1. Focus

**Explain the Use of Numbers Versus Numerals in Running Text**

Say: In writing, there is a difference between a number and a numeral. A number is the amount of something, expressed in words, and a numeral is a symbol used to represent that number. For example, I might write the word *three* or the numeral *3*. When you want to represent numbers using numerals in the main text of a biography, there are a few important things to remember. First, whole numbers from one to one hundred are normally spelled out as words. Second, a number at the start of a sentence should be spelled out. Third, numbers that are greater than one hundred should be represented using numerals. Fourth, dates (such as *the year 2000*) are almost always written as numerals. The rules may be different in some cases—for example, we can use numerals even for small numbers if we’re trying to save space on a graph or in a table. Knowing when to use words as numbers and when to use numerals is important for biography writers because—among other uses of numbers—they often use dates in time or mention a person’s age to tell when events occurred.

**Model Using Numerals in Running Text**

Display the following text on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources.

1. The three rulers divided the Roman Empire among themselves.
2. In the summer of 41 B.C.E., Mark Antony summoned Cleopatra to Tarsus.

**Modeling Text**

**Read sentence 1.** Say: *I see the word three instead of the numeral 3 in this sentence. The number three is less than one hundred. This explains why the number is spelled out as a word.*

**Read sentence 2.** Say: *Here, I see that numerals represent the date 41 B.C.E. I remember that writers use numerals for dates. So this sentence makes sense.*
2. Rehearse

Practice Using Numbers Versus Numerals in Running Text

Display the practice text on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources. Ask students to choose between the options in parentheses for each sentence—the numerals or the numbers spelled out as words. (Students do not need to copy the sentences.)

If your class includes English learners or other students who need support, use “Strategies to Support ELs.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. After Caesar’s death, (3, three) powerful Romans shared power.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. (4, Four) days later, Julius Caesar arrived in Egypt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Cleopatra and her son traveled to Rome with Caesar in (47, forty-seven) B.C.E.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Share Sentences with Numbers Versus Numerals in Running Text

Invite volunteers to tell whether they chose the spelled-out number or the numeral for each sentence. Discuss their choices as a class. Ask students the following questions:

- Did you choose the numeral or the number spelled out as a word for the sentence?
- Why did you choose the numeral or spelled-out number?

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: We learned that writers use both numerals and the words that represent them in writing. If a number is one hundred or less, you usually write out the number. If a number is more than one hundred, you usually use the numeral that represents the number. You spell out numbers that begin sentences. You use numerals for dates, and in some special cases to save space. Knowing how to write numbers correctly is important for biographies because you often include people’s ages, dates of events, and other numbers.

If you would like to give students additional practice choosing between spelled-out numbers and numerals in text, ask them to complete BLM 8.

4. Share

Bring students together. Review and provide corrective feedback based on students’ answers to BLM 8. Ask students to share what they learned about using numbers versus numerals in running text.

Strategies to Support ELs

Beginning

Beginning ELs are not ready to work on this English convention. While other students collaborate on the small-group activity or write independently, meet one on one with students to support developmentally appropriate skills based on their independent writing and language levels. For example, you may focus on building students’ understanding of the different possible forms of numbers between one and one hundred. Say different numbers aloud as you write their numeral and spelled-out forms. Encourage students to repeat the numbers back to you.

Intermediate and Advanced

Pair ELs with fluent English speakers to complete the “Practice Using Numbers Versus Numerals in Running Text” activity.