicolon.

Read the sentence twice as the student listens.

Of course they could shoot; any bumpkins who lived mostly on squirrels, rabbits, deer and wild turkeys would have to be able to shoot.

Ask the student to repeat the sentence back to you.

Then tell the student that you will read the sentence a third time. This time, the student should listen for the commas that separate items in a list. He should raise his hand or tap the table every time you reach a comma.

On this third reading, pause significantly at each comma, but make sure that your pause at the semicolon is *longer*. If the student indicates that he hears a comma after the word “deer,” explain that items in a list can be separated *either* by conjunctions (*but, and, or*) or by commas. It is not necessary to use both.

Watch the student as he writes, and correct him at once if he begins to make a mistake.

When he is finished, ask him to point out each plural noun. As he points, tell him the rule that governs each plural.

bumpkins	Most nouns form the plural by adding an <i>s</i>
rabbits	Most nouns form the plural by adding an <i>s</i>
squirrels	Most nouns form the plural by adding an <i>s</i>
deer	Irregular noun; the singular and plural are the same
turkeys	Form the plural of a noun ending in <i>y</i> by adding an <i>s</i> if the <i>y</i> is preceded by a vowel.

DAY THREE: Narration and Dictation

Student pages 15–17

Focus: *Identifying the central emotion in a passage and writing original sentences from dictation*

Pull out Student pages 15–16 and 17. Ask the student to write his name and the date on Student page 17.

Today’s exercise will combine narration and dictation. Allow the student to read the story on Student pages 15–16, either silently or aloud.

Help the student recall important details by asking the following questions. He should try to answer these questions without looking back at the story, but if he cannot remember an answer after thinking for a few minutes, allow him to reread. Remind him to answer in complete sentences.

Instructor: What did Scheherazade’s cart have in it?

Student: *It was loaded with hoofs and horns.*

Instructor: The passage describes Scheherazade’s food with two words; can you remember them?

Student: *Her food was atrocious and scanty. [If necessary, explain that “atrocious” means “of horrible quality” and “scanty” means “not very much.”]*

Instructor: What happened to her coat?

Student: *It grew long and matted.*

Instructor: What did the collar do to her skin?

Student: *It rubbed sores.*

Instructor: What was Scheherazade's greatest fear?

Student: *She was afraid that she might see horses from her old regiment.*

Instructor: When she saw the regiment coming, what did she do?

Student: *She ran away.*

Instructor: What two things does Scheherazade say made her feel humiliated?

Student: *Pulling a glue cart and looking shabby and dirty both made her feel humiliated.*

Instructor: Her embarrassment and humiliation were so deep that she decided to do something terrible, if she ever met Ajax and her friends again. What did she mean to do?

Student: *She meant to drown herself in the harbor.*

Now say to the student, "Finish the following thought: 'Scheherazade hoped that she wouldn't see her friends because . . .'" He may use two or three sentences to complete the thought. His answer should resemble one of the following:

"Scheherazade hoped she wouldn't see her friends because she was embarrassed. She was forced to pull a cart full of bones for making glue. Her coat was long and matted and she had collar sores."

"Scheherazade hoped she wouldn't see her friends because they were still in the regiment and she was not. She was humiliated because no horse of spirit would ever pull a glue cart. She was dirty and shaggy and she had sores."

Encourage the student to use the word "embarrassed" (or "embarrassing") or the word "humiliated" in his answer.

Write down the student's narration on the lines below, but do not allow him to watch.

Then choose one or two sentences (about 12–15 words) to dictate back to the student. Repeat the sentences twice and ask the student to repeat them back to you before he writes on Student page 17. If he cannot repeat the sentences, read them again until he is able to keep them in mind.

Give all necessary help in spelling and punctuation.

When done, set the workbook page aside for the next lesson, which is on the back of it.

DAY FOUR: Dictation Exercise

Student page 18

Focus: *Plural nouns, exclamations*

Pull out Student page 18. Ask the student to write his name and the date.

Tell the student that today's dictation sentences are from *Mr. Revere and I*. This is what Scheherazade says, after all of her adventures.

Dictate the following sentences to the student two times. Before you read, tell the student that there is an exclamation point at the end of one of the sentences. Be sure to indicate this with your voice. Pause at the comma in the second sentence.

How times and fortunes do change! My circumstances are most comfortable, my duties almost none.

Ask the student to repeat the sentences back to you before he writes. Remind him to put the exclamation point in the proper place. If he cannot remember the entire selection, you may repeat it additional times.

Watch the student as he writes, and correct him at once if he begins to make a mistake. Give all necessary spelling help.

When the student is finished writing, tell him that there are four plural nouns in these sentences. Three of them formed the plural by adding an *s*, but the fourth followed another rule. Ask him to find all four nouns and to tell you which three simply added an *s* (times, fortunes, circumstances).

Ask the student to write the singular form of the fourth noun (duty) underneath the plural form (duties). Remind the student that when a noun ends in *y* preceded by a consonant, you form the plural by changing the *y* to *i* and adding *-es*.

DAY FIVE (optional): Creative Writing

Student page 19

Pull out Student page 19. Write the student's name and the date for her as she watches, or ask her to write the name and date independently.

Instructor: Scheherazade traveled across the Atlantic Ocean on a ship with many other horses. What animal would you choose to have if you had to have ten of them? Make sure to use the correct plural form when writing your answer. You can write just one sentence explaining which animals you chose, or add another sentence explaining why you love them or how you play with them! If you like, draw a picture of yourself surrounded by your pets!

WEEK 3

DAY ONE: Narration Exercise

Student pages 21–23

Focus: *Identifying the central details in a description*

Pull out Student pages 21–22 and Student page 23. Ask the student to write her name and the date on Student page 23.

Allow the student to read the story on Student pages 21–22, either silently or aloud.

Help the student begin to identify the central details in the narrative by asking the following questions. She should try to answer these questions without looking back at the story, but if she cannot remember an answer after thinking for a few minutes, allow her to reread. Remind her to answer in complete sentences.

Instructor: Do you remember one of the two things mentioned in the passage that ships unloaded?

Student: *The ships unloaded turtles and chandeliers.*

Instructor: Do you remember two of the three things that street vendors sold?

Student: *They sold fever pills, hair oil, and oysters.*

Instructor: List three other things that Paul Revere could see in Boston.

Student: *He could see traveling acrobats, performing monkeys, parades, firework displays, fistfights, a pickled pirate's head, and a polar bear.*

Instructor: List five things that Paul Revere made out of silver.

Student: *He made beads, rings, lockets, bracelets, buttons, medals, pitchers, teapots, spoons, sugar basins, cups, ewers, porringers, shoe buckles, candlesticks, and a squirrel collar.*

Instructor: What did Paul Revere do at Christ Church to make extra money?

Student: *He rang the bells.*

Instructor: List four different times or reasons when the bells were rung.

Student: *They were rung on Sundays, three times a day on weekdays [that only counts as one answer!], holidays, anniversaries, fires, emergencies, deaths, good news, bad news.*

Instructor: Paul did six more things to earn extra money. Can you remember at least three?

Student: *He engraved portraits, sold pictures, made picture frames, brought out hymnbooks, and became a dentist.*

Instructor: What did he make false teeth out of?

Student: *He whittled them out of hippopotamus tusk.*

Now ask the student the general question, “Can you give me a brief summary of this passage?” The student should answer by listing details about Paul Revere’s busy life. Her answer should be no more than three sentences and should resemble one of the following:

“Paul Revere was a silversmith who made rings, bracelets, teapots, spoons, and cups. He rang the bells at Christ Church to make extra money. He also sold pictures, made picture frames, and became a dentist.”

“Paul Revere lived in a very busy place—Boston. In Boston, you could always see something exciting going on, like fireworks, a parade, or performing monkeys. Paul Revere was a silversmith, but he also rang church bells, made artificial teeth, and sold pictures.”

“Paul Revere was a silversmith, but that’s not all he did. He also rang the Christ Church bells every time there was a special occasion. He made false teeth out of hippopotamus tusks, sold hymnbooks, engraved portraits, and made picture frames.”

Write down the student’s narration on Student page 23 as she watches.

When done, set the workbook page aside for the next lesson, which is on the back of it.

DAY TWO: Dictation Exercise

Student page 24

Focus: Plural nouns

Pull out Student page 24. Ask the student to write her name and the date.

Tell the student that today’s dictation sentences are from another biography of Paul Revere, *Paul Revere, American Patriot* by JoAnne Grote.

Dictate the following sentences to the student two times. Before you read, tell the student that there are two commas and two periods. Pause briefly at the commas and for a long time at the first period.

Many huge wooden docks, called wharves, lined the harbor. Paul’s family lived on a wharf when he was seven.

Now ask the student to repeat the sentences back to you before she writes. If she cannot remember the entire selection, you may repeat it additional times.

Watch the student as she writes, and correct her at once if she begins to make a mistake. You may need to help her with the spellings “wharf” and “wharves”; also remind her, if necessary, that “Paul’s” is a possessive noun, and that it ends with an apostrophe and an *s*.

When she is finished, point out that “wharves” is the plural form of “wharf.” To make a plural out of a noun ending in *f*, you often change the *f* to a *v* and add *-es*.

DAY THREE: Narration and Dictation*Student pages 25–26*

Focus: *Identifying the central narrative thread in a passage and writing original sentences from dictation*

Pull out Student pages 25 and 26. Ask the student to write her name and the date on Student page 26.

Today's exercise will combine narration and dictation. Allow the student to read the story on Student page 25, either silently or aloud.

Help the student begin to identify the central thread in the narrative by asking the following questions. She should try to answer these questions without looking back at the story, but if she cannot remember an answer after thinking for a few minutes, allow her to reread. Remind her to answer in complete sentences.

Instructor: What kind of cargo were the British ships carrying, as they sailed towards American ports?

Student: *They were carrying tea.*

Instructor: When the *Dartmouth* arrived in Boston, how did the Sons of Liberty keep the owner from unloading the tea?

Student: *They stood guard with muskets and bayonets.*

Instructor: What message did Paul Revere carry to a nearby seaport?

Student: *The message was that British tea ships might try to unload.*

Instructor: How did the Sons of Liberty disguise themselves?

Student: *They dressed like Indians and put soot and lamp black on their faces.*

Instructor: What did they do with the tea?

Student: *They threw the tea into the harbor.*

Now ask the student the general question, "Can you give me a brief summary of this passage?" The student should answer by summarizing the plot, rather than listing details. Her answer should be no more than three sentences and should resemble one of the following:

"British ships filled with tea docked in Boston. The Sons of Liberty refused to let the owners unload the tea. That night, they dressed up like Indians, went on board the ships, and threw the tea into the water."

"The Sons of Liberty refused to let tea ships unload, and sent messages to other seaports so that no ships could unload anywhere else. After dark, they dressed up like Indians and blackened their faces. Then they boarded the ships, broke open the tea chests, and threw the tea into the water."

"The Sons of Liberty decided to keep British tea ships from unloading. Paul Revere helped carry the message to other seaports. Once it was dark, the Sons of Liberty disguised themselves, went aboard the ships, and threw all of the tea into the harbor."

Write down the student's narration on the lines below, but do not allow her to watch.

Then choose one or two sentences (about 12–15 words) to dictate back to the student. Repeat the sentences twice and ask the student to repeat them back to you before she writes on Student page 26. If she cannot repeat the sentences, read them again until she is able to keep them in mind.

Give all necessary help in spelling and punctuation.

DAY FOUR: Dictation Exercise

Student page 27

Focus: *Exclamations, plural nouns*

Pull out Student page 27. Ask the student to write her name and the date.

Tell the student that today's dictation sentences are from a song written to celebrate the Boston Tea Party, when Paul Revere and many others threw tea from England into the Boston Harbor rather than pay taxes on it.

Ask the student if she can decide what punctuation marks come at the end of these sentences. When you read the sentences, use an excited voice.

Bring out your axes! And tell King George we'll pay no taxes on his foreign tea!

Ask the student to repeat the sentences back to you before she writes. If she cannot remember the entire selection, you may repeat it additional times.

Watch the student as she writes, and correct her at once if she begins to make a mistake. You may need to remind her that "King George" is a proper name, and that both words should be capitalized. You may also need to remind the student that "we'll" is a contraction of "we will," and that the apostrophe shows that the letters *wi* have been left out. If the student needs help spelling "foreign," remind her of the rule: I before E, except after C, or when sounded like A, as in "neighbor" and "weigh." Americans tend to swallow the last syllable of the word "foreign" (so that it sounds like "forn"), but if the student says the second syllable on its own ("reign"), she will hear the A sound.

When the student is finished, ask her to write the singular nouns “ax” and “tax” above or below the plural nouns “axes” and “taxes.” Remind that student that nouns ending in *x*, *sh*, and *ch* form the plural by adding *-es* rather than just *-s*.

When done, set the workbook page aside for the next lesson, which is on the back of it.

DAY FIVE (optional): Creative Writing

Student page 28

Pull out Student page 28. Write the student’s name and the date for him as he watches, or ask him to write the name and date independently.

Instructor: Paul Revere had many jobs to help him make enough money for his family. Imagine you are old enough to have a job. What is one thing you would like to try doing to make money? Or what is one thing you would make and sell? If you like, draw a picture of the thing you would make or the job you would have.

WRITING WITH EASE AND WRITING WITH SKILL: SUSAN'S UPDATED RECOMMENDATIONS

In 2008, Well-Trained Mind Press began publishing *Writing With Ease*, which fleshes the general elementary writing recommendations in *The Well-Trained Mind* out into a full curriculum. *Writing With Skill*, which does the same for the logic stage (pre-rhetoric recommendations), followed.

We've been fortunate that many thousands of parents have made use of these programs—and have given us plenty of feedback about their experience. Here are three things I've learned . . .

You'll Probably Need to Repeat the Dictations More than Three Times

Throughout *Writing With Ease*, I suggest that you repeat dictation sentences three times. If a student can hold the dictations in his head after three repetitions, that's great. Ideal, in fact.

But as we all know, “ideal” isn't “real.” Many students need additional repetitions. And as you get into the more complex dictations, *most* students will need you to say the dictation sentences additional times.

That's absolutely fine. Don't frustrate your young writer. Repeat the sentences again.

And, if necessary, again. And again. BUT, follow these two rules:

- 1) Always ask the student to repeat the sentence back to you before she goes back to writing.
- 2) Always repeat the dictation assignment from the beginning. Don't allow the student to write one word at a time as you “feed” the sentence to her.

Three Levels of *Writing With Ease* is Enough

The purpose of the readings, narrations, and dictations in *Writing With Ease* is to develop critical skills in writing—putting ideas into words, getting words down on paper, and holding words in your head long enough to write them out. (If you're not familiar with the need for these skills, be sure to read my short essay “Why Writing Programs Fail,” which can be found on the Well-Trained Mind website.)

For most students, those skills are in place by the end of *Writing With Ease, Level Three*.

In fact, many students who are perfectly ready to go on to original writing (the next step in the process) are frustrated by the more complex sentences in our original Level Four—particularly the dictation exercises.

So we suggest that you complete *Writing With Ease* 1-3, and then follow one of the options in the chart below, keeping this last point in mind . . .

Fifth Grade is Generally Too Early for *Writing With Skill*

Writing With Skill is one very specific, parts-to-whole, step-by-step outworking of the principles laid out in my writing workshops (available as audio downloads on the Well-Trained Mind website). It is a *pre-rhetoric* course, designed to give students the skills necessary to 1) compose well-organized, properly researched and documented short pieces of expository writing across the curriculum, and 2) prepare them to go into a high school or freshman college rhetoric course.

So, although it is the next logical step after *Writing With Ease* in the student's writing development, it doesn't necessarily have to be completed *immediately* after the *Writing With Ease* series. In fact, most students seem to benefit from a year or more of writing across the curriculum or using another writing program. This additional maturity reduces frustration levels, makes the texts used in *Writing With Skill* more accessible, and still gets the student ready for rhetoric in plenty of time.

Here are a few possible scenarios that you might follow...all of them completely compatible with the writing goals I discuss in my workshops. (Please note that I'm not necessarily making full endorsements and recommendations of the listed curricula—simply trying to give you a sense of how a number of different progressions can get a student to high school rhetoric in time.)

GRADE	First Scenario	Second Scenario	Third Scenario	Fourth Scenario
First	Writing With Ease 1	Writing With Ease 1		
Second	Writing With Ease 2	Writing With Ease 2	Writing With Ease 1	Writing With Ease 1
Third	Writing With Ease 3	Writing With Ease 3	Writing With Ease 2	Writing With Ease 2
Fourth	Continue narrations and summaries across the curriculum	Killgallon, Sentence Composing for Middle School	Writing With Ease 3	Writing With Ease 3
Fifth	Continue narrations and summaries across the curriculum	Killgallon, Paragraph Composing for Middle School	Writing With Skill 1, half speed	Bravewriter course
Sixth	Writing With Skill 1	Killgallon, Sentence Composing for High School	Writing With Skill 1, half speed	Bravewriter course
Seventh	Writing With Skill 2	Writing With Skill 1	Writing With Skill 2, half speed	Follow TWTM recommendations for outlining, summarizing, etc.
Eighth	Writing With Skill 3	Writing With Skill 2	Writing With Skill 2, half speed	Writing With Skill 1
Ninth	Continue to write short researched compositions across the curriculum	Writing With Skill 3	Writing With Skill 3	Writing With Skill 2

GRADE	First Scenario	Second Scenario	Third Scenario	Fourth Scenario
Tenth	Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein, <i>They Say, I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing</i> and <i>Schaum's Quick Guide to Writing Great Research Papers</i> , plus regular persuasive papers across the curriculum	Well-Trained Mind Academy Rhetoric 1	Classical Academic Press, Writing & Rhetoric, Books 7, 8, 9	Writing With Skill 3
Eleventh	Frank D'Angelo, <i>Composition in the Classical Tradition</i> , plus regular persuasive papers across the curriculum	Well-Trained Mind Academy Rhetoric 2	Classical Academic Press, Writing & Rhetoric, Books 10, 11, 12	Well-Trained Mind Academy Rhetoric 1
Twelfth	Thomas Kane, <i>The New Oxford Guide to Writing</i> plus regular persuasive papers across the curriculum	Advanced writing or literature elective	Thomas Kane, <i>The New Oxford Guide to Writing</i> plus regular persuasive papers across the curriculum	Well-Trained Mind Academy Rhetoric 2