Objectives

In this mini-lesson, students will:
- Learn to edit a biography for punctuation, focusing specifically on ending punctuation and commas.
- Edit practice sentences and share their edits with the class.
- Discuss how they can apply this skill to their own independent writing.

Preparation

Materials Needed
- Chart paper and markers
- Biography Checklist
- 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.

1. Focus

Explain Editing for Punctuation

Say: As we get closer to publishing our work, we need to focus on how well our writing reflects the rules of punctuation. Why do you think this might be important? (Allow responses.) When we put something out there with our name on it for others to read, we want it to be as good as we can make it. We want people to focus on the message—not on the mistakes that we didn’t find. That is what editing is about. When we edit, we get critical with ourselves. We find the mistakes we don’t want others to find. It is important for us to know how to edit for punctuation. This can sometimes be tricky because there are many different types of punctuation.

Model Editing for 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 errors in the writing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modeling Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. For the 1861 election, Douglass campaigned for Abraham Lincoln.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Lincoln was elected, and the Civil War began.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Douglass helped Lincoln with his re-election in 1864 and grieved deeply when the president was assassinated in 1865.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Where was Abraham Lincoln born?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After sentence 1. Say: I know that sentences need to have ending punctuation. Sometimes it’s easy to forget to put in the punctuation. This sentence is a statement and needs a period at the end. I’ll add one. The words “For the 1861 election” seem like an introductory phrase describing when Douglass campaigned. I’ll go ahead and add a comma.

After sentence 2. Say: I can see that this is a compound sentence. “Lincoln was elected,” is a complete sentence. If we take out the word and and capitalize the first t in the, we have another complete sentence. The two sentences are made into one sentence with the word and. I need to put a comma before the word and to make a compound sentence.

After sentence 3. Say: This sentence is a little tricky. At first I thought it might be a compound sentence because of the word and. It is not. The words before and can stand alone as a complete sentence, but the words after the word and cannot. This is not a compound sentence. It does not need a comma before the word and, and it’s correct.
After sentence 4. **Ask:** This sentence ends with a period, but is this the correct end punctuation? No, it isn’t because it’s asking a question. I need to add a question mark. It’s always a good idea to check that we’ve used the correct end punctuation. It’s easy to make a mistake when we’re writing our drafts quickly.

### 2. Rehearse

#### Practice Editing for Punctuation

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

| 1. In 1870, the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution was passed. |
| 2. South Carolina, Mississippi, and Georgia are states in the southern United States. |
| 3. I read the book about Frederick Douglass, and I wrote a book report about it. |
| 4. Where was Frederick Douglas born? |

**Practice Text**

Ask students to work with partners to edit each sentence for correct comma use and ending punctuation. Ask student pairs to write their edited sentences and be prepared to read them to the class and explain how the changes improved the sentences.

#### Share Practice Edits

Invite partners to read aloud their edited sentences and explain how their edits improved their writing. Make the changes to the sentences on chart paper or use the interactive whiteboard resources to 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 just learned to edit our biographies to improve our punctuation. Remember, good writers find and correct punctuation errors before taking their work to completion. When you leave errors in your writing, readers focus on these errors instead of on the subject of your biography.

Review the Biography Checklist (page 64) and encourage students who are at the editing stage of their independent writing to focus on editing for punctuation and other conventions of good writing. During conferences, use the prompts on your conferring flip chart to support students’ independent or peer editing.

### 4. Share

Bring the class together. Invite volunteers to discuss errors they found and were able to correct in their biographies.

### Strategies to Support ELs

**Beginning**

Support beginning ELs with a review of ending punctuation. Create flashcards of end punctuation. Then practice with simple sentences. Write “What is your name” on chart paper. **Say:** What mark would you use at the end of this sentence? (Allow responses. If necessary, hold up the card with the question mark.) **Good! You use a question mark after a question!** Repeat with other examples.

**Intermediate and Advanced**

Pair ELs with fluent English speakers during the partner activity.