

Inspiring Writers!

# How to edit without tears.

Read well. Write well. Think well.



**blackbird & company**

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E D U C A T I O N A L P R E S S  
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Writing is an  
art form.

Nurturing an idea is fulfilling work.

Great writing never begins with collecting a basket of capitalization, punctuation, or grammar!

**Great writing always begins with an IDEA!**





Imagine you are a dog. What would you look for in a person to be his friend? here us

Hook: It's tricky to imagine being a dog!

but  
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IF I WAS A DOG, I WOULD LOOK FOR A PERSON THAT WAS A QUICK THINKER.

Learning to write is the

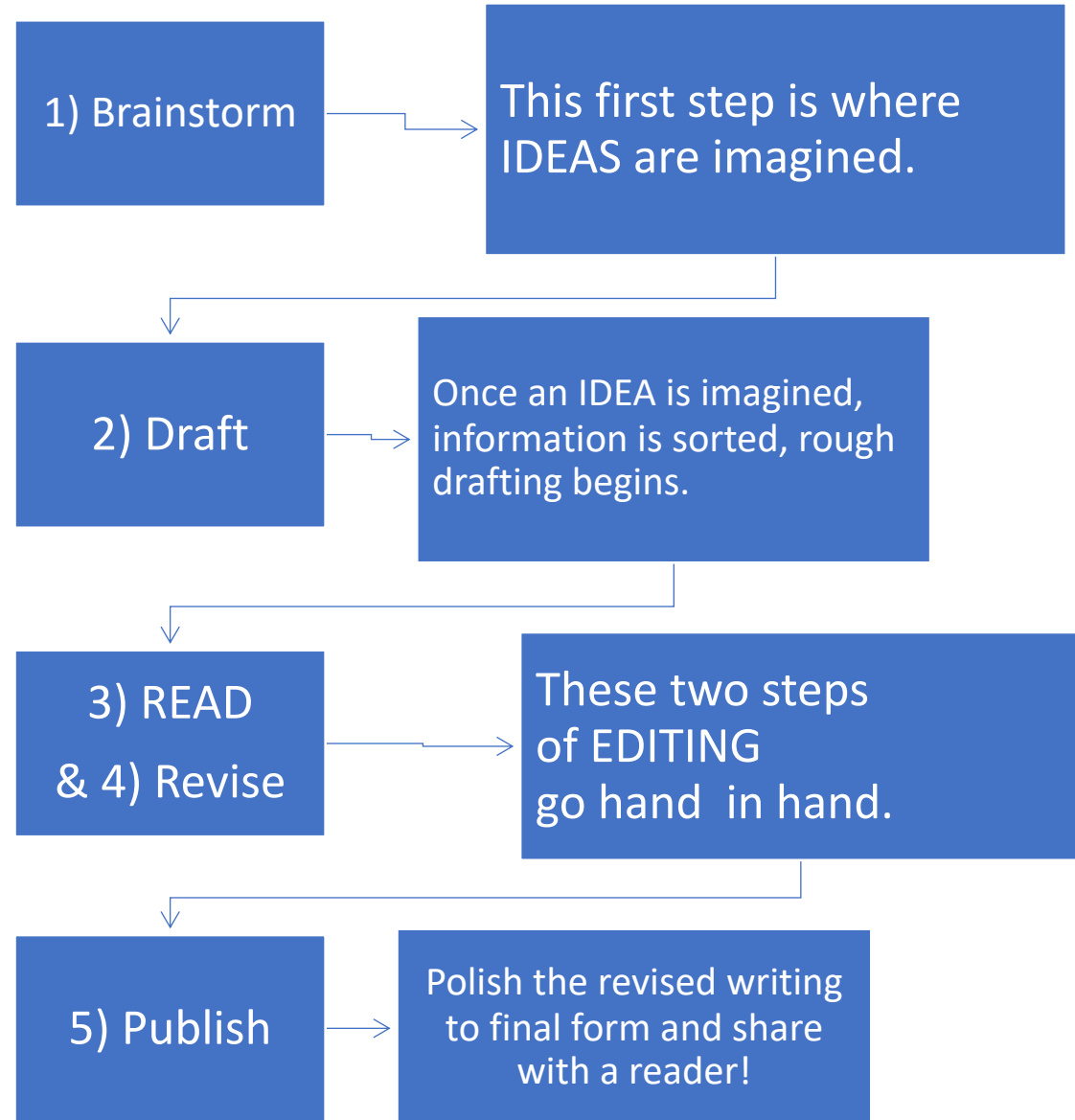
OPAL SHOWED SHE WAS A QUICK THINKER WHEN SHE HAD TO COME UP WITH A NAME FOR <sup>her</sup> ~~her~~ ~~idea~~ ~~idea~~

taming of an idea.

I WOULD ALSO LOOK FOR SOME ONE WHO WAS LOVING. OPAL SHOWED SHE WAS LOVING WHEN SHE SAVED HIM FROM



# FIVE Stages of the Writing Process





# Editing Elevates IDEAS

Writing cannot be accomplished by skipping steps!

Empowering students to engage in the simple steps of:

- 1) **RE-READING** the rough draft, and
- 2) **Activating their very own RED PEN** will ultimately elevate their ideas.


Before we  
begin...

You **CAN** become a writing mentor!

## **Encouragement & Guidance**

These are the primary tools of the  
writing mentor.





We partner with you to encourage your students to move from **IDEA** to **Rough Draft** to the **Edit** and the **Polished Final Draft** every step of the way.

**Blackbird & Company ELA curriculum** provides student writers with weekly prompts tied to great stories that will enable them to write across many genres each year.

Utilizing our CORE units, students will be supported through the steps of the writing process, composing 24 expanded paragraphs each school year.

**HOW?**

# Begin Here: **Form Follows Function**

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Who, when asked to write a sentence about an apple, will begin like this:

“I will need an interesting adjective, an adverbial phrase, plus a dependent and independent clause,” with a deep dive into grammar and mechanics and rhetoric?

**NOBODY!**

Form **FOLLOWS** Function is the most important rule of writing.

Empower your students to understand this rule, that the **function**, or **PURPOSE**, of writing is always the idea, and the **form** (punctuation, spelling, grammar, rhetoric) are always attended to during the editing of the roughly drafted idea.





Editing  
enables IDEAS  
to come first...

To clarify, we are NOT saying *don't teach capitalization, punctuation, or grammar.*

We are simply saying that primarily focusing on mechanics over and above actually constructing ideas will *never* produce exceptional writing.

The best way to learn to write is to WRITE.



# Let the editing begin!

Once the idea is drafted in rough form, the writer digs back in (**re-reads with a red pen!**) to polish—corrects misspelling, capitalization, punctuation, embellishes word choice, improves syntax, and so on, for the purpose of communicating the idea well.

Writing is a process.



Editing Part 1.

## Encourage the Habit of Re-reading

Whenever a student writes words on a page—single words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs and beyond—the student should slow into the simple work of slowly reading those words aloud.

Build habit of re-reading.



Editing Part 2.

## Activate the Red Pen

First, while re-reading aloud slowly, the student will stumble on mistakes such as misspellings, missing capitalization or punctuation, sentence fragments or run-ons, even missing words.

Next comes the “conference read aloud” where the the writing mentor reads the rough draft aloud, making marks at areas needing revision.

Building the habit of using the RED PEN will empower students to press into revision.



# Broad Editing Checklist

- 1) Is the IDEA clear?
- 2) Do details support the IDEA?
- 3) Does the IDEA flow?
- 4) Do words and phrases enhance the tone?
- 5) Is the rhythm amiable with both short and longer sentences?
- 6) Do spelling errors distract?
- 7) Do errors such as punctuation or capitalization distract?



Is the IDEA clear?

This is the most important task of the writing mentor is to help students stay true to their ideas.

Allowing the student writer to read the idea aloud, provides an opportunity for you to listen carefully for the heart of the story.

Take care to work with the student's idea, not to change it. Encourage and teach the student to independently polish the idea through the process of editing.

# What you might encounter in the rough draft:

- 1) Sometimes the first sentence or two of the rough draft is shaky and a third sentence will really pop the idea into shape. Encourage the student to rearrange so that this strong sentence becomes the idea opener, the HOOK for the reader.
- 2) Sometimes the student writer will compose related details in an unrelated order. Encourage the student to organize ideas together for flow.
- 3) Sometimes the student writer will write the rough draft without spacing or punctuation. When the mentor reads aloud slowly while editing, the student will begin to hear space between words, the pause, the stop, and the inflection of punctuation and mechanics.



# We are here to support writers!

Blackbird students, from kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade will build a rich fund of knowledge gathered from the books they read and be introduced systematically to the **building blocks of reading and writing**.

**IDEAS** are sparked along the way.

We provide opportunities to practice the building blocks—notetaking, vocabulary development, prompts that provide a springboard to the significant genres of writing— all this and more to help students conquer writer's block, bring shape to ideas, and to raise their voice with pride.





YOU,  
as Writing  
Mentor...

...are equipped to delight in the IDEAS of your students, and as you do, the opportunity to challenge them to **READ** and **REVISE**.

**In so doing, you will be raising writers!**

# Let's Write!

Writing begins with an idea in the mind of the writer. Think of writing genres as the scaffolding that bring shape to an idea.

Ultimately writing is an art form that generously communicates an idea and sparks intrigue and delight in the reader.

“You can make anything by writing.” ~C.S. Lewis

Take Flight!



**blackbird & company**<sup>TM</sup>

READ WELL • WRITE WELL • THINK WELL