

PENNY LEARNING LITERATURE

Penny Sweeps It Clean

A story about editing, sweep it clean with E-D-I-T

Book Eight • The Sweep It Clean Song

The Writing Academy®, LLC

© 2026 The Writing
Academy®, LLC. All rights
reserved.

This document is provided for
classroom instructional use. No part
may be reproduced for resale or
distribution outside the purchasing
campus without written permission
from The Writing Academy®, LLC.

Penny's essay was strong now, revised and rearranged, every word doing its job. She reached for the tape to hang it on the Proud Writers wall. But Mrs. Ray caught her eye and said, kindly, "Pencil down? Not yet, my friend." Penny groaned a happy groan. "There's MORE?" Champ lifted one ear, as if he wondered too.

“One last step,” said Mrs. Ray, “and it’s a fun one. You revised to make your ideas strong. Now you EDIT to make them clean. Editing is the little sweep-up before your writing goes out into the world, catching the small mistakes so nothing gets in the reader’s way.”

Penny pictured a tidy little broom. “I’m going to sweep it clean,” she said, and she rather liked the idea.

“Just remember the letters E-D-I-T,” said Mrs. Ray, “and sweep for three things.” She held up one finger. “First, CAPITAL LETTERS, standing tall at the start of every sentence and on every name.” Penny swept her eyes across her page and found a lowercase r hiding at the start of a sentence about recess. She stood it up tall: Recess. “Capital letters standing tall,” she hummed. One swept.

“Second,” said Mrs. Ray, “END MARKS, catching the end of it all.” Penny looked, and sure enough, one of her sentences had run right off the edge with no period at all, like a car with no brakes. She tapped a period on the end. Then she found a question that deserved a question mark and gave it one. “End marks catching the end of it all,” she sang. Two swept.

“Third is a sneaky one,” said Mrs. Ray.

“SUBJECT and VERB, do they agree?

Think of it like Sentence Weather. One sunny subject needs one raindrop verb;

many need many.” Penny read, “The

kids on the playground runs and

plays.” Her ear tingled. Kids was many,

but runs and plays sounded like just

one. She fixed it: “The kids on the

playground run and play.” “Subject and

verb, now they agree!” she cheered.

Three swept.

Penny went back to the top and swept the whole page, slow and careful, the way you sweep a floor you are proud of. A capital here. A period there. A verb made to match its subject. Each little fix was small, but together they made her writing look sharp and sure, like a shirt with every button done.

“Why do the little things matter so much?” Penny wondered out loud. Mrs. Ray smiled. “Because when your writing is clean, the reader never trips. They don’t stop to puzzle over a missing period or a lowercase name. They just hear your strong ideas, clear as a bell.” Penny nodded. She wanted her ideas heard, not tripped over.

At last Penny held up her page. It was strong AND clean now, revised down to the ideas and edited down to the last tiny mark. “Now I’m done,” she said, and this time Mrs. Ray beamed. “Now you’re done. You wrote it, you strengthened it, and you swept it clean. That, Penny, is the whole journey of a writer.” Penny taped her essay to the Proud Writers wall, standing a little taller herself.

Penny sang the editor's song, sweeping to the beat:

**Pencil down? Not yet, my friend,
a great writer edits to the very end!**

**Capital letters standing tall,
end marks catching the end of it all!**

**Sweep it, sweep it, make it clean,
best little edit you've ever seen!**

E-D-I-T, edit! You're not done 'til you've said it!

From that day on, Penny never let her writing leave the desk without a good sweep first. Capitals standing tall, end marks in their places, subjects and verbs agreeing like sunshine and rain. She revised for the ideas, then edited for the shine.

Now you know the whole journey too.
First you find your pieces and grow
your essay. Then you revise to make
the ideas strong. And last of all, you
edit, you sweep it clean, E-D-I-T,
catching the capitals, the end marks,
and the subjects and verbs that need
to agree.

So the next time you think you are finished, smile like Penny and pick up your little broom. Sweep for the small things so the reader never trips, and let your strong, clean writing shine so bright. You wrote it, you strengthened it, you swept it clean, and now, you really are a writer.