“Swish!”
Taking Free Throws at Proofreading

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**Background Information**

Do you remember being in fifth grade? You are beginning to accept the fact that school is getting more challenging and middle school and high school are rapidly approaching. You are excited, but a little scared. You are also realizing it is becoming increasingly important to have a “social life” and be included in the popular group. That makes it fun to go to school to see your friends. There reaches a point where it’s difficult to maintain interest in school and in what your teacher is trying to teach. It seems like life is throwing you into a fast-moving whirl-wind!

As I reflect upon my fifth grade experience, I recall feeling similar emotions of anxiety and excitement. Additionally, I remember expressing a great degree of disinterest towards the task of writing in my fifth grade English class. Our dry English text books included pages of definitions and practice problems which seemed uninteresting and time-consuming. I felt I was able to communicate effectively without knowing all of the rules for grammar and mechanics accompanying the English language. During class, we would read several pages out-loud and be instructed to complete the writing exercises at the end. As a result, I put enough thought and effort into the exercises to get me through each lesson.

The pattern of repetitive English exercises and boring grammar lessons set the stage and continued throughout my high school career. I simply had a hard time maintaining interest. When I noticed I had a weakness in these areas I felt it was too late. I assumed I would eventually pick it up before I proceeded to go on to college. Little did I know college classes would provide a whole new level of writing and grammar usage? When I applied to the college of choice, Penn State University, they informed me I would need to take a preparatory English course in the summer because my English grades and English/writing portion of the SAT’s were below average. I had to quickly learn how to write properly and proofread for mechanics if I wanted to succeed and excel in college.

I took advantage of the opportunity to explore exciting and interesting English and writing courses at Penn State during my undergraduate study. When I returned to Penn State to pursue an Elementary Education certificate, writing and grammar became one of the passions I wanted to be able to share with my students. I want students to experience the power and importance effective communication through your writing has to offer.

Presently, I am a Penn State Elementary Education intern participating in a year-long internship at Houserville Elementary. Houserville is one of the eleven elementary schools in the State College Area School District and includes grades three to five, with three classroom teachers per grade. The approximate number of faculty and students in my school are 250. This rurally developed area sits amongst rolling valleys of farmland and curvaceous mountain ranges. Residents to the State College area primarily consist of individuals of a White decent. There is little diversity in the local surroundings; however, the college town contributes greatly to the diversity that does exist.
What Led Me to This Study

The academic development of the 22 students in my fifth grade classroom include a range of students who are gifted and talented, to students who have special challenges and receive learning support several times a week. Those students who are gifted/talented (three boys) are presently leading the class in academic achievement and participate in learning enrichment activities (reading and math) two times a week. There are four boys and two girls who have special learning challenges and receive learning support several times a week. Two of those girls and one boy, are in the process of receiving learning support for spelling and comprehension. Two of the boys are in the process of receiving learning support for writing. Only one of the boys is receiving learning support for a hearing disability. Some of the students receiving learning support (four girls, one boy) have also displayed difficulties in reading and mathematics.

The beginning of the school year introduced new procedures and routines meant to assist my students. They were encouraged to carry-out these repetitive activities in order to establish a regular schedule for the rest of the year. Activities that were included in their daily routine were: classroom “crew” duties; lunch sign-up; reading the morning letter (performing assignments); lining-up to go to “Specials”; cleaning desks; etc. It didn’t take long for students to get into the routine. A great majority were on a similar schedule to my mentor teacher and me by the third or fourth week of school.

As October and November approached, I started noticing the repetitiveness and consistency which existed in the students’ morning work, as well as, the behaviors accompanying it. More specifically, I recognized every Tuesday and Thursday was the same thing; write MUG Shot (Mechanics Usage and Grammar) sentences on the chalkboard and instruct the students to copy and correct the grammatical mistakes. I observed a wide range of behaviors from the students when instructed to conduct these morning activities. I recognized some students were writing the sentences in the incorrect form and correcting them as we went over them as a class. I also noticed several students completed two or three sentences and finished when we reviewed them as a group. Additionally, there were a few students who came up to the carpet with a clipboard to copy, and correct, the sentences during the fifteen-minutes designated for morning work. I saw little interest and less effort being exerted towards MUG Shot sentences as the weeks progressed.

A month passed and I began teaching the morning activities more frequently. As I took over the MUG Shot sentences, I tried to peak their interests by making connections to prior knowledge and providing additional information about the objects, people, or events being referred to in the sentences. This method worked, but only for a hand-full of students and only for limited time.

As I began to teach spelling and started paying closer attention to student writing, specifically for grammar and spelling, I noticed students were rushing and not proofreading their work. Their writing (for content) was on grade-level and fairly appropriate for this point in the school year. However, I saw no
evidence of students proofreading for surface errors, (spelling, punctuation, and word usage errors), before handing in an assignment. (Figueroed & Varnhagen, 2004) I started asking myself, “Do the students understand what is meant by proofreading their work,” I continued, “Are the MUG Shot sentences helping the students with their proofreading skills? Or is the students disinterest in the activity preventing them from learning?”

When I started teaching the morning activities full-time I decided to change the MUG Shot assignment slightly. To establish if the students were actually proofreading the MUG Shot sentences, I randomly announced for students to hand their assignment in at the conclusion of morning work time. (See Appendix I-30) I quickly discovered most students copy the sentences directly and correct them as we go over them as a class. I was again left with additional questions. I wondered, “Do students see the value in proofreading their work?”

“Is proofreading for mechanics and grammar an area we are neglecting in our teaching?”

“How can I change students’ attitudes towards proofreading?”

“How can I improve proofreading from the current program of MUG Shots, to something more interesting?”

Finally, the question I was driving to figure out, “How can I make proofreading more fun and interesting to the students?”

**Inquiry Design**

**Procedure**

I began my research in the present vicinity of my school district. My mentor teacher shared a personal observation she obtained regarding the fifth grade Language Arts Assessment testing. She explained, “None of the three LAC tests implemented throughout the year assesses students on the mechanics of their writing. The LAC testing focuses strictly on the content of student work.”

I found this particularly interesting, considering the school district obtained an already integrated language arts curriculum, with very little concentration on teaching the English as a subject. I further researched the fifth grade language arts curriculum for State College School District. I wanted to see the focus and extent to which concepts surrounding proofreading is covered, implemented, and taught in a fifth grade classroom. I identified the writing standards (which are aligned with Pennsylvania State Standards) students are expected to have met by the end of fourth grade and at the conclusion of fifth grade. All students entering fifth grade are expected to be at the “Bridging Stage.” Some of the benchmarks students are expected to demonstrate include:

- writing in complete sentences;
- using appropriate ending punctuation;
• using commas in series, in letters, between city and state/country, between adjectives, and for numbers;
• using apostrophes in contractions;
• editing for conventional spelling (high-frequency words); and
• beginning to use dialogue appropriately, not necessarily with correct punctuation.

At the closing of the first marking period, my mentor teacher and I established that a majority of the students were at the Fluent Stage. There were only four students still classified at Bridging. Since it was early in the year we did not find this too unusual. However, students are expected to be at the “Fluent Stage” at the end of fifth grade, which requires many of the Bridging concepts to be mastered. Some of the benchmarks students are expected to demonstrate include the previous standards, as well as the following additions:
• using apostrophes in contractions and in most possessives;
• using dialogue in contractions and in most apostrophes; and
• editing capitalization.

I recognized several of the students may need extra attention and encouragement towards reaching and achieving this benchmark.

After uncovering the structure behind the language arts curriculum I collaborated with veteran teachers and fellow-colleagues in the school. When discussing the concept of proofreading with a veteran teacher in fifth grade, he chuckled and said, “Good luck trying to get the children excited about proofreading their work. You almost need extrinsic rewards to motivate them to proofread.”

When asked what he did in his classroom for proofreading, he showed me a sample document the students would read from the overhead projector each week. They would correct the grammatical mistakes independently and collaborate on the corrections as a group. He concluded by saying, “Proofreading, like spelling, is more affective,” he continued, “A student has to want to do it or have a reason to do it.”

I also met with another fifth grade veteran teacher in my school. She teaches Writers Express to both her students and my students three times a week. I asked how much time was spent on mechanics and proofreading their work? She identified a three to four week time-span spent focusing on the different grammatical areas of writing (comma usage, verb usage, quotations marks, capitalization, etc.) But no extended period of time was devoted to the process of proofreading. She also showed me several mini-lessons involving the writing process, and individual lessons focusing on grammar usage.

As I began researching general proofreading methods and strategies, I was finding many useful studies focusing on group collaboration in proofreading and spelling strategies through proofreading. I decided to focus some of my research on group collaboration because I wanted to know if working in groups would be more effective than working independently. I found in a recent study, individuals who looked at the performance differences between children who collaborated during a reasoning-task to children who did
not collaborate. (Teasley, 1995) One of their discoveries supported that “learning is facilitated by exposure to a greater number and diversity of explanations and possible solutions.” (Teasley, 1995) I found an additional study which focused on the effects group collaboration had on detecting surface errors during proofreading. (Nihei, Y., Terashima, M., Suzuki, I., & Morikawas, S., 2002) Their results showed “the individual group detected significantly more ‘contextual errors’, which are found by tracking the context of a passage, than surface errors.” (Nihei, Y., Terashima, M., Suzuki, I., & Morikawas, S., 2002) Both studies reported promising results for group collaboration over independent work.

Although I uncovered a wide-range of strategies for spelling enhancement, I found a study conducted by Lisa Kervin, to be most advantageous and encouraging. She conducted a study to show that proofreading skills is an integral part in spelling development. Kervin feels “proofreading is a powerful strategy in children’s development as spellers…it should be taught explicitly, along with other reading, writing, and spelling skills.” (Kervin, Lisa K., 2002) I took note of several of her spelling strategies and saw much room to expand upon them.

In the classroom, I started encouraging students to proofread their in-class work and writing assignments more often. I also began collecting assignments unannounced to check for spelling and grammatical mistakes. I was hoping to identify if students were being lazy, in regards to not proofreading their work, or was it that they didn’t know what I meant by, proofread their work. I checked and analyzed spelling, MUG Shots, and journal entries. I attempted to use those three subjects as a constant reminder for students to proofread their final copy before handing it in to be graded. (See Appendix I-31 & I-32)

After a couple of weeks of unannounced checking and proofreading reminders, I wanted to identify how students felt about their proofreading skills. I created a pre-proofreading survey asking for their opinions on the present proofreading activity, as well as, how they felt about their proofreading skills. (See Appendix I-33 & I-34) Prior to distributing the survey to the class, I conducted a piloted-version of the survey to two students in my classroom. I wanted to ensure the survey was clear and concise, as well as, age-appropriate and easily comprehendible. After reviewing the completed piloted-version, I adjusted questions to be mostly, “Choose the correct response” and I provided clearer instructions.

Ultimately, the student feedback I received from the pre-proofreading survey provided me with the direction and motivation for how to establish a unit, involving proofreading activities which is both interesting and educational.

March was rapidly approaching and I wanted to establish a theme students would find intriguing and interesting. I considered activities or sports which are popular to fifth grade students, such as soccer, volleyball, basketball, and football. I realized the big event that was beginning across the country—March Madness. This was a great way to incorporate a “real-life” current event with learning that would be taking place in the classroom. I incorporated the structure of the NCAA March Madness Tournament (See
Appendix I-35) into a proofreading tournament for our classroom. NCAA basketball teams from four conferences were incorporated into a classroom tournament bracket, to also include four teams from the classroom. I constructed tournament brackets on the computer and included the college team names within the appropriate conference brackets. I had the brackets enlarged and arranged them on a bulletin board in the classroom. Students were randomly selected (picking conference names out of a hat) into a group of five or six students and given a Conference (Big East, Big Ten, Big Twelve, and Conference U.S.A.) where they chose their team name.

I used the five areas of proofreading (identified from the pre-proofreading survey) to act as a round in the March Madness tournament. (See Appendix I-36) The four teams could advance into the next round by meeting the minimum number of points required. I established a detailed description of rules and procedures to be followed during March Madness and posted them on the bulletin board. (See Appendix I-37)

After incorporating two of the five proofreading concepts into one round, the March Madness tournament included four rounds, a quarterfinal, and finals. The four rounds of activities incorporated the concepts of spelling, commas and quotations marks, apostrophes, and homophones. Each round included two to four team activities. I used student artifacts to determine interest levels and learning response from the first round to plan for each following round. For example, round one (spelling) included two spelling worksheets to be completed as a group and an actual basketball shoot-off reflecting the accuracy demonstrated on those worksheets. If the student response during this round was not enthusiastic, or if I felt learning had not occurred, I would use the next round to make any adjustments in learning and enthusiasm. This pattern was continued throughout March Madness.

Round 1

- I placed spelling “Free-Throws” (one-sentence sheets of paper students correct and turn-in for extra points) in two pockets on the bulletin board. (Safro, 2003) Students may only do two “free-throws” per round. (See Appendix I-38)
- I handed out and discussed the four spelling strategies. (See Appendix I-39 – I-42) I tried to incorporate and expand on many of the rules located in the students Writers Express book. (Kemper, D., Nathan, R., Elsholz, C., & Sebranek, P., 2000) I also incorporated ideas from an article written by Lisa K. Kervin. She conducted a study to show that proofreading skills is an integral part in spelling development. Kervin feels “proofreading is a powerful strategy in children’s development as spellers…it should be taught explicitly, along with other reading, writing, and spelling skills.” (Kervin, Lisa K., 2002)
• The first activity included two worksheets involving spelling correction (Graham & McCoy, 1999). (See Appendix I-43 & I-44) Students were instructed to complete these worksheets individually or in their teams. They were allowed to use a “Spell-Ex” and a dictionary.

• I posted the half-time score (each teams’ total points after one activity) on the white board, located beside the bulletin board. Students had to accumulate 25 points to advance to the next round.

• Students received instructions for “The Great Spelling Shoot-Off.” Teams had approximately 25 minutes to work together in their teams to jointly correct the spelling mistakes on a letter. (See Appendix I-45 & I-46) Each student was instructed to complete the corrections on the letter. Each team chose one of their group members paper to place on top and this would be the one graded and awarded the points. The total number of spelling mistakes fixed correctly earned a certain number of seconds to make as many baskets as their team could. Each corrected mistake earned three seconds. For every basket a team made with the basketball, they received one bonus point.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5-10 corrections</th>
<th>15-30 seconds</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11-15 corrections</td>
<td>33-45 seconds</td>
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<tr>
<td>16-20 corrections</td>
<td>48-60 seconds</td>
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<tr>
<td>21-25 corrections</td>
<td>63-75 seconds</td>
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Round 2

• I placed comma and quotation mark “Free-Throws” in the two pockets on the bulletin board. (Safro, 2003) (See Appendix I-47)

• As a class, we reviewed comma rules and quotation mark rules. (See Appendix I-48 – I-50) I tried to incorporate and expand on many of the rules located in the students writers express book. (Kemper, D., Nathan, R., Elsholz, C., & Sebranek, P., 2000)

• The first activity included two worksheets involving comma insertion or deleting (Graham & McCoy, 1999). (See Appendix I-51 & I-52)

• I distributed “Sweet Sixteen” worksheets to the students to choose the final two NCAA teams they think may be in the finals of the NCAA March Madness tournament. (See Appendix I-53 & I-54)

• I posted the half-time scores for the Second round on the white board. Students had to accumulate 35 points to advance to the next round.

• I introduced the second activity, “Famous Quotations Rotation.” (See Appendix I-55 & I-56) The object of the game was to put the words together to form a sentence which states a “famous quote”. Each team earned one point for correctly placed punctuation (commas, quotation marks, and period); there were 20 points total to be earned. The team who completed the sentences with the fewest errors (most points) received an additional TEN Bonus points towards the next round. Students received four minutes per sentence/station. Teams moved in a Clockwise rotation.
Round 3

- I placed apostrophe (possessive) sentence correction “Free-Throws” in the two pockets on the bulletin board. (Safro, 2003) (See Appendix I-57)
- I introduced singular and plural possessive nouns to the students. (See Appendix I-58 & I-59) I tried to incorporate and expand on many of the rules located in the students Writers Express book. (Kemper, D., Nathan, R., Elsholz, C., & Sebranek, P., 2000)
- The first activity for this round took place between two teams. Each team received a worksheet (See Appendix I-60) with four columns, (Singular; Singular Possessive Nouns; Plural; Plural Possessive Nouns). First, each team was instructed to write down 30 singular nouns (challenging or not challenging), and exchange it with the opposing team. The opposing team then fills in the rest of the chart with the correct form of the noun that is being asked. Points are rewarded the following way: the opposing teams earn points by correctly writing the appropriate nouns on the original team’s paper. If the original team makes a mistake (such as writing a verb instead of a singular noun or misspelling the word) the opposing team receives a point for discovering the error. Students received approximately 20-25 minutes to work on this activity in their teams.
- I posted the half-time scores for the third round on the white board. Students had to accumulate 45 points to advance to the next round.
- I collected finished and un-finished singular/plural worksheets to use in the second activity, “Possesso Ball.” (See Appendix I-61) I set up the activity by first passing out a letter of the alphabet to each student (including only the number of letters corresponding to the number of students). I instructed students to sit on their desks (like in Silent Ball). The “Magic Possesso Ball” (soft, small basketball) was passed to the person matching the letter randomly called. This student then received a singular noun, which they had to say and spell the singular possessive or plural possessive form. Each student earned their team one point for each correct word. Incorrect words resulted in the student sitting in their seat. However, that student then chose a person he/she would like to throw the ball to. The incorrect word would be repeated for the next person. The points earned throughout this activity are added on to the singular/possessive worksheet score. The team with the person still sitting on the top of their desk at the end received ten additional points, to be added to their final score. I kept track of the points and the letters that were selected during the throwing process, (to avoid any one-person being thrown to repeatedly.)

Round 4

- I placed homophone sentence correction “Free-Throws” in the two pockets on the bulletin board. (Safro, 2003) (See Appendix I-62)
• I conducted a mini-lesson on homophones and homographs.

• The first activity was “Homophone & Homograph BINGO.” (See Appendix I-63 & I-64) Students received a word bank with homophones and homographs. They had to choose 24 words to fill in their bingo cards. They used little beans to identify the words. I read the students sentences which included one of the words on their word bank. They needed to determine how the word was being used in the sentence in order to know if they had that word on their card.

• The second activity was one homophone worksheet and a homophone crossword puzzle per student. Each student, in each team received 4-6 different sentences that were to be completed (as instructed). Since each student’s paper was different, I wanted them to complete them individually. They also received a BONUS crossword puzzle which was also meant to be completed individually. There was 2.5 points rewarded to both worksheets. Students only received 2.5 points on the crossword puzzle if it was completely correct. (See Appendix I-65 – I-70)

• I posted the half-time scores for the Fourth round on the white board. Students must accumulate 50 points to advance to the next round.

• The third activity was a “bonus-round.” The bonus round consisted of the students crinkling up their homophone worksheets and homophone crossword puzzles and standing at the foul line to take a shot at the mini-basketball hoop on the chalkboard. If they made the basket, they received “double” the score on their paper. Students received one shot per worksheet (2 shots.) I photocopied student homophone worksheets and crossword puzzles because they crinkled them up for the basket-shooting bonus round.

• The fourth and final activity was “Win-Lose or Draw” with Homophones. Students were read the rules for the activity (which were almost identical to the real win-lose or draw instructions.) Students received 5 points if they guessed their teammate’s sketch within 2 minutes. If they did not guess within the time allotted, the opposing team received 1 minute and/or one guess. If the opposing team guessed correctly, they received the 5 points and began the next round. An additional 2 points were distributed to the team who could say and spell the homophone that went with the sketched word.
  
  o For example: The words “Son/Sun” are written on a card and the word “Sun” is circled. The sketcher must draw that word. If the sketcher’s team guesses correctly, they can receive an additional 2 points if they spell its homophone correctly. The words “Son/Sun” could also be written with the “your choice” underneath—meaning the sketcher can choose which one they wish to draw.

Quarterfinals
Students received a “Strategies for Perfection” worksheet. (See Appendix I-71) which included 8 different strategies for proofreading work. The one I most emphasized was, “SHACQ-Attack.” I incorporated all of the concepts covered over the past five weeks into an easy-to-remember acronym (Spelling, Homophones, Apostrophes, Commas, and Quotation marks.) I told the students this was an easy way to remember all of the different areas to check when they’re proofreading. I also reviewed or introduced additional strategies that were recommended on the worksheet. (Smith, D. A., & Sutton, H. R., 1994)

Students received a practice letter. (See Appendix I-72 & I-73) They were told to read it through once independently and proofread for mistakes covered in March Madness. They could converse and collaborate with their team members upon finishing.

I distributed a post-proofreading survey, a ballot to vote for a student with “team spirit”, and a parent letter. The post-proofreading survey asked for students’ opinions on the new proofreading activity, as well as, how they felt about their present proofreading skills. (See Appendix I-74 & I-75) The “team spirit” ballot encouraged the students to recognize an individual who exhibited motivation and enthusiasm during the tournament. (See Appendix I-76) Finally, I sent home a letter to parents/guardians explaining the purpose of March Madness. (See Appendix I-77 & I-78) This letter also included three brief questions which parents/guardians were encouraged to discuss and answer with their child.

Quarterfinals! Students received a book report which they were to proofread and correct the mistakes. (See Appendix I-79) They were told to use any strategy (individual or group effort). They were also told the only mistakes made in the document were ones covered during March Madness.

I announced the two final teams.

Finals

I held a brief ceremony of recognition on the final day of March Madness and congratulated them on a job well-done. I distributed a “Certificate of Accomplishment” to each student. (See Appendix I-80) I also recognized the individual who obtained the highest number of points throughout the tournament, as well as, the student who showed the most improvement. (See Appendix I-81)

The final two teams received instructions (See Appendix I-82) in another classroom. They had to each write a paragraph including, correct spelling, 4 homophones, 4 possessive words, 8 commas, and 2 sentences with quotation marks. They were allowed to come together to proofread each others paragraphs after they were completed. They handed in all “5” paragraphs and the team with the fewest combined errors won the final round.
• The March Madness winners were announced and received their awards. The one team who successfully advanced through all six rounds and the five students being recognized for their accomplishments received a Houserville March Madness t-shirt.

**Data Collection and Results**

I conducted and collected pre-proofreading and post-proofreading surveys. The pre-proofreading survey was administered the first week of February, approximately four weeks before the start of March Madness. The purpose of this survey was to determine how the students felt about their proofreading skills. I also hoped to establish their feelings concerning the present proofreading activity being conducted in class. I administered the post-proofreading survey the final week of March Madness. The purpose of post-proofreading survey was to determine if the students’ opinions on proofreading or confidence in their proofreading skills changed after participating in March Madness. I also hoped to see how the March Madness proofreading activity compared to the previous proofreading activity, MUG Shots. In my final analysis, I combined and transferred data from the two surveys into charts in order to compare and contrast the results.

I conducted brief interviews with veteran teachers and my mentor teacher. I took advantage of opportunities during casual conversations to ask teachers questions concerning their proofreading strategies. I was hoping to acquire a feeling for where proofreading fit into each of the fifth grade classrooms at Houserville. As a result, I accumulated several quotes and stories from fellow-fifth grade teachers.

I maintained detailed journal entries every day for six weeks. I included in these journal entries: observations; documentation of activities and lessons; reminder notes to self; student comments and behaviors; point distribution; and any personal comments or opinions. I used the journal entries to document progress and maintain accurate records of the activities and lessons taking place in the classroom.

I created and collected field notes during the school-day. I kept a small notebook and carried the notebook with me at all times to document observations throughout the day. I wrote down student quotes and comments as I heard them and documented any ideas or suggestions for future activities as soon as they came to me. I also made sure to document most activities by photographing them with my digital camera. The field notes and photographs were meant to serve as an accurate depiction of the student enthusiasm and hands-on activities taking place in the classroom.

I collected student artifacts throughout the six weeks of March Madness. I photocopied or collected every activity or worksheet the students participated in during the six rounds of the tournament. The purpose of collecting student artifacts was to show the amount of enthusiasm, motivation, and achievement of the
students. I wanted to see if collaborating within their teams would drive them to turn assignments in on-time, motivate them to want to do better, or give them more confidence in their proofreading skills.

I collected parent-feedback through a parent letter containing three short-answer questions to be discussed and answered with their child. This letter was intended to inform the parents of what the students have been participating in over the past six weeks. If parents were uninformed of this activity up to this point, I wanted this to generate conversation between the parent and child, ultimately providing me with feedback of the child’s feelings about March Madness from the parent.

**Data Supporting Learning**

**CATEGORY ONE: Improving the Current Process**

**Claim One:** *The opinions my students hold on their favorite subject in my class will change over time.*

Looking at the chart, **All Subjects (Rating 1-5) Pre-Survey Results**, it was clear to see the MUG Shot unit was not effective in the minds of the students’. MUG Shots only had one person who ranked it in the top five subjects, in fact, it was ranked fifth.

When comparing the results from the chart, **All Subjects (Rating 1-5) Post-Survey Results**, there was definitely an improvement from the MUG Shots unit to the March Madness unit. March Madness, not only ranked several times in the top five with the students, it was tied with being ranked first with two other subjects (Writers Express and Technology). There were 17 students who ranked March Madness within the top five.

Out of all the subjects, March Madness had the most number of students rank it as their second favorite subject.
Claim Two: My students favor the new proofreading activity (March Madness) over the previously existing program (MUG Shots).

The charts showing the rankings from MUG Shots versus the rankings from March Madness revealed a higher ranking for March Madness. In the pre-survey, the students did not rank MUG Shots any higher than fifth out of ten. In the post-survey, there were three students who selected March Madness as their number one ranking and six students ranked it second. There were fourteen students who ranked March Madness in the top five, compared to one from the pre-survey results for MUG Shots. One of my initial questions, “How can I improve proofreading from the current program of MUG Shots, to something more interesting?” was answered in the results of this question by the students. The results from the survey shows students liked March Madness better than the MUG Shots, so the new program appeared to be more interesting than the previous one.
Claim Three: My students have the capacity to share additional educational ideas and suggestions.

A question on the survey was “What would make proofreading MORE FUN FOR YOU?” Some of the comments that were written by students on the Pre-Survey included:

- Getting 5 minutes to proofread with the whole class.
- Possibly switching your papers with a friend. Then you would proofread your friend’s work and visa-versa.
- It would be more fun for me if we had more commas in it.
- Putting it into a song.
- If you spell everything right, the whole class gets a treat but not as much as you.
- Always getting it perfect.
- Making it into a game.
- Pretending that each mistake you find, you’d get $100.
- Getting a piece of candy every time you fix one.
- Writing stuff that I will want to read over and over.
- If you would proofread for me until I get better.
- I would get a puppy every time I did it.
- Listen to music while doing it.

These suggestions demonstrate the students’ lack of interest in “just doing it” as part of their assignments.

When asking the question, how can I improve proofreading from the current program of MUG Shots to something more interesting, this was one sign that making it better was going to be a step in the right direction? After March Madness, some of the comments from the Post-Survey included:

- Having class time to do the proofreading.
- Switching papers with friends. Proofread with someone else.
- Do it to a song.
- Already think its improving.
- To think up ways to remember what to do.
- If you would win a prize.
- Say that my grades will be better.
- It’d be more fun writing it in poetry.
- March Madness is the best way for me.
- To not make it not so boring, play a game. Didn’t care of March Madness.
- Really like the strategies of March Madness (even though they can be corny).
- Spell check on paper and computer.
• I don’t like proofreading period.
• I think it’s pretty good by itself.

The final responses show that students came to realize whether they liked proofreading or not, they seemed to understand more clearly, the different aspects of proofreading and this helped them to determine their strengths and weaknesses. Those that were unsure of the entire concept of proofreading now understand and know where their proofreading skills rank.

**CATEGORY TWO: Gaining Confidence**

**Claim Four: My students establish an enhanced confidence in their class work.**

The chart for **Confidence in Proofreading Class Work – Pre-Survey**, shows the likes and dislikes of Spelling and Technology. There was one student that declared they thought Spelling was “Great.” Otherwise, it seemed that the ratings for Spelling fell between Good and OK. That shows the students’ confidence level in Spelling needed some encouragement. Technology, on the other hand, was recognized “Great” by 11 of the students. Using this information helped me to determine that more emphasis should be placed on spelling than technology during March Madness.

![Confidence in Proofreading Class Work - Pre-Survey](image)

The chart for **Confidence in Proofreading Class Work – Post-Survey**, shows the activities used in March Madness for spelling had an impact with the students’ confidence levels in Spelling. It went from one in the pre-survey to seven in the post-survey. Technology ratings of “Great” remained the same (11) from the pre-survey. One thing noted from the results of their confidence levels is there were more students that rated Spelling “Awful” in the post-survey than the pre-survey. This could indicate a couple issues: either the activities made the students realize they needed more attention in spelling than initially thought, or the activities made them dislike spelling more than they did at the beginning of March Madness.
Claim Five: *My students establish an enhanced confidence in their own writing.*

The chart from the pre-survey results, **Confidence in Proofreading Their Own Work - Pre-Survey**, shows students working with “Journals” had the lowest confidence level. Homework had only 4 students rate it “Great” and Stories had the highest rating of “Great” with 6 students. The majority of the students rated Journals and Homework “OK” and Stories were rated “Good.” Using this chart, it was determined to spend more time in activities dealing with their Journals and Homework to build their confidence levels.

The chart, **Confidence in Proofreading Their Own Work – Post-Survey**, shows the students’ confidence levels were up slightly, from one to four, for rating Journals “Great.” Homework also had an increase in the Great rating, going from three to four. Journals, which were already the highest rating of “Great” in the Pre-Survey, continued with that higher rating, going from six to eight.
The main focus of the questions in the survey was to determine where students felt confident when doing work in the class and on their own. These questions were part of the solution to the question; how can we improve proofreading from the current program of MUG Shots to something more interesting? This information was very valuable to determine the direction to take to actually make an improvement over the current program.

**CATEGORY THREE: Identifying Problem Areas**

**Claim Six: My students can more accurately identify problem areas in their writing and proofreading skills.**

There were eight areas of proofreading listed on the survey for students to determine which ones they felt they experienced problems. In the chart, *Comparing Problem Areas – Pre-Survey*, “spelling words correctly” and “when / where to use commas” stood out as the areas identified as the biggest problem.

After March Madness, results of the post-survey showed the number of students who had a problem with spelling decreased from eleven to eight. Those that indicated having problems working with commas, also decreased from eleven to six. The activities made an impact on the students in the areas that had previously been identified as problems. One area that shows no change before or after the introduction of March Madness, was the use of apostrophes. Students felt this was a problem area before and there was no change after March Madness. Both charts show nine students felt this was still a problem. Another area identified as a problem, which had no change was verb usage. Verb usage (tenses), capitalization, and punctuation (ending of sentences) were not identified as problem areas for the majority of students, therefore the material was not covered in March Madness. Looking at the charts, the two areas that remained the same
could be areas to focus on for upcoming proofreading or grammar lessons. There were no subjects identified as bigger problems in the post-survey.

![Comparing Problem Areas - Pre- and Post-Surveys](image)

**Claim Seven: My students obtain a clearer understanding of the importance of proofreading.**

The survey requested students to provide feedback on their opinions on the importance of proofreading. The question was: “Do you think proofreading is important? YES / NO and Why? Or Why not?”

The responses from the Pre-Survey if proofreading was considered important:

- You can spot mistakes you didn't have time to spot.
- After you proofread your work turns out better.
- You might get something still wrong and everyone will know.
- So we can end a sentence and know that someone is talking.
- I think it's because it helps you find your mistakes.
- It helps people to read your papers better.
- You might find a mistake that you missed.
- It would be important to spell words right.
- It helps you get your grades up.
- It helps with grammar and your grades.
- If you don't, you could get a failing grade.
- It helps make you know what you are supposed to write in a sentence then if it's wrong, you know what to write.
• It hasn't helped my grades.
• It helps improve any work.

The responses from the Post-Survey if proofreading was considered important:
• You can spot mistakes.
• When you look over your paper again, you find many mistakes that you can correct.
• If no one proofreads they might put something embarrassing on a paper or newspaper.
• If we didn't have it, we could not express our feelings.
• If you go over it again, you can find a lot of mistakes you wouldn't find if you didn't go over it again.
• It's important to get the very best grade you can get.
• If people wouldn't spell things right, people might not know what the person said.
• It helps your grades.
• If you don't proofread, then many of your answers could be wrong.
• If you don't, you could get a whole grade lower for not proofreading.
• Then you get a better grade on writing.
• It helps other people.
• If you don't proofread, then you would have a lot of mistakes.

The responses were similar before and after. There were a few students that seemed to feel proofreading was more important than they first realized. The majority of the students realized its importance, but did not like to proofread or didn’t have a clear understanding of it. Out of 22 surveys reviewed, there were two students who responded that proofreading was not important on the pre-survey. One student responded with a “no” on the pre-survey and on the post-survey. The comment on the post-survey was that they spell everything correctly every time (indicating there was no need to proofread). These results helped me determine the students’ understanding of the importance of proofreading.

**CATEGORY FOUR: Evaluating the Results of Different Levels of Students**

**Claim Eight: Students of all achievement levels were impacted in my class.**

In order to get a useful sampling of different students at different levels of achievement, six students were selected, prior to the start of March Madness, and their surveys were evaluated. There were two students identified as higher achievers, two as middle achievers, and two as lower achievers. The different subjects were broken down and results compared pre-survey results and post-survey results.

The first chart compares the ratings on confidence working with journals. There were no students out of the six that selected journals as being “Great” in the pre-survey. In the post-survey, one of the six did rate journals a “Great.” The pre-survey shows they were divided equally between “Good” and “OK.” Breaking
it down further, the higher achievers remained the same, and indicated no change in their ratings. The middle achievers had one student who remained the same and one student who went from “Good” to “OK.” The lower achievers had one student remained the same and one student who went from “Good” to “Great.” It’s interesting to note that it was a low achiever that felt journals were now “Great.”

The next chart compares ratings on stories. The pre-survey shows the majority of the students rated stories as “Good” or “OK.” The post-survey shows they split their rankings between great, good, OK, and not good. When breaking this down, there was one high achiever who lowered their rating from “Good” to “OK.” One of the lower achievers went from “OK” to “Not Good” and the other low achiever went from “Good” to “Great.” This could demonstrate students who dropped their ratings were either bored with the material for stories or found proofreading made it even more difficult than they had experienced in the past.
Homework ratings went from “OK” in the pre-survey to mostly “Good” in the post-survey. There wasn’t a lot of change in the breakdown between the different levels of students. No student dropped their rating in this category, most confidence ratings increased.

![Selected Students - Comparing Homework Ratings](image)

The spelling ratings improved from the pre-survey to the post-survey. One middle achiever answered “Awful” for both pre-survey and post-survey. The higher achievers each increased their ratings and a low achiever switched from “Good” to “OK.”

![Selected Students - Comparing Spelling Ratings](image)

The technology ratings also showed improvement with only one student, a middle achiever, rating it from “Good” to “OK,” and a lower achiever upgrading the rating from good to great.
Monitoring this data from a randomly selected group, with representation from the three different level of achievers helped to determine the level of activities to use for March Madness. I wanted the activities to be challenging enough to maintain the interest of the high achievers, yet not too challenging to leave behind the lower achievers.

The chart of the Problem Areas chosen by the six selected students shows improvement from pre-survey to post-survey in the areas of spelling, commas, and quotations. Only two areas were selected by these students as not improving: verb usage and word usage. Verb usage was not part of the activities for March Madness. From this information, it could be determined that the activities for word usage needs to be re-evaluated to be more effective to students at all levels.
**CATEGORY FIVE: Monitoring Progress**

**Claim Nine: Maintaining detailed, daily journal entries assisted me in monitoring student progress in my classroom.**

The March Madness unit ran for six weeks. Six weeks of documenting activities, results, and schedule adjustments would have been quite challenging had I not been writing a journal entry each day. The journal was a very valuable tool in assessing this unit. Areas I found particularly helpful were: documenting information about the activities that were completed and the dates they were completed; responses from the students; point distribution and grading; suggestions for new or revised activities; notes to self; and feedback from other teachers and parents. These were all critical parts of the unit I needed to review during and after the implementation of the March Madness. Looking back through the journal, will help determine a plan for the next March Madness unit, as well as, provide a reflection on the success, strengths, weaknesses and excitement that was all part of the unit.

**Claim Ten: Collecting student artifacts provides feedback and direction for future activities.**

**Round 1** – Each team needed 25 points to advance to round two. Spelling was the first subject covered. Using the activities that were completed and extra points for free throws, each team managed to make it to Round 2. Examples of activities included a three-paragraph letter which had 29 spelling mistakes for the students to identify and another paper for building proofreading into spelling. Some activities had time limits and some activities could earn students extra time to get points for free throws. Both of these activities and the free throws appeared to make the program a success so far. Each activity would be more difficult and challenging. As individuals and as a team, the students seemed to rise to the occasion to do their best.

**Round 2** – This round was designed to teach students how to use commas. The goal for each team is to meet a mark of 35/50 to go to Round 3. This round was more challenging for the students. The charts on “Problem Areas” can support this finding. This told me the activities needed to be better understood by the students, but still challenging enough to hold their interest, in order for each team to advance on to Round 4. To make things more interesting, a side activity was used involving the real March Madness NCAA Tournament. The students had to write their guess of which two teams from the NCAA Sweet Sixteen would make it to the finals. This made it more interesting for them and there was only one student that actually guessed right. When offered bonus points or a prize, he chose to take points in order to help his team’s score. The next activity for Round 2 involved quotations at different work stations. There was 20 possible points that could be earned in this exercise. The highest number of points received was two teams tying at 16. The other two teams were right behind them with 15 and 14. There was a tie-breaker between the two teams with 16 points. The enthusiasm of the students, at this point, was phenomenal – they decided to skip recess to continue the activity.
**Round 3** – This round involved learning singular and plural possessive nouns. This activity included two teams going against each other one-on-one. The first team wrote 30 singular nouns and gave them to their opposing teammates, who needed to write the correct form of noun that was requested. The way the points are rewarded is; the opposing team scores every time they write the correct noun on the original team’s paper. The opposing team could also gain points if the original team makes a mistake (writing a verb instead of a noun, misspellings, etc.). This activity was challenging for the students. They wanted to make the words difficult for their opposition so they would not score a lot of points. There was a possible 95 points to this activity and the team scoring the highest number of points had 85.

Another activity in this round was Possesso Ball which was more of an individual activity. The student would receive a singular noun and they would then have to spell the singular noun or plural possessive form of that word to use in a sentence. Each student earns one point for their team on the correct answer. If a student made an error, they were out of the game. This went on until only one student was left. This was a challenge to most of the students since it was an individual, yet class activity. The student was put on the spot to show what they learned.

Apostrophes, according to the chart of problem areas, showed no change between the pre-survey and post-survey. An activity that was completed for students to understand the usage of apostrophes had scoring that went as follows (each team needed 45 more points):

- Team 1 – 80/95; adjusted score of 42/50 (+14 extra points) = 56 points.
- Team 2 – 85/95; adjusted score of 45/50 (+22.5 extra points) = 67.5 points.
- Team 3 – 79/95; adjusted score of 41.5/50 (+ 17 extra points) = 58.5 points.
- Team 4 – 68/95; adjusted score of 36/50 (+ 10.5 extra points) = 46.5 points.

All teams advanced to Round 4.

**Round 4** – We worked with homophones in this round. All teams were still in the tournament. There were a couple activities for homophones – a mini lesson and bingo. Both of these activities were a success, especially the bingo. Students needed to fill their bingo card with 24 homophones and homographs. Then a sentence would be read out loud and the students would have to determine how the word was used to know if they had that word on their card. All of the students reported the correct form of word. There was a bonus crossword puzzle which was an individual activity. The highest scoring team had 26.5 points out of 30.

Bonus Round – Students were instructed to crinkle up their worksheets and use them for the basket-shooting bonus round. This event was not very successful. Very few students actually made their shots.

An activity called “Win-Lose or Draw” using homophones was successful and challenging. They worked well as a team for this game.
Quarterfinals: Parent letters were sent home and students were instructed to discuss several questions with their parents. The quarterfinal activity worksheet was worked on as a team. The scoring on the quarterfinal worksheet: (out of 61 corrections)
Team 1 scored 55 correct, Team 2 scored 54 correct, Team 3 scored 47 correct and Team 4 scored 40 correct.
Team 1 and Team 2 advanced to the Finals.

Finals: The two remaining teams completed the finals worksheet. This activity involved the students doing their own writing including all of the things they just learned over the past six weeks. The team with the fewest errors won the tournament. It was difficult to see some of the teams become disappointed because they didn’t win. Some students were selected for special awards for Spirit, Most Valuable Player, and Most Improved Player.

Some key points from the entire unit:
• Work from other classroom subjects is occasionally turned in late; however, all March Madness work was turned in on time.
• The expressions of excitement from the students did not reside during the six week program.
• They kept up their enthusiasm throughout the tournament.
• The results from the grading showed that students obtained an understanding of the material and had a good time completing activities.

Category Six: Collaboration

Claim Eleven: Communication with my students’ parents provided effective feedback on how the new activity impacted my students.

The parent letter (with short-response questions) informing them of March Madness provided encouraging feedback and comments from the parents about students’ feelings and interest at home. Out of the nineteen parent letters returned to me, only two claimed their child did not speak of March Madness prior to receiving the letter. Many of the parents took time to share additional comments and stories they observed over the past six weeks. I have included several responses below:

She came home and was excited to share the concept of March Madness.
Great activity- very creative!!”

He liked the activities but he told me his favorite part was that with all this practice he now feels like he will be a better proofreader.” “Great! Fun unit/program. Wonderful way to learn grammar, spelling and punctuation. Really motivated the kids.”

I went to UNC!! Go Tarheels—Everytime I mention UNC or March Madness- She talked about H&T Cobras and her March Madness!” “March Madness is a good way to make learning fun!

She mentioned March Madness many times, which gave me the indication that she is having a lot of fun with it.” “Your idea of this particular lesson seems to have been enjoyed a lot by your students.”

I think this is a great way to motivate the kids to improve in an area that is challenging. Thanks for taking the time and applying the effort.”

26
This activity is perfect for XXXX. She is enjoying it and she is working on something that she needs—proofreading.

I don’t remember being told about the reason for an activity but I was told how “their” group picked words that were easy to do (singular/plural) but the other team picked hard words.” As she tells me, “most of the activities and games were fun and has helped me be more aware of the need for me to proofread.” “XXXX says this is a good activity to keep doing.

He told me about reading backwards and magic possesso ball.” “XXXX feels that March Madness has improved his proofreading ability.

**Claim Twelve:** The collaborating groups encouraged learning within my classroom.

I placed the students into groups for reasons other than to simply make four teams. I believed “two heads are better than one” and the act of communicating ones interpretation to another involves great thought and articulation. (Teasley, 1995) In a recent study, individuals looked at the performance differences between children who collaborated during a reasoning-task to children who did not collaborate. They found “learning is facilitated by exposure to a greater number and diversity of explanations and possible solutions.” (Teasley, 1995) Students in the four teams were constantly explaining their thought process and supporting their reasoning behind why they did, or did not place punctuation in certain places. This type of communication not only benefited the individual expressing, but also those individuals listening. “Experiencing a perspective different from one’s own might lead to learning a new perspective.” (Nihei, Y., Terashima, M., Suzuki, I., & Morikawas, S., 2002)

Group collaboration also “increases the probability of detecting surface errors that tends to evade individual subject’s eyes.” (Nihei, Y., Terashima, M., Suzuki, I., & Morikawas, S., 2002) An additional study looked at the effects group collaboration had on detecting surface errors during proofreading. “The results showed that the individual group detected significantly more “contextual errors,” which are found by tracking the context of a passage, than surface errors.” (Nihei, Y., Terashima, M., Suzuki, I., & Morikawas, S., 2002) Therefore, the collaborating group detected significantly more surface errors than the individual. This was my hope for the four teams. I knew the students felt rather comfortable proofreading for context, now I wanted to place them in an environment which supported proofreading for mechanics and surface errors. Collaborative groups appeared to be most appropriate for this activity.

**Concluding Thoughts**

As I reflect back on my fifth grade experience again, I try to imagine what English and writing assignments would have been like, if my teacher would have introduced it to me in a more exciting and interesting way—such as March Madness. I firmly believe my opinion towards grammar and writing would have improved significantly. More importantly, when I reflect back on the past six weeks and ask myself,
“Have I made proofreading more fun and interesting to my fifth grade students,” can I say, “Yes?” I believe March Madness did prove to be more interesting to the students than the previous proofreading activity.

March Madness did surface two newly formed questions I would pursue in the future. First, I was wondering how this unit of activities would look if implemented throughout an entire school year? And should more or less grammar concepts be included? Second, would more students at different achievement levels be impacted if fewer grammatical concepts were covered, over longer periods of time?

As I reflect upon March Madness, some general bits of information I found particularly surprising was how much this activity supported community building in the classroom. Putting into consideration the teams were selected at random, I was very pleased by the level of team work and collaboration that took place. By the middle of March Madness the students were asking me if they could sit in their “March Madness Teams.” It provided some of the more quiet students with the opportunity to make new friends and establish relationships. Overall, I was pleased to see so many students motivating each other and lending assistance to fellow team members.

The direction I would take my future wonderings would be to explore students at different achievement levels. Would covering fewer grammatical concepts, over longer periods of time prove to be more beneficial for all achievement levels?
APPENDICES I.
(Pages 30-82)
The word calligraphy means beautiful writing in Greek. When you think of calligraphy, you probably think of the fancy writing that you see on wedding announcements.

In Islamic countries and in India, China, and Japan, calligraphy is art. In China and in other countries, calligraphy is often combined with quiet nature scenes on long scrolls.
Have you ever seen anyone do the Charleston? It's an American dance that can be performed as a solo, with a partner, or in a group. You don’t have to be knock-kneed to do the Charleston, but it helps.

You also need to kick up your legs and fling your arms around a lot. The Charleston comes from Charleston, South Carolina. It was an African American folk dance. The Charleston was everybody's dance in the 1920s.
DEAR DIARY

FEBRUARY 8, 1853

HI MY NAME ASHLEY BRYANT. I HAVE A HUSBAND NAMED PAUL. I HAVE THREE KIDS. MARIAH, MARK AND BOB. MARIAH IS 2, BOB IS 6 AND MARK IS 12. I AM 30.

I WAS BORN IN VIRGINIA. WHEN I WAS 10 I BECAME A FARMER. MADE GOOD MONEY. I GREW TOMATOES, CORN, AND GRAIN. I HAVE 3 OXEN AND 6 COWS. MARIAH IS STARTING TO STARTING WALK. BOB IS STARTING TO GET CRUSHES. MARK IS WORKING WITH ME ON THE FARM. I MET PAUL WHEN I WAS 13 AND WE GOT MARRIED WHEN I WAS 16.

OUR HOUSE BURNT DOWN A MONTH AGO. NOW WE ARE LIVING WITH MY FATHER. MY FATHER IS 67. MY MOTHER DIED WHEN I WAS VERY LITTLE. SHE WOULD BE 66 IF SHE WAS ALIVE. I HOPE WE HAVE A BETTER LIFE IN OREGON.

ASHLEY BRYANT
NAME_____________________

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. Below is a list of subjects in class. In the space to the left, RATE in order your “Most Favorite” to your “Least Favorite”. (1) would be your “Most Favorite”, (2) would be your second favorite, etc. All the way to (10) being your “Least Favorite”.

____ Math
____ Science
____ Social Studies
____ MUG Shots
____ Spelling (Stretch-It; Finish-It; Sentences)
____ Reading
____ T.F.K.
____ States/Capitals
____ Writer’s Express
____ Technology

The next several questions focus on “Proofreading”.

2. How do you feel about proofreading your writing? Circle One.
   - Journals: “I Feel:  GREAT  GOOD  OK  NOT GOOD  AWFUL
   - Stories: "I Feel:  GREAT  GOOD  OK  NOT GOOD  AWFUL
   - Homework: “I Feel: GREAT  GOOD  OK  NOT GOOD  AWFUL

3. How do you feel about proofreading class-work? Circle One.
   - MUG Shots: "I Feel:  GREAT  GOOD  OK  NOT GOOD  AWFUL
   - Spelling: "I Feel:  GREAT  GOOD  OK  NOT GOOD  AWFUL
   - Technology: "I Feel:  GREAT  GOOD  OK  NOT GOOD  AWFUL

4. TRUE/FALSE _______
   "Proofreading has helped me improve my writing."

   Explain.________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
5. What part of proofreading do you find difficult or challenging? Place a (✔️) next to any problem areas.

___ Spelling words correctly          ___ Endings of sentences (., ?!,)
___ Capitalizing words                ___ Past, Present, Future tense of Verbs
___ When/Where to use commas          ___ Using “Quotes”
___ When to use apostrophes           ___ Which word to use
   (example: bird’s, birds’, or birds) (example: They’re, their, there)
___ Other __________________________

6. What would make proofreading MORE FUN FOR YOU?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

7. Do you think proofreading is important? Circle One.
   YES or NO   (Why or Why not?)

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Extra Comments...

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Thank You!
Mrs. Webber
1. Object of the game:
   a. The purpose of the game is to advance through the six rounds of the tournament by achieving the minimum team scores on the various proofreading activities and ultimately becoming the champion of “March Madness”.

2. Teams:
   a. Division I.
      i. Big Ten Conference
      ii. Conference U.S.A.
   b. Division II.
      i. Big Twelve Conference
      ii. Big East Conference

3. Advancement in the Tournament:
   a. 1st round— Team score of (25/50)
   b. 2nd round— Team score of (35/50)
   c. 3rd round— Team score of (45/50)
   d. Quarterfinals Team score of (50/50)
   e. Final Four (Division winner)— Highest #Points
   f. Finals (Champion)— Highest #Points

4. Rules:
   a. Team effort is encouraged.
   b. Sportsmanlike conduct is expected at all times. Unsportsmanlike conduct will result in a technical-foul (loss of points in Team score).
   c. Games/activities must be completed on time.
   d. No overtimes.
   e. No tie ballgames.
   f. Weekly meetings will take place every Friday.
   g. “Foul Shots” are limited to 2 per/player during each round.
   h. Referee’s word is the final word.

5. Champions:
   a. “March Madness” Champions receive an award and experience the feeling of “success”.
8. Find the spelling mistakes and correct them. Then say the tongue twister three times fast!

Frank feested on flameing fish at the famus Friday fish frie.

9. Find the spelling mistakes and correct them. Then rewrite the sentences. (The team names are spelled correctly.)


10. Find the spelling mistakes and correct them. Then rewrite the sentences.

The gam of basketball was invented in 1892. It was playd with a soccker ball and peech bascets.
Strategy #1

Having trouble remembering how to spell words?

The Mnemonics (say NEM-ON-IX) are your thing. Mnemonics are brain tricks that will help you to remember your words.

Here are some mnemonics for you to use.

1. PIEce of PIE
2. There is a LIE in beLIEve
3. Where ever there's a Q there is U too.
4. BECAUSE - Bunnies Eat Carrots And Uncle Sam's Eggs
5. WEDNESDAY - WED - NES - DAY
6. FRIEND - Fri the End
7. KNIFE - k - nif -e
8. Was - Wally and Sam
9. Website - Where the spider sits
10. Teacher - There is an ACHE in every teacher.

You can also make up some of your own to help you remember spelling words.
Strategy #2

CHUNKING

It's simple! If you can't spell a word this is one way to use.

What you do is, you spell it out in bits and break the word up into smaller parts.

☑️ FOR EXAMPLE:
   - In-ter-net
   - Be-cause
   - Tech-no-lo-gy

It makes words easier to spell and to remember how to spell them. You should try it.

CHIN DROPS

To work out where to split up words,

☑️ Place two fingers underneath your chin and say the word that you want to spell slowly.
☑️ Get a pen and a piece of paper.
☑️ Split the word (and write it down) every time your chin drops.
   - It is a part of the word (a syllable) and this will help you to spell hard (long) words.
Strategy #3

Here's another great weapon in the battle against spelling problems.

“Words Within Words” is when you find little words inside big words. It’s just great. Remembering the little words will help to remember the big words.

Here are some examples:

☑ Father - fat, her, he
☑ Believe - be, lie, eve
☑ Football - foot, all, ball
☑ Forget - for, or, get, forge
☑ Hotdog - hot, do, dog

See how many new words you can find within the word INFORMATION...there are heaps.
**Strategy #4**

There are lots of things that you can do if you cannot spell a word - here are some things you could try:

- **Ask a teacher or a friend**
- **Write out as much of the word as you can**
- **Break it up into chunks or syllables using using chindrops**
- **Write out the word in lots of different ways and then see which one looks right.**
- **Try to look it up in a dictionary**
- **Refer to any charts or lists of words that you may have around the room.**
- **There are lots of things you could use, so try some of these and they may help you.**
Building Proofreading Skills in Spelling

**Spelling**

**ACTIVITY:** Proofread the following paragraphs for spelling errors. Circle the misspelled words and then, on the line provided, write the correct spelling of each word.

**Sample:**

The (wonderful) employees at Della's Gift Shop were treated to a dinner party (honoring) all employees who had served over five years.

**Snakes**

Snakes are in the reptile family and are closely related to lizards. They are covered with numerous small scales, which are overlapping. They have moveable eyelids and external ear openings. They use their tongues to smell. The smallest snake is 8–12 inches long and the largest measures about 8 feet.

Snakes are carnivores, which means they are meat-eaters. They find their prey by smell and sight, but they don't see well. They eat their prey whole. Some snakes kill by constriction, some by prompt swallowing, and others kill by poisoning. Their jaws aren't attached and this helps them swallow their food. Their teeth also aid them in eating. Many snakes eat rats and mice, and it may take 4–6 days to digest a meal. Some snakes are believed to be able to go two years without food.

Building Proofreading Skills in Spelling

Spelling

**ACTIVITY:** Proofread the following paragraphs for spelling errors. Circle all the misspelled words. Then, write the correct spelling of each misspelled word on the line provided.

**Sample:**

Antartica, the coolest place on earth, is the fifth largest continent. This ice-covered area completely encircles the South Pole.

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**VACATION AT MULBERRY POND**

(JOURNAL: JUNE 20, 19___)

Colors of mostly orange and yellow began to drift in the sky as a welcoming sunrise fell upon Mulberry in the warm morning that I arrived. Rays of gold danced on the pond, beckoning me to the water to soothe the summer heat. Hardly waiting for the car to come to a standstill, I immediately dashed for the pond, with renewed memories of last summer and what lay in store for me this summer.

Retreating to this secluded log cabin out in the middle of the forest has been our family tradition for years. The pond reaches out into the pine trees, giving beauty to the surrounding wilderness. Accustomed to friendly human life, animals roam the area with the same kind of contentment that the pond seems to reflect. And the lush green grass around the pond willingly supports all kinds of ladybugs and butterflies.

---

Dear Granma,

I am having the most amazing time here in Australia! The sights here are brilliant and the bananas are delicious. Yesterday, we visited a small community of monkeys and they tried to steal my luggage. I was a little scared! But I think they smelled sugar from the bananas. I herd they are very curious creatures.

Tomorrow I want to spend my leisure time visiting other foreign areas. I've heard their is a captain who entertains tourists on his enormous cruise ship. May be I can go on a dangerous adventure across the deep blue sea. The only way you can go is if you have greet swimming abilities and an athletic
physique. If each individuel shows courage and strength they will have no problem being accepted onto the cruise.

Well, I guess I should get back to having fun. My hotel is on 123 Kangaro Bulevard if you want to write back to me. I will try to buy some interesting gadgets for you. I’ve heard the chocolate covered grasshoppers are awesome! Tell everyone at home I miss them and can’t wait to see them!

Love,

Suzy
69. Find and correct the punctuation errors. Then rewrite the sentences.

If you like peace; and quiet dont move to Tororo, Uganda: It thunders more than 250 days a year, there?

70. Find and correct the punctuation errors. Then rewrite the sentences.

Benjamin Franklin was a busy guy He helped create Americas first postal system: fire department: and hospital?

71. Find and correct the punctuation errors. Then rewrite the sentences.

What's that ringing! It must be the House of Telephones, in Coffeyville; Kansas? It has 1,000 phones
COMMA RULES

1. Use commas to separate words in a series.
   a. Example: I went to the store and bought eggs, milk, and cheese.

2. Use a comma before *and, but, or, nor, for, and yet*
   a. Example: Jimmy really likes golf, *BUT* he doesn’t like tennis.

3. Use commas to set off introductory phrases and clauses.
   a. Example: Since we have had no rain, we have watered our lawn every day.

4. Use a comma to set off words that are directly addressed to/at someone.
   a. Example: Mr. Johnson, come to the office immediately!

5. Use comma(s) to separate from the rest of the sentence any word or expression that is not essential to the sentence's meaning
   a. Example: Writing essays is not difficult, if you plan them well.
   b. Example: Carol Shields, a university chancellor, wrote *The Stone Diaries* and *Larry's Party*.
   c. Example: Valerie, predictably, was named class valedictorian.
Quotation Rules

✓ Begin quotations with a CAPITAL LETTER.

✓ If the quote comes before the person who spoke and tells something,
  a. Place a **comma after the quote**, before the closing quotation mark.
     i. **Example:** "You can’t catch me," said the cat.

✓ If the quote comes after the person who spoke and tells something,
  a. Place the **comma after the person** who spoke, before the opening quotation mark.
     i. **Example:** The cat said, "You couldn’t catch him."

✓ If the quote comes before the person who spoke and asks something,
  a. Place the **question mark after the quote**, before the closing quotation mark.
     i. **Example:** "Do you understand?" he asked.

✓ If the quote comes after the person who spoke and asks something,
  a. Place the **question mark after the quote**, before the closing quotation mark.
     i. **Example:** He asked, "Do you understand?"

✓ If the quote comes before the person who spoke and shows strong emotion,
  a. Place the **exclamation mark after the quote**, before the closing quotation mark.
     i. **Example:** "Help!" yelled the bird.
✓ If the quote comes **after the person** who spoke and asks something,
   a. Place the **exclamation mark after the quote**, before the closing quotation mark.
      i. **Example**: The bird yelled, "Help!"

✓ A quote separated by the person who spoke is called a **split quotation**.
   a. Begin the **first part** of a split quotation with a **capital letter**, and end with a comma.
   b. Begin the **second part** of a split quotation with a **lower case letter**.
   c. Enclose both **parts** of the split quotation with **quotation marks**.
      i. **Example**: "Tomorrow," said the cat, "we will visit my friends."
Building Proofreading Skills in Punctuation

Comma

**ACTIVITY:** Proofread the following sentences for errors in comma usage. Using the correct proofreading symbol (see page 5), add commas where necessary.

**Rule 1:** Use commas to separate words in a series (eggs, milk, and cheese).

**Rule 2:** Use a comma before *and, but, or, nor, for,* and yet when they join independent clauses. (*Jim really likes golf, but he doesn’t like tennis.*)

**Rule 3:** Parenthetical expressions are set off by commas. (*To be honest, I thought the book was well written.*)

**Rule 4:** Use commas to set off introductory phrases and clauses. (*Since we have had no rain, we have watered our lawn every day.*)

**Rule 5:** Use a comma to set off words used in direct address. (*Mr. Johnson, come to the office immediately.*)

**Sample:**

These bats balls and gloves need to go into the duffel bag.

1. The new girl on the block liked sailing but she did not like biking.
2. Maurice sang danced and played the harmonica for the talent show.
3. Our team if you can believe it won the championship last year.
4. During the Civil War life was very chaotic near the battlefields.
5. Tell me Louise if you can work for me on Thursday evening.
6. Frederick my oldest brother is a leader and motivational speaker.
7. Dad have you heard of this alternative group?
8. When did Francesca my cousin have the time to write a book?
9. Before drawing her brother cleaned his messy room.
10. When she fell down the shaggy dog licked her face.
11. I saw the movie *The Diary of Anne Frank* but I liked the book better.
12. The countries of Italy Mexico France and Russia belong to the United Nations.
13. Our visitor Akiko has returned to her native country Japan.
14. Her birthday June 23 1985 is the same as mine.
Building Proofreading Skills in Punctuation

Comma

ACTIVITY: Using all of the previously stated comma rules, proofread the following sentences for errors. Use the correct proofreading symbols (see page 5) to add commas where they are necessary and to delete commas where they are not necessary. Some sentences may not require any punctuation changes.

Sample:
Elizabeth Taylor was one of the most important movie stars in the 1960s, and now she is a very successful businesswoman in the perfume industry.

1. The famous designer Nell Bennett, will speak today at Macy's at, 3:00 P.M.
2. Since I have not completed my research paper on time Mrs. Slaton has given me three days to finish it.
3. If you will help me bake you may have some cookies.
4. You may work on the computer, for an hour or you may work on the GeoSafari®.
5. Yes Allen the play Evita is one written, by Andrew Lloyd Webber.
6. Of course, Lori Sandra would be happy to go with you, to Sears.
7. Walker's favorite sports are, canoeing basketball hiking and swimming.
8. Call me Leland if you can assist at the concession stand.
9. Gustav have you heard of the author Carl Sandburg?
10. We were thirsty and we were hungry.
11. We came to the office early worked hard and left late on Tuesday, of last week.
12. In addition your participation in class discussions, is a part of your grade.
13. By the way have you ordered your cap, and gown for graduation?
14. Please bring to class the following materials: pencil paper ruler colored pencil protractor and your math book.
15. Before Mantoya, started running he looked rather pale, and tired.
16. If it rains, this afternoon we will go to the movies, instead.
"SWEET SIXTEEN"

WHO'S GOING TO BE THE FINAL "TWO" TEAMS?

ILLINOIS (1)

UW-MILWAUK. (12)

ARIZONA (3)

OKLAHOMA STATE (2)

WASHINGTON (1)

LOUISVILLE (4)

TEXAS TECH (6)

WEST VIRGINIA (7)
NORTH CAROLINA (1)
VILLANOVA (5)

WISCONSIN (6)
N.C. STATE (10)

DUKE (1)
MICHIGAN STATE (5)

UTAH (6)
KENTUCKY (2)

NAME_________________________  

FINAL TWO TEAMS_________________________
“Famous-Quotation Rotation”

1. “Early to bed, early to rise,” said Benjamin Franklin, “makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise.”

2. John F. Kennedy stated, “Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country.”

3. “I have a dream,” shouted Martin Luther King.


5. Thomas Jefferson said, “We hold these truth to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.”

6. “I have not yet begun to fight,” exclaimed John Paul Jones.
Team_______________

“Famous Quotations”

#1_____________________________________________
________________________________________________
________________________________________________
________________________________________________
_________________________________________

#2_____________________________________________
________________________________________________
________________________________________________
________________________________________________
_________________________________________

#3_____________________________________________
________________________________________________
________________________________________________
________________________________________________
_________________________________________

#4_____________________________________________
________________________________________________
________________________________________________
________________________________________________
_________________________________________
143. Circle the mistakes. Then rewrite the sentence without errors.

When Tinas tonsil's tickled, Tinas mother took her to Doctor Dolots office.

144. Circle the mistakes. Then rewrite the sentence without errors.

Percys only parakeets feathers' are falling on the floor.

145. Circle the mistakes. Then rewrite the sentence without errors.

Murrays' room is much messier than Millies room.
Plural Possessive Noun Phrases

Each phrase includes a PLURAL NOUN that has possession of something. If the plural noun already has an (S) on the end, just add an apostrophe. If there is no (S), add an (‘S).

the snouts belonging to the alligators __________
the skateboards belonging to the girls __________
the handles belonging to the mugs _____________
the dresses belonging to the ladies ____________
the ball belonging to the children ____________
the papers belonging to the men ____________
the calves belonging to the cows ____________
the car belonging to the clowns ____________
the feathers belonging to the geese ____________
Possessive Noun Phrases

Each phrase includes a SINGULAR NOUN that has possession of something. An apostrophe can take the place of the words, “belonging to.”

the wing belonging to the plane
the food belonging to the cat
the pages belonging to the book
the antlers belonging to the deer
the tank belonging to the fish

the trunk belonging to the car

the leaf belonging to the tree

the watch belonging to the lady

the nest belonging to the bird

the tail belonging to the kite
“Magic Possesso Ball”

- The game goes as follows:
  - Pass out a letter of the alphabet to each student (letters A-V).
  - Students sit on their desks (like in the game, Silent Ball).
  - The “Magic Possesso Ball” will be passed to the person whose letter is randomly called upon. That student will receive a singular form of a noun, which they will then be instructed to say and spell the singular possessive or plural possessive form of that word. Students may also be asked to use it in a sentence.
  - A student earns their team one point for each correct word.
  - Incorrect words result in the student sitting in their seat. However, that student then chooses a person he/she would like to throw the ball to. The incorrect word will be repeated for the next person. (This provides students an opportunity to strategize)
  - The points earned throughout this activity are added on to the apostrophe activity sheet score.
  - The team with the person still sitting on the top of their desk at the end receives ten additional points, to be added to their final score.
149. Circle the words that are used incorrectly. Then replace them with the correct homophones.

Frankie the florist charges fifty sense a flour.

150. Circle the words that are used incorrectly. Then replace them with the correct homophones.

Irving’s insult maid Bertha cry for more than an our.

151. Circle the word that is used incorrectly. Then replace it with the correct homophone.

Milton threw his shoo at the flies.

152. Circle the words that are used incorrectly. Then replace them with the correct homophones.

Ernie eight won beet and two tomatoes for supper.
BINGO WORD BANK

HOMOGRAPHY

Dove (noun)  
Dove (verb)  
Wind (noun)  
Wind (verb)  
Present (noun)  
Present (verb)  
Fall (noun)  
Fall (verb)  
Rose (noun)  
Rose (verb)  
Lives (noun)  
Lives (verb)  

Hi  
High  
Sent  
Scent  
Cent  
Acts  
Ax  
New  
Knew  
Meat  
Meet  
Sail  
Sale
This is a test of how well you understand homophones. Read each of the following and choose the BEST answer.

1. In which sentence can the blank be filled by the word peace?
   a. I’d like a _________ of the coconut cake.
   b. Is that _________ of pizza mine?
   c. I’d like for us to have _________ in the world.
   d. There is a _________ of chicken on my plate.

2. Which of the following sentences does NOT use the word tale correctly?
   a. I like the tale about the rabbit the best.
   b. Which tale is your favorite?
   c. Jay likes the tale about the snake.
   d. The mouse caught his tale in the trap.

3. Which sentence has the word waist used correctly?
   a. I am not going to measure my waist.
   b. I don’t like to waist food.
   c. That is a waist of your time.
   d. Please don’t waist that.

4. In which sentence can the blank be filled by the word two?
   a. There will be _________ many of us in one room.
   b. Would you like to go _________ the movies?
   c. Please sharpen _________ pencils before the test.
   d. I have _________ much to do today.

5. In which sentence is the word there used correctly?
   a. There not going to be able to come to our party.
   b. There new house will be finished in May.
   c. I will go there later in the summer.
   d. The twins will have there own room.
Read each of the following and choose the BEST answer.

1. Which of the following sentences does NOT use the word write correctly?
   a. We write stories in writing class each week.
   b. Most of us try to do the write thing.
   c. Sometimes we write about famous people.
   d. I like to write about famous athletes.

2. Which of the following sentences does NOT use the word male correctly?
   a. I checked the male earlier today.
   b. If you are male, please mark the second circle.
   c. The male group of students had the highest score.
   d. Male is the opposite of female.

3. Which of the following sentences does NOT use the word weight correctly?
   a. I am going to lose weight this year.
   b. The nurse will check your weight.
   c. Don’t weight for me to get there.
   d. My weight is normal for my age.

4. Which of the following sentences does NOT use the word flour correctly?
   a. We need to buy flour to bake the cake.
   b. Flour is not part of that recipe.
   c. The flour must be combined with the sugar.
   d. I planted that flour last year.
Read each of the following and choose the BEST answer.

1. In which sentence can the blank be filled by the word waste?
   a. Please put a belt around your ________.
   b. Be careful with the glue and don’t ________ it.
   c. Sarah has a beautiful scarf on her ________.
   d. Those jeans are too tight in the ________.

2. In which sentence can the blank be filled by the word too?
   a. Are those your ________ dogs?
   b. We have ________ many cats at our house.
   c. We are going ________ the mall tonight.
   d. ________ of us have turned in our projects.

3. In which sentence can the blank be filled by the word led?
   a. My pencil ________ is broken.
   b. There is ________ in some kinds of paint.
   c. Coach Brown ________ the team to victory.
   d. What kinds of paint contain ________?

4. In which sentence can the blank be filled by the word fare?
   a. That was a very ________ game.
   b. I am going to be ________ with you.
   c. What is the bus ________ to Texas?
   d. Would it be ________ to ask for a refund?

5. In which sentence can the blank be filled by the word here?
   a. Can you hear me?
   b. The music is so quiet, I can’t hear it.
   c. He can speak, but he can’t hear very well.
   d. Put the box down here.
Read each of the following and choose the BEST answer.

1. In which sentence is the word *brake* used correctly?
   a. We took a brake at eleven o’clock this morning.
   b. Don’t brake my new vase.
   c. The driver quickly applied the brake.
   d. The X-ray clearly shows a brake near the elbow.

2. In which sentence is the word *weak* used correctly?
   a. We will study map skills next week.
   b. He is very weak since his last surgery.
   c. I ran seventy miles last weak.
   d. I’ll spend this weak with my sister.

3. In which sentence is the word *their* used correctly?
   a. Their friends are coming for a visit.
   b. Their are twelve chapters in my new book.
   c. Mrs. Martin wants us to work over their.
   d. Their are four more weeks until our test.

4. In which sentence is the word *here* used correctly?
   a. I here too much noise in this classroom.
   b. Our meeting will be here at three o’clock.
   c. Did you here that new song on the radio?
   d. I don’t want to here it again.

5. In which sentence is the word *your* used correctly?
   a. I told your mother to give you a message.
   b. Your the funniest person I’ve ever met.
   c. Do you realize your in my way?
   d. I think your here for the first time.
6. In which sentence is the word *break* used correctly?
   a. I can use the break pedal to stop the cart.
   b. Did you break your leg in an accident?
   c. The car seat was so high, she could barely reach the break.
   d. Don’t confuse the break pedal and the accelerator.

7. In which sentence can the blank be filled by the word *weather*?
   a. I need to know __________ you can go today or Tuesday.
   b. Have you seen the __________ report today?
   c. I wonder __________ my mother will let me go.
   d. Let me ask Mrs. Thomas __________ we turn in our papers today or on Monday.

8. Which of the following sentences does NOT use the word *meet* correctly?
   a. I’ll meet you at the theater at three o’clock.
   b. I am going to meet my new teacher today.
   c. Don’t meet me at the mall until six o’clock.
   d. My favorite meet is steak.

9. In which of the following sentences is the word *bear* used incorrectly?
   a. I can’t bear to be late.
   b. The forest is not really full of lions and tigers and bears.
   c. Mother Hubbard’s cupboard was bear.
   d. It was easy for the camel to bear the heavy load.

10. In which sentence can the blank be filled by the word *heat*?
    a. The doctor said it would take three weeks to __________.
    b. He taught his dog to obey the command, “__________”
    c. These shoes are too tight in the ____________
    d. The tango dancer wore high ____________

11. In which of the following sentences is the word *aloud* used correctly?
    a. There is no smoking aloud on international flights.
    b. I’m only aloud to go out after dark on weekends.
    c. You can scream all you want, but screaming isn’t aloud.
    d. The teacher told the student to read the sentence aloud.
Homophone Puzzle

Each of the answers to this puzzle is a word which has a homophone.

Across
2. _______ is a letter waiting for you.
5. Three plus one.
6. Husky.
7. To require something.
8. To be sure of something.
11. (DELETED)
12. Four plus four.

Down
1. Observe with your ears.
2. She was ______ busy to answer the phone.
3. Correct.
4. She is enrolling in a university ______.
7. You have one in the middle of your face.
8. A tangle.
9. Make sure you ______ some warm clothes.
10. Small insect that bites animals.
STRATEGIES FOR “PERFECTION”

☑ Proofing with a Partner/Team members

☑ Proof for ONE ERROR AT A TIME

☑ Know YOUR consistent errors

☑ Backwards Reading (with Sentence Rectangles)
  ✓ Focus on correction of spelling

☑ Reading Aloud
  ✓ Read slow
  ✓ Read every word

☑ Ruler Proofreading
  ✓ Separate the sentences row–by–row
  ✓ Circle every punctuation mark

☑ Lucky Number “3”
  ✓ Read at least three times

☑ Use the “SHACQ”–Attack Sequence
Deer Conrad

I had a wounderful Christmas vacation with my family in Okalahomia City. We spent the holiday’s with my grandmother. Hour family had so much fun carrolling on Christmas Eve. How do family’s celebrate in Munich? I hope you’re vacation was as enjoyible as mine. School begins’ tomorrow. I am not looking forword to going back. My mom said “honey, you
should be excited to see your friend’s”. I told her “I am, but, I don't miss the school part!”

I have been chosen as “Class Reporter” four hour School Newspaper. I am worried, I will not have enough time, for my schoolwork. Hour newspaper is called The Chatter Box. Does your school have a newspaper?

You maybe wondering why this letter is typed, My mother has moved her office to your house. And she is letting me use her computer. She said “Oh, he will be impressed”. I yelled “you better believe he’ll be impressed!”

I have learned so much about computers in the last month. She asked “Does Conrad have a computer”? I stated, “I don’t know”? Do you have a home-computer?
I have inclosed a picture of hour nieghborhood, and please send me a of what Munich looks’ like in the winter. I will right to you as soon as I here from you.

You’re Pen Pal

Josh
NAME___________________

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. Below is a list of subjects in class. In the space to the left, RATE in order your "Most Favorite" to your "Least Favorite". (1) would be your "Most Favorite", (2) would be your second favorite, etc. All the way to (10) being your "Least Favorite".
   
   ______ Math    ______ Reading    
   ______ Science ______ T.F.K.    
   ______ Social Studies ______ States/Capitals    
   ______ March Madness ______ Writer's Express    
   ______ Spelling (Stretch-It; Finish-It; Sentences) ______ Technology

The next several questions focus on “Proofreading”.

2. How do you feel about proofreading your writing? Circle One.
   
   - Journals: "I Feel: GREAT GOOD OK NOT GOOD AWFUL
   - Stories: "I Feel: GREAT GOOD OK NOT GOOD AWFUL
   - Homework: "I Feel: GREAT GOOD OK NOT GOOD AWFUL

3. How do you feel about proofreading class-work? Circle One.
   
   - MUG Shots: "I Feel: GREAT GOOD OK NOT GOOD AWFUL
   - Spelling: "I Feel: GREAT GOOD OK NOT GOOD AWFUL
   - Technology: "I Feel: GREAT GOOD OK NOT GOOD AWFUL

4. TRUE/FALSE ______
   "Proofreading has helped me improve my writing."
   
   Explain.___________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________
5. What part of proofreading do you find difficult or challenging? Place a (✓) next to any problem areas.

___ Spelling words correctly    ___ Endings of sentences (., ?, !)
___ Capitalizing words         ___ Past, Present, Future tense of Verbs
___ When/Where to use commas   ___ Using "Quotes"
___ When to use apostrophes    ___ Which word to use
   (example: bird's, birds', or birds)   (example: They're, their, there)
___ Other ______________________

6. What would make proofreading MORE FUN FOR YOU?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

7. Do you think proofreading is important? Circle One.
   YES or NO   (Why or Why not?)

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Extra Comments...

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Thank You!
Mrs. Webber
Vote-vote-vote

Who do you think should receive the “March Madness” Team spirit award?

____________________________________

This person exhibited high enthusiasm, motivation, and encouragement throughout the entire tournament.

April 17, 2005

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Since March 16, 2005, your child has been participating in a comprehensive proofreading activity. The proofreading activity, “March Madness”, was created in an effort to make proofreading a more rewarding and fun experience for the students. Over the past five weeks, the students have been practicing and recognizing the
fundamental concepts of spelling and punctuation in writing. They have repeatedly implemented ways to identify and correct these concepts during proofreading activities and competitions. Within their “Conference Teams”, the students participated in a wide range of activities: backwards reading, “Free-Throw” practice sheets, letter proofing, basketball shoot-offs, “Famous-Quotation Rotation”, “Magic Possesso Ball”, homophone BINGO, and Win-Lose or Draw.

This week, Monday, April 18 and Wednesday, April 20, marks the conclusion of “March Madness” in the classroom. Wednesday’s challenge will determine the proofreading champions of Room 16. In order to analyze the effectiveness of this activity, I would appreciate feedback from both you and your child, on how this activity has impacted your child’s opinion of proofreading. Following the conclusion of this letter, I have included several short questions which I would like you and your child to discuss and answer.

Many congratulations should be expressed towards the children for they have put a lot of heart, time, and devotion into these past several weeks of “March Madness.” My only hope is they have established a more optimistic outlook on their proofreading skills.

Thank you,
Mrs. Webber

PLEASE RETURN BY: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 20, 2005

1. (Parent/Guardian) Has your child mentioned the "March Madness" activity prior to you receiving this letter?  YES  NO

   If so, are there any statements/stories you would like to share?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
2. (Parent/Guardian & Child) Were there any activities or games your child found particularly enjoyable?

_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

3. (Parent/Guardian & Child) What was your child’s favorite part of “March Madness?”

_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________


_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

The Witch of Blackbird Pond by Elizabeth George Speare a famous author of other historical novels. This enjoyable entertaining book, first published in 1958 is a Newberry Award Winner.

The story take place during the nine teenth century in Connecticut Colony. The mane character is Katherine Tyler, also know as Kit. This fictional book has many other intresting
charactors, especially Hannah an old window who becomes a close friend of Kit. Kit sales on a ship called the *Dolphin* to Wetherfield a town in Connecticut, leaving the Carribean Islands. With noone to turn to she hopes that her only living relatives will except her.

Kit thinks to herself “What do I do if they dont accept me” she continues, “Will they make me leave?”

Kit find’s herself in a strange and lonely place quiet different from the sunny Caribbean Islands wear she once lived. In the strict Puritan community home of her relatives. She work’s long tyring ours. The only place she feels free and pieceful is at Blackbird Pond, where she can let go her worrys.

One day Kit wanders into a meadow and meets Hannah the Witch of Blackbird Pond. Immediately Kit said “You are a witch”!

Hannah responds “Does it matter”

When they’re friendship is discovered Kit is accused of whichcraft. Suddenly a mysterious fever spread’s throughout the town. A few children dye from this illness.

Suspecting that she put an evil curse on the town the angry people decide to burn Hannahs home.

I enjoyed this book. The charactors thoughts’ and actions seemed expecially believable. Kit, my favorite character in the book reminds me of several of my outspoken friends. Ms. Speare wrote this historical novel with excitement and zest. I highly recommend *The Witch of Blackbird Pond* because its quiet heartwarming and enlightening.
Certificate of Achievement

This is to certify that

Has successfully completed March Madness

Certified by Smilies

Date

April 20, 2005
you're a
STAR

presented to:

from: Mrs. Webber

date: April 20, 2005

YOUR HIGH ENTHUSIASM, MOTIVATION, AND ENCOURAGEMENT THROUGHOUT MARCH MADNESS.
1. **EACH TEAM MEMBER** IS RESPONSIBLE FOR
THE FOLLOWING:

- ONE PARAGRAPH CONTAINING:
  - CORRECTLY SPELLED WORDS  (NO SPELLING MISTAKES)
  - AT LEAST 4 HOMOPHONES
  - AT LEAST 4 POSSESSION WORDS  
    (APOSTROPHES)
  - AT LEAST 8 COMMAS
  - AT LEAST 2 SENTENCES WITH 
    "QUOTATION MARKS"

2. PARAGRAPHS ARE WRITTEN INDEPENDENTLY.

3. THE ENTIRE TEAM MAY COME TOGETHER TO
PROOFREAD EACH OTHERS PARAGRAPH.

4. HAND IN ALL "5" PARAGRAPHS.

5. THE TEAM WITH THE FEWEST ERRORS WILL
BE THE
“MARCH MADNESS” CHAMPIONS!

APPENDICES II.
(Pages 84-95)
All Subjects (Rating 1-5) Pre-survey Results

Students per Rank

Math
Science
Social Studies
MUG Shot
Spelling
Reading
Writer’s Express
Technology

# Students per Rank

States/Captials
Writer’s Express
Technology

Subjects

Ranked #1
Ranked #2
Ranked #3
Ranked #4
Ranked #5
All Subjects (Rated 1-5) Post-Survey Results

# Students per Rank

- Ranked #1
- Ranked #2
- Ranked #3
- Ranked #4
- Ranked #5

Subjects
- Math
- Science
- Social Studies
- March Madness
- Spelling
- Reading
- TFK
- States/Capitals
- Writer’s Express
- Technology
MUG Shots Rankings

March Madness Rankings
MUG SHOTS Rankings versus March Madness Rankings

# Students

Rankings

[Bar chart showing comparisons between MUG SHOTS and March Madness rankings]
Comparing Problem Areas - Pre- and Post-Surveys

Problem Areas
- Spelling
- Capitalization
- Commas
- Apostrophes
- Punctuation
- Verb Usage
- Quotation
- Word Usage

# Students with Issues

Pre-Survey Post-Survey
Selected Students - Comparing Journal Ratings

Selected Students - Comparing Stories Ratings
Selected Students - Comparing Homework Ratings

- **GREAT**: 4 students out of 6
- **GOOD**: 3 students out of 6
- **OK**: 3 students out of 6
- **NOT GOOD**: 2 students out of 6
- **AWFUL**: 1 student out of 6

*Pre-Survey* and *Post-Survey*
Selected Students - Comparing Spelling Ratings

Selected Students - Comparing Technology Ratings
Problem Areas of Selected Students
Comparing Pre- and Post-Surveys

- Spelling
- Capitalization
- Commas
- Apostrophes
- Punctuation
- Verb Usage
- Quotation
- Word Usage

# Students with Issues out of 6

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<tr>
<th>Problem Areas</th>
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References


