

## 6. Edit

After revising your informative/explanatory text, you will edit it. When you edit, you read very carefully to be sure to find any mistakes in your writing. Here's a checklist of some things to look for as you edit.

### Editing Checklist

- ✓ Did you indent each paragraph?
- ✓ Are all of your sentences complete? Does each have a subject and a verb?
- ✓ Did you begin each sentence with a capital letter?
- ✓ Does each sentence end with the correct punctuation?
- ✓ Have you used commas correctly?
- ✓ Are all of your words spelled correctly?

You can use these editing marks to mark any errors you find.

^ Add

# Add space

~~delete~~ Delete

○ Close up space

This section of a paragraph from a draft of the mentor text shows how to use editing marks.

Other herbivores such as reindeer muskoxen and horses also lived on ~~of~~ the steppes. Mammoths used their trunks to reach <sup>down</sup> and tear out grass. Scientists believe they used their tusks to <sup>scrape</sup> ~~scrap~~ the ground and dig up plants or rip off tree bark.

## Language Focus: Varying Sentence Style

Varying sentence style makes your writing more interesting for the reader. Variety also makes the text read more smoothly and adds interest to your writing. There are many ways to vary sentence style in your writing.

- Combining sentences will help make your writing stronger.
  - Original: Mammoths had thick fur. The fur was shaggy.
  - Combined: Mammoths had thick, shaggy fur.
- Avoid short, choppy writing by adding details.
  - Short sentence: Scientists study mammoth bones.
  - Detailed sentence: Scientists study mammoth bones with microscopes to look for teeth marks or marks made by stone tools.
- Changing the beginnings of your sentences is a good way to add variety to your writing. Begin a sentence with an introductory word, phrase, or clause.
  - Original: The mammoth's habitat disappeared when oceans rose.
  - Changed: As oceans rose, the mammoth's habitat disappeared.
- Reduce sentences that contain unnecessary information.
  - Original: Mammoths had to eat all day long throughout the day to maintain their size.
  - Changed: Mammoths had to eat all day long to maintain their size.

Everything about the mammoth was gigantic. Its large teeth were shaped like bricks and weighed ten pounds each. The trunk was six feet long. The curved tusks were also impressive. They grew up to thirteen feet long and could weigh almost 200 pounds! With such large bodies and tusks, woolly mammoths were not in danger from many predators. The only predators that threatened adult mammoths were sabertooth cats and later, humans.

**VARYING SENTENCE STYLE** Read this section of the mentor text. Use the information on this page to underline sentences that combine more than one idea or fact. Place a square around the sentence that begins with an introductory phrase.