Editing for Precision: Punctuating quotations, grammar and accurate terms

NBE3U, Unit 2: Behind the Image, Lesson 12. 75 minutes. Teacher lesson plan.

Lesson at a glance

In writing about representation, small errors carry weight: a misplaced quotation mark changes who said what, and a careless term repeats the harm you are analysing. Precise punctuation, grammar and terminology are part of respect.

What students do: Students practise punctuating and integrating quotations, fix common grammar errors in analytical writing (agreement, pronoun reference, tense), check their own drafts for accurate terminology, and plan their deconstruct and reconstruct presentations.

Curriculum expectations

Code	Students will…
D3.3	use punctuation correctly and effectively to communicate their intended meaning
D3.4	use grammar conventions correctly and appropriately to communicate their intended meaning clearly and effectively
A3.2	identify appropriate ways to refer to Indigenous peoples in diverse contexts, and locate examples of inappropriate terminology in contemporary and historical text forms from both Indigenous and non-Indigenous sources and explain the significance of naming choices
D2.4	write complete sentences that communicate their meaning clearly and effectively, skilfully varying sentence type, structure, and length to suit different purposes and making smooth and logical transitions between ideas

From The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9 to 12: First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Studies (2019), English: Understanding Contemporary First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Voices, Grade 11, University Preparation (NBE3U). A = First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Perspectives and Text Forms in Canada, B = Oral Communication, C = Reading and Literature Studies, D = Writing, E = Media Studies.

Learning goals and success criteria

Learning goals	Success criteria
• We are learning to punctuate and integrate quotations correctly. • We are learning to edit for grammar and accurate terminology.	• I can punctuate and integrate quotations correctly. • I can fix agreement, pronoun reference and tense errors. • I can replace inaccurate or outdated terms with appropriate ones. • I can explain why precise language matters in this kind of writing.

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Materials and preparation

- **Slides:** Editing for Precision deck.
- **Handouts:** Quotation Clinic (page 1), Edit and Plan (page 2).
- **Students:** Essay drafts or body paragraphs.

Lesson sequence

Time (min)	Part	Teacher	Students	Look for
0–8	**Hook**	One mark, new meaning.	Discuss.	
8–28	**Quotation clinic**	Rules and practice.	Practise.	Correct punctuation.
28–45	**Grammar**	Three common errors.	Fix.	
45–60	**Terms check**	Own drafts.	Edit.	Accurate terms.
60–75	**Presentation plan**	Next steps.	Plan.	

Differentiation

- **Support:** A quotation rule card with examples.
- **ELL:** Grammar examples with the error highlighted.
- **Challenge:** Edit a partner's draft with comments explaining each change.

Assessment

Type	Tool	Purpose
Assessment for learning	Quotation Clinic and Edit and Plan	Punctuation (D3.3), grammar (D3.4), terminology (A3.2) and sentences (D2.4)

Editing for precision: key points

- **Integrating:** Blend quotations into your own sentence: Christine insists that “our law is honor.”
- **Punctuation:** Periods and commas go inside the closing quotation mark (Canadian and American style used here); cite the source with the author's name.
- **Agreement:** “The images in the film shows” → “The images in the film show.”
- **Pronoun reference:** “Scott and Johnson both wrote about it, but he…” → name the writer.
- **Tense:** Analyse texts in the present tense: Scott describes, Johnson argues.

Teacher notes

- Practice sentences quote Johnson's “A Red Girl's Reasoning” (1893) and Scott's sonnet (1898), both public domain; quotations are checked against the texts.

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- When students quote historical texts that use period terms, they quote accurately and explain; in their own sentences, they use today's terms. Historical texts use the words of their time, including terms now considered offensive (for example, “Red-skin,” “savage,” “squaw,” “half-breed,” “Eskimo”). We quote accurately when analysing, explain why these terms are harmful, and use today's terms (First Nations, Métis, Inuit, Indigenous, or the specific Nation) in our own words. Readers may say “[skip]” instead of reading a slur aloud.
- We strongly recommend reviewing this unit with your board's Indigenous education lead and, where possible, inviting a First Nations, Métis or Inuit Elder, Knowledge Keeper or guest speaker following your board's protocols (including offerings and honoraria). Local Nations' own sources come first.

Coming up

Lesson 13, Deconstruct and Reconstruct.

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