

## MINI-LESSON



# REVISION

At some point, you'll start to feel like your story is finished. But all stories can be improved, and some of the best ones out there get revised many times before they are ever published. To improve your story, you need to revise it. In this lesson, we'll look at two different strategies for revision: one you do on your own, and one you do with a classmate.

### SELF-REVIEW

You can do a lot on your own to review and revise your own writing. Here are some tips to make the most of that:

- 1. Print it out.** If you can, print out your story when you think it's done. Looking at it on paper will always help you see things you don't see on a screen.
- 2. Read it out loud.** This is one of the BEST things you can do to improve your writing. Slowly and carefully, actually *read your story out loud*—you will notice things that you just don't notice otherwise. When you come to places that sound wrong or need changing, just mark these places so you can change them later.
- 3. Review the rubric.** Go over the rubric that your teacher will use to grade your story, and look for evidence that you've done what's required. If you haven't, then you need to make some changes to your story.
- 4. Repeat.** Once you've revised your story, go back to the beginning of this list and do it again. You'll be amazed at how much you'll want to change the second time around.

### PEER REVIEW

This is where another classmate reads your story and gives you feedback. After reading your story, a peer could:

- **Summarize it.** Having someone else tell *you* what your story is about is a good way to see if you wrote the story you wanted to write.
- **Use the rubric to “score” it.** This will help you see if you are missing any requirements.

- **Point out three places that are working, and three places that need improvement.** This helps you see what you're doing right and where you need improvement.

## **GUIDELINES FOR GIVING HELPFUL FEEDBACK**

When you are giving feedback to your peers, follow these guidelines for giving helpful feedback.

1. **Early rounds are not for editing.** When you and your classmates are revising stories, you should be adding details, reorganizing things, and developing the story. This is not the time to go through and fix spelling or punctuation errors.
2. **Start with praise.** Before you give someone feedback about what is NOT working with their story, point out a few things that ARE working.
3. **Be specific.** It's much more helpful to point out one sentence that is especially good than to just say "Good story."
4. **Offer suggestions with your criticism.** Whenever you can, try to give the writer some kind of advice about what they should do to fix a problem, rather than just pointing out the problem.
5. **Describe your feelings as a reader.** Comments like, "I got confused here," or "This part made me laugh," remind the writer that they are writing for an actual audience, and the choices they make will change how the readers experience their story.

### **What to Do Now**

- Do a self-review of your story by reading it out loud. Remember to go slow and mark places you'd like to change.
- Have at least one peer read your story and give you feedback. When you are giving feedback, remember the guidelines from this lesson: don't focus on editing, start with praise, be specific, offer suggestions, and describe your feelings as a reader.