**Model the Writing Process**

**Edit for Correct Punctuation**

**Objectives**

*In this mini-lesson, students will:*

- Learn how to edit persuasive letters for punctuation.
- Edit practice sentences for appositives and quotations.
- Discuss how they can apply this skill to their own independent writing.

**Preparation**

**Materials Needed**

- Chart paper and markers
- Proofreading Symbols BLM (from Additional Resources)
- Persuasive Letters Checklist (page 64)
- Interactive whiteboard resources

**Advanced Preparation**

If you will not be using the interactive whiteboard resources, copy the modeling and practice texts (with errors) onto chart paper prior to the mini-lesson.

**Explain Editing for Punctuation**

**Say:** When we write our drafts, we try to get our ideas down and we don’t worry so much about grammar and punctuation. But once we finish our drafts, we need to go back and find any errors we’ve made and correct them. It’s especially important to use correct punctuation to make sure what we write is clear and easy to follow. When we’re writing persuasive letters, we are trying to convince our readers to accept our point of view. We want to write with authority. If we don’t write correctly, our readers might question whether we really know what we’re talking about and they may be less likely to accept our position on an issue. Today I’m going to show you how I edit my work to make sure I have used quotation marks and commas correctly.

**Model Editing for Correct Punctuation**

Display the modeling text (with errors) on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources. Ask students to listen as you read the passage aloud and look for grammar errors in your writing.

1. **If you answered “yes” to these questions, then I need your help.**

2. **Lena Rodriguez, their science teacher, told me, “We have been taking readings for five years.”**

**Modeling Text**

**After example 1. Say:** This sentence begins with the group of words “if you answered ‘yes’ to these questions.” To make the sentence easier to read, I need to put a comma after the word **questions** to set these introductory words apart from the rest of the sentence. Commas are usually used after introductory phrases or clauses.

**After example 2. Say:** These sentences include some dialogue and quotation marks. But are these quotation marks used correctly? I need to put a comma after the word **me** before the quotation begins. I’ll add that. I have too many quotation marks in this dialogue. I don’t need quotation marks around each sentence if I don’t introduce a new speaker or break up the sentence with “said Lena Rodriguez.” I just need quotation marks at the beginning of what she said and at the end of what she said. I’ll delete the extra quotation marks.
2. Rehearse

Practice Editing for Punctuation

Display the practice text (with errors) on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources.

| 1. In 1998, our elementary school had one crossing guard.  
2. Matthew pleaded, “This is our town. We’re all responsible or in charge for what happens to it.” |

Practice Text

Invite students to work with a partner to edit the text for punctuation. Partners should write their edited sentences and be prepared to share them with the class.

Share Punctuation Edits

Invite partners to read aloud their edited sentences and explain how their edits improved the writing. Invite a volunteer to make the corrections to the sentences on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources, or model how you use proofreading symbols during the editing process. Discuss and support students’ use of proofreading symbols.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: We learned how to edit our persuasive letters, especially when using commas and quotation marks. It is important that we edit for all types of punctuation when we are editing our own writing. If we have punctuation errors in our writing, our readers might not take our position seriously.

Review the Persuasive Letters Checklist (page 64) and encourage students who are at the editing stage of their independent writing to focus on punctuation and other conventions of good writing. During conferences, use the prompts on your conferring flip chart to reinforce students’ editing of appositives, quotation marks, and other errors.

4. Share

Bring students together. Invite volunteers to talk about their experiences editing their persuasive letters for punctuation and other basic writing conventions.

Strategies to Support ELs

Beginning

Support students’ use of punctuation in dialogue. Ask a student a question and record the answer using dialogue and quotation marks. For example, you might write, Maria said, “I like chocolate ice cream.” Repeat with other students and other examples of dialogue.

Intermediate and Advanced

Pair ELs with fluent English speakers during the “Practice Editing for Punctuation” partner activity.