



Lesson #1

Using novel visual teaching tools created by the teacher.

Topic Editing

Students: 5th Grade: ages 10 – 11

Primary Green Light strategy Visuals

Related strategies Novelty, drama, movement, and emotion

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Red Light. Traditionally, the curriculum calls for students to follow the writing process and edit samples of writing according to lengthy checklists. Students are given paragraphs with mistakes and off they go ... or at least, that’s the intention of the lesson. Most don’t actually do it, because to them the topic seems tedious and uninteresting.

Green Light. When my students get to the editing part of the writing process, they put on white lab coats and become ‘Doctors of Editing’. They write ‘prescriptions’ for sick essays and paragraphs.



They walk around with clipboards and 'prescription pads'. I created an acronym for what to look for, and we call it their "S.C.R.I.P.T." The initials stand for the six major aspects of the editing process:

- **S** pelling
- **C** apitalization
- **R** un-ons
- **I** ndenting problems
- **P** unctuation
- **T** ense

Here is the visual that students use for their 'prescription pad':



**Green Light
Education**
A new perspective

Pre-S.C.R.I.P.T.-ion For Writing

Dr. _____ Edit

Name of Writing _____

Type of Illness:

S evered spelling

C apitalization cold

R un-on runny nose

I ndent-itus

P unctured Punctuation

I ense tension

Seriousness of Illness:

1 2 3 4 5

Recommended Treatment





Now, when we get to the editing portion of the writing process, students are eager to ‘diagnose’ and ‘treat’ their essays. They eagerly pull out their ‘prescription pads’ and work hard to make their writing ‘well’. The use of the visual – the prescription pad – has taken information that was previously uninteresting to them, and made it seem ten times clearer to understand, and infinitely more interesting. The addition of clipboards and white lab coats, and the chance to play the role of a ‘doctor’ of writing, merely make the visual we use even more powerful.

Effectiveness. When I used to teach this topic the traditional way, students would get to the editing portion of the writing process and skip through it. They were bored, distracted, and couldn’t care less. Now they *can’t wait* to edit their papers!

Debrief of Lesson #1

This amazing demonstration lesson contains many Green Light strategies. Together they create a lesson that not only engages students learning the material the first time, but also provides a novel platform for subsequent skills development and review. However, for the purposes of this chapter, let us focus on the visual component of the lesson.

The key aspect of the visual used here, the ‘prescription pad’ is how the teacher took the central information students needed to learn – the six critical components of the editing process – and





presented them to her students in a clear, concise and visibly understandable format. The ‘visual’ students are using becomes a lively prompt for their engagement with the content. The other Green Light strategies, such as novelty, dramatics, movement, and emotion (they *are* enjoying themselves, after all!) all flow outwards from this central starting point.

Rather than relying on words alone, where possible Green Light teachers consolidate the central concepts or key points of their lesson into a visual organization mechanism. This makes the information easier for students to grasp, allowing them to quickly learn the basics of a particular topic. Once this occurs, they are free to expend the remainder of their mental energy on understanding *how* to apply the information.

In the previous example, the *teacher* created the visual that students used to help them learn and apply the information. The other side of the equation is that sometimes *students* can create the visual apparatus they will use to encode information.