

The Editor's Eye

GRAMMAR FOR WRITERS • LESSON 12

Essential Question: How do editors recognize strong writing?



Bellringer: Which Would You Rather Read?

Take a moment to read both paragraphs below. Don't explain your choice yet — just vote!

Paragraph A

The storm was bad. We ran home. We were scared.

Paragraph B

Rain slammed against the pavement as we sprinted toward home, our hearts pounding with every flash of lightning.

 **Simply vote — we'll dig into *why* one works better as the lesson unfolds.**



QUICK REVIEW

Yesterday's Learning

✓ Yesterday

You learned The Three-Pass Editing Process — a systematic method for reviewing your own writing in stages.

→ Today

You will learn to think like an editor. Professional editors don't simply correct mistakes — they recognize *opportunities* to improve writing.

Editors Read Differently

The shift from reader to editor is a shift in the questions you ask while you read. It changes everything about how you engage with a piece of writing.

A Reader Asks

"What happens next?"

Readers follow the story, carried along by plot and curiosity.

An Editor Asks

"How could this be better?"

Editors step back from the story to evaluate *how* it is told — and what could make it stronger.

Today's Activity Overview

You will receive one Google Doc in Google Classroom. Inside, you'll find three drafts of the same piece of writing — each on its own page. Your job is to read, annotate, and analyze each one carefully.

1

Draft A

Page 1 — The original version

2

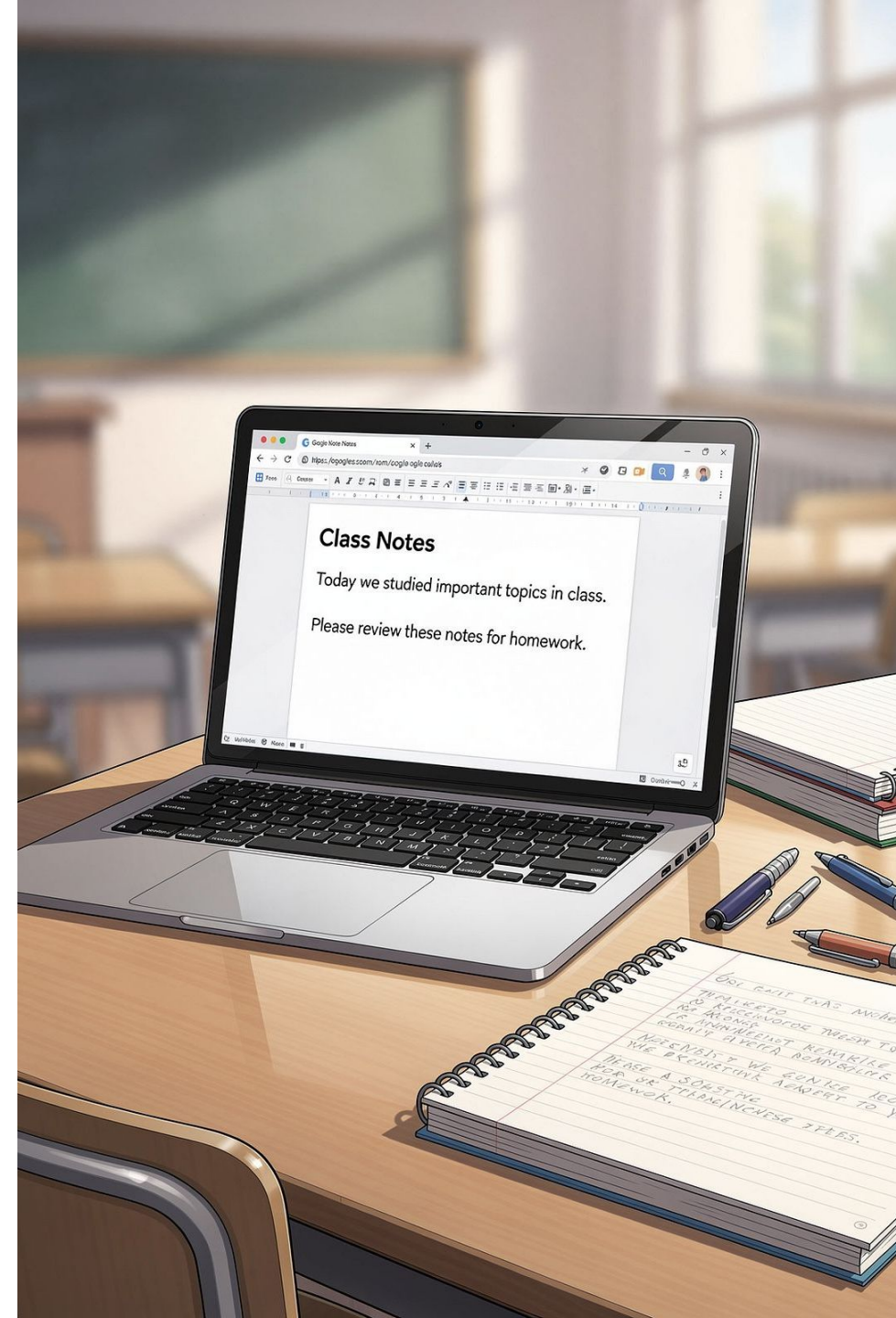
Draft B

Page 2 — After one editing cycle

3

Draft C

Page 3 — After another editing cycle



Before You Begin: Setup Steps

Follow these steps carefully before you start annotating. Working in your own copy protects the original document for everyone.

01

Open the Google Doc

Find it in Google Classroom and click to open.

03

Rename Your Document

Use the format: Lastname_Firstname_EditorsEye

02

Make a Copy

Go to File → Make a Copy to create your personal version.

04

Work in Your Copy Only

Complete all annotations in your own copy. Do NOT edit the original document.

Digital Editing Tools

Today you'll use Google Docs the way professional editors use real editorial software — marking up the text and leaving notes that explain your thinking. Just like a real editor, your goal is not only to *find* strong or weak writing, but to *explain why*.



Highlight

Use color highlights to identify effective or weak writing. Let the color signal your judgment at a glance.



Comments

Use Google Docs comments to explain what works, what could improve, and most importantly — why.



Editors always explain their thinking. A highlight without a comment is only half the work.

STEP 1

Draft A — Your First Read

Go to Page 1 of your Google Doc. Read the paragraph once all the way through before you annotate anything. Then go back and highlight:

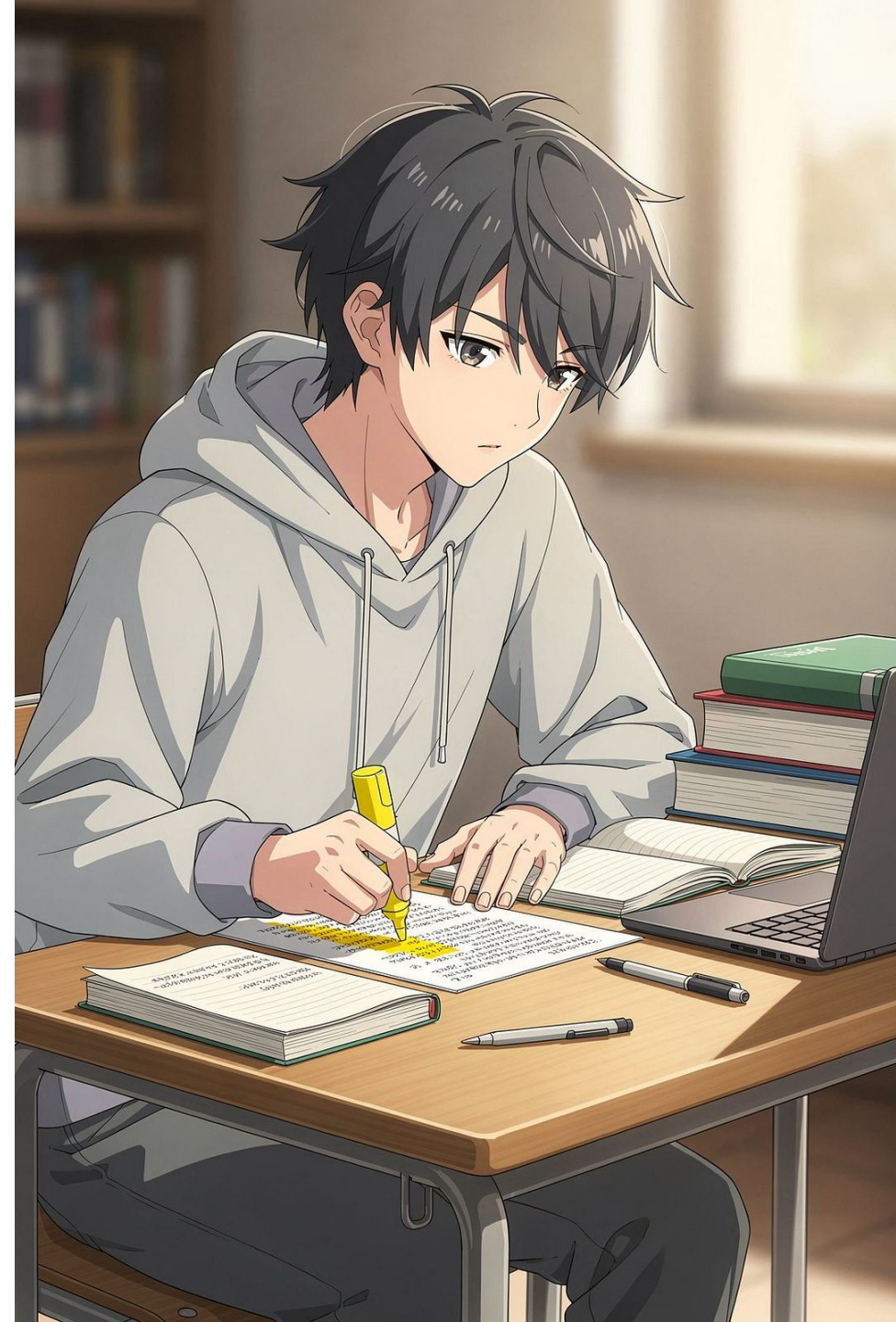
● The Strongest Sentence

Which sentence does the most work? Which one paints the clearest picture or creates the strongest feeling?

● The Weakest Sentence

Which sentence falls flat? Which one could be cut, combined, or rewritten for more impact?

Add a comment to each highlight explaining your choice. Do not rewrite the paragraph.



Compare with Your Partner

Once you've finished annotating Draft A independently, pair up with a partner and compare your findings. You may agree on some things — and disagree on others. That's not just okay, it's the point.



What Did You Both Notice?

Identify the highlights and comments you have in common.
What stood out to both of you?



Where Did You Differ?

Look for places where your opinions don't match. Don't just say you disagree — use evidence from the text to support your view.

 Professional editors often disagree. What matters is your ability to support your ideas with evidence from the writing.

STEP 2

Draft B — Spotting Improvement

Turn to Page 2 of your Google Doc. Read Draft B carefully, keeping Draft A in mind as you go. This time, your focus is on what has changed — and whether those changes actually made the writing stronger.

Highlight Improvements

Mark places in the text where you can feel or see the writing getting stronger. Look for sharper word choices, clearer sentences, or more vivid details.

Leave Comments Explaining

For each highlight, add a comment that explains what changed from Draft A and why that change is stronger.



STEP 3

Draft C — The Editor's Checklist

Turn to Page 3. Read the final version and look for specific craft elements. Highlight and comment on every example you find of the following:

✓ **Strong Verbs**

Precise, active verbs that show rather than tell.

✓ **Sentence Variety**

A mix of short, punchy sentences and longer, flowing ones.

✓ **Specific Details**

Concrete images and facts instead of vague generalities.

✓ **Effective Description**

Language that creates a clear picture in the reader's mind.

✓ **Smooth Organization**

Ideas that flow logically from one to the next.

Compare All Three Drafts

Now that you've annotated all three pages, look back across the entire document. You're building a complete picture of how this piece of writing evolved over multiple editing cycles. Ask yourself these questions — and support every answer with evidence from the text:

1

Which Draft Is Strongest?

Don't just say "Draft C." Point to specific sentences or moments that make it the strongest version.

2

What Changes Made the Biggest Difference?

Were there one or two key edits that had an outsized impact on quality?

3

Which Editing Pass Created Those Improvements?

Connect the improvements back to the Three-Pass Editing Process from yesterday's lesson.



Teacher Reveal

Here's what those three drafts actually were — and what this tells us about the writing process:

Draft A

The original, unedited version — exactly as it was first written.

Draft B

Draft A after one full editing cycle — word choice, sentence structure, and clarity reviewed.

Draft C

Draft B after another editing cycle — deeper revision for voice, detail, and flow.

Great writing is built through revision — not written perfectly the first time. Every professional writer revises. Every time.

Reflection

Before you submit, take two minutes to complete the following sentence in your Google Doc. Think carefully — you'll be asked to share your answer with the class.

Today I learned that editors...

Go Beyond the Obvious

Don't just write "fix mistakes." Think about the bigger idea — how editors *see* writing, how they ask questions, how they improve rather than simply correct.

Be Ready to Explain

You may be called on to share your sentence and defend it with an example from today's activity.



Exit Ticket & What's Next

Today: Submit Your Work

Submit your fully annotated Google Doc through Google Classroom before the end of class. Make sure your name is in the file title and all three drafts have highlights and comments.

Tomorrow: Apply It Yourself

Tomorrow you'll take the editorial thinking you practiced today and apply it independently to a brand-new narrative. You'll move from *analyzing* someone else's writing to *improving your own*.

 **The editor's eye you developed today is one of the most powerful tools a writer can have. Use it every time you revise.**