MENTOR TEXTS TO TEACH GRAMMAR AND MECHANICS: A CURRICULUM

by

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A capstone project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Literacy Education.

Hamline University

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INTRODUCTION

This curriculum is designed for use with students in grades 3-4, but can easily be adapted for older students and younger students as needed. It addresses many of the standards in the Language strand of the Common Core State Standards. It was written with the goal of helping students apply grammar and mechanics skills and concepts to their own writing. Its creation is part of a capstone experience to research and answer the question, how can mentor texts be used to teach grammar and mechanics in an elementary classroom?

Use of Mentor Texts

The use of published texts as models for students is advocated by a number of researchers, including Anderson (2005), Calkins (1994), and Ray (2002). These texts are called mentor texts. With the guidance of a teacher, students can use these texts to study how writers write. Teachers who model the use of mentor texts give students access to the thinking process behind writing and studying writing (Angelillo, 2002; Ray, 1999). Each lesson includes a teacher model text, but you can write your own teacher model to help improve your familiarity with the concept you are teaching to students and/or to write about a topic that might be more relevant to your particular students.

Mentor texts were carefully selected and are included in the annotated bibliography. However, teachers can use nearly any high-quality text as a mentor text. If there is a book you love and wish to use with students, scour it for sentences that would work well to teach the concepts in these lessons and use them. Your enthusiasm for a particular text will shine through in your teaching and help motivate students.
Whatever text you choose to use as a mentor text with students, be sure you’ve read it at least once to or with students so they are familiar with the text as readers before asking them to study the writing. I encourage you to return to these texts again and again throughout the year, not just for the lessons in this curriculum, but for other writing and reading mini-lessons. High-quality texts have a wealth of teaching opportunities tucked inside (Sturgell, 2008).

What if the Book Doesn’t Follow the Rules?

Since this curriculum is built around real texts and encourages students to utilize real texts as models for their writing, you will inevitably find text that doesn’t always follow the rules. Sometimes this is due to an editing error, but more often it’s due to stylistic differences or choices made by the author. For example, sentence fragments abound in published literature. If students point these or other errors out, it means they’re paying attention! As a teacher, you can talk about why an author might have decided to make a particular choice. You can also tell students that right now they need to write following whatever rules you’ve laid out for your class (e.g. Don’t begin a sentence with “and.”) because they’re still practicing writers and it will keep them from making other mistakes until they’ve learned more. However, if students have shown proficiency with a particular skill across multiple writing assignments, I encourage you to let them play with language and try writing something the way an author they’ve studied wrote it. You might be surprised at what you get.

Frequency and Pacing

Each lesson is written to take approximately 15 minutes. A teacher should aim for teaching 1-2 lessons a week. Pacing is more fluid and will depend on your student population. For example, classrooms with a high percentage of English Learners (ELs) will need to spend more time on each skill.
There are several skills that require multiple exposures, such as compound sentences or punctuating dialogue. These skills have a main introductory lesson and follow-up text and teacher models. Use these new models either with the whole class or with targeted small groups in the same lesson format as the first lesson. They are included to provide students who need it more practice, but do not feel required to use all of them. You may also wish to pull out these follow-up models later on in the school year as review lessons.

**Lesson Components**

Most lessons will include the following parts:

- **Essential Question:** When you’re teaching a lesson, it can be easy to get bogged down in the details. The essential question will help you keep in mind the big idea for the unit (Wiggins & McTighe, 2011). It will also help your students connect with why they are learning something. The essential question might apply to other mini-lessons you’re teaching in writing.

- **Lesson Objective(s):** This is what you want students to be able to do by the end of the lesson.

- **Standards Correlations:** Some of the standards listed here will be fully addressed by the lesson; others will only be partially addressed. All standards are Common Core State Standards.

- **Materials:** Teacher materials needed for the lessons. (NOTE: Students will need pencil/pen and paper for each lesson. A writer’s notebook would be ideal, as students will be able to keep a record of their work over time and it will help them connect these lessons to other writing lessons you teach.)

- **Mentor Text Model:** This is an excerpt taken from a trade book.
- **Teacher Model:** You can write this out beforehand or write it in front of students, thinking aloud as you write. Teacher models are generally about topics which students commonly write about.

- **Lesson Sequence:** Steps in the lesson. Words the teacher says are written in italics. The sequence is based on a sequence described by Paraskevas (2006) and Ray (2002) and generally includes the following:
  - Notice - Students notice features of the mentor text model. Some lessons include an optional guiding question if your students need more direction about what to notice.
  - Describe and Name - The teacher provides explicit teaching about the model. (NOTE: This step can be combined with the Notice step if students notice the features the teacher will be explicitly teaching for the lesson.)
  - Teacher Model - The teacher shows the model and tells how it’s like the mentor text model.
  - Try It! - The teacher invites students to try to compose text like the models. Students can generally write about whatever they’re already writing about in writing workshop.
  - Sharing - Students close out the lesson by sharing what they’ve written. If you’re teaching these lessons at the beginning of your writing workshop block, you can incorporate sharing as part of your sharing at the end of the workshop.

- **Formative Assessment:** Formative assessment options are given for each lesson.
- **Transfer Tips**: These are tips that will help your students transfer what they are learning to their writing.

- **Additional Supports**: These are scaffolding options for your striving writers.

- **Extra Challenges**: These are additional options for students who have shown success with the main lesson.

### Model Lessons

Model lessons can be seen at this link: [https://youtu.be/dSrWZybnBY](https://youtu.be/dSrWZybnBY)

### Color Coding

Throughout the lessons you will find a color-coding system for coding different parts of speech. This system is optional, and you can change the colors as you wish, however this curriculum uses the Modified Fitzgerald Key for color coding. You may wish to color code the vocabulary you teach the same way. You may also wish to consult with your special education department to see if they have a color-coding system they use. The code is as as follows:

- Blue: Adjectives
- Green: Verbs
- Yellow: Pronouns
- Orange: Nouns
- White: Conjunctions
- Pink: Prepositions, social words
- Purple: Questions
- Brown: Adverbs
- Red: Important function words, negation, emergency words
- Grey: Determiners
A notable exception to the above code is conjunctions. Because conjunctions are coded white and this would not show up on chart paper, lessons where conjunctions need coding call for underlining them in red. Red is also used to circle some punctuation.

**Assessments**

Formative assessments are included for each lesson. Each unit also includes a rubric for assessment. These rubrics can be applied to any student writing sample and can be used as a pre-assessment and/or a post-assessment. These rubrics are single-point rubrics, meaning they have a descriptor for proficient skill in a particular area and room for teacher comments for areas where students show particular weakness or strength for each descriptor (Fluckiger, 2010). If students meet the descriptor criteria exactly, teachers can circle or highlight that area on the rubric.

**How do I get my Students to Remember the Lessons?**

The transfer tips included in most lessons are designed to help your students apply the skills and concepts to their own writing. This application will help them remember what they learn. You can also create a numbered system for each skill you teach. Numbering the skills can create a helpful shorthand for the classroom. You may wish to start this numbered system with a quick review of skills learned in the previous grade. For example, your list at the beginning of the year might look something like this:

1. Capitalize names of people.
2. Capitalize the word “I.”
3. Include end punctuation for every sentence.

If you write these on an anchor chart or sentence strips and post them in the classroom, you can add to them throughout the year. The list serves as a visual reminder to students of what they are expected to do in their writing and to you of what skills you have already taught (and what’s not
on the wall yet). The numbers enable you to make quick editing suggestions to students, just writing a number at the top or in the margin of a paper, and giving them the responsibility to check it and figure out where their errors were. You can also have peer editors look for specific things, making their editing more focused and effective. For example, “Today you’ll edit your partner’s paper for numbers 1, 3, and 8.”

In addition to a numbered, visual list of skills that will serve as a reference all year, and the lessons included in this curriculum, your students need to read. The more they read, the more they will absorb the rules of English writing, just as they learned how to speak from hearing others speak. Surrounding your students with print will enrich their knowledge of language, the main focus of this curriculum, but it will also enrich their lives.
This unit will give students a basic understanding of sentence structure. This unit focuses on the essential question, how do writers communicate thoughts to readers? This essential question helps address the reason why grammar and mechanics matter. Readers and writers have agreed on certain rules and following them increases understanding. By the end of this unit, students should have the essential understandings that all complete sentences contain a noun and a verb and that some sentences can be combined into one sentence.

This unit could be incorporated into a unit on writer’s notebooks, writing workshop routines, or thinking about audience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential Question:</th>
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<tr>
<td>• How do writers communicate thoughts to readers?</td>
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<tr>
<th>Essential Understandings:</th>
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<tr>
<td>• All complete sentences contain a noun and a verb.</td>
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<td>• Some sentences can be combined into one sentence.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Unit Assessment:</th>
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<tr>
<td>The unit assessment is a rubric or a rating scale that can be used as both a pre- and post-assessment. It can be applied to any writing sample students produce.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lesson Title</td>
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<td><strong>Complete or Incomplete I</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Complete or Incomplete II</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Two Words</strong></td>
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<td><strong>More than Two Words</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Multiple Verbs</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Helping Verbs (Auxiliary Verbs) I</td>
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<tr>
<td>Helping Verbs (Auxiliary Verbs) II</td>
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<tr>
<td>Progressive Tenses</td>
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<td>Compound Sentences</td>
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Complete or Incomplete? I

NOTE: If your students do well with this, you may want to combine Complete or Incomplete? I and II into one lesson.

<table>
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<th>Essential Question:</th>
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<tr>
<td>How do writers communicate thoughts to readers?</td>
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<tr>
<th>Lesson Objective(s):</th>
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<tr>
<td>Students will be able to:</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Identify complete sentences.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Standards Correlation(s):</th>
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<tr>
<td>This lesson addresses prerequisite skills for the following standards:</td>
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<tr>
<td>● L.3.3a. Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons.</td>
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<tr>
<td>● L.3.1i. Produce simple, compound, and complex sentences.</td>
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<tr>
<td>● L.4.1f Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons.</td>
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<th>Materials:</th>
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<tr>
<td>picture books (about 2 per student) - choose a mix of titles that are complete sentences (e.g. Hop on Pop, Don’t Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus) and titles that are incomplete sentences or fragments (e.g. A Chair for My Mother, When I Am Old with You)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Lesson Sequence</th>
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<tr>
<td>Explanation:</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Tell the students: Today we’re going to practice identifying complete sentences. Complete sentences need to be complete thoughts¹. We’ll sort picture books into two categories by their titles: complete sentences and incomplete sentences or fragments. Let’s try some.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

¹ Complete sentences technically need to meet three criteria: 1) having a subject, 2) having the subject do something, and 3) being a complete thought. The idea of subject and verb are not introduced here as it can be confusing for students with some picture book titles. For example, Pop is NOT the subject in Hop on Pop. Instead, in this title the subject is implied; whoever is hopping is the subject, but it’s not directly stated in the sentence who that is. In this case, no subject is stated because hop is a command.
| Teacher Model: | Model sorting a couple of picture books with the whole group, putting them into two different piles. Be sure to read the titles and think aloud.  

Sample Think-aloud: *Hop on Pop*. That sounds like a complete sentence to me. I know exactly what is happening in this sentence. My next title is *A Chair for My Mother*. I know this is about a chair, but I don’t really know what about the chair. Noone is doing anything here. *A Chair for My Mother* is not a complete thought; there’s something missing. It must not be a complete sentence. |
| --- | --- |
| Try it! | Put students into mixed-ability groups of 2-4. Give each group several picture books and have them sort them into two piles, complete sentences and fragments.  

OPTIONAL: Have student groups mix their books into one stack and pass to another group for more sorting. |

### Formative Assessment:

- Monitor groups to see that they’re sorting correctly. Offer additional modeling and/or assistance as needed.

### Transfer Tips:

- Have students review their own writing and find two places where they can add in multiple adjectives to describe one noun.

### Additional Supports:

- Encourage students to read the titles out loud.

- Dependent clauses (like *When I Am Old with You*) can be especially difficult for students; it may help to let them know that sometimes incomplete sentences have a subject and verb, but leave unanswered questions. Try saying: *When I am old with you … what?*

- Repetition and modeling will help. Try sorting 2-3 book titles before guided reading groups or at transition times (e.g. before lunch).
Extra Challenges:

- Have students write sentences using three or more adjectives to describe a single noun.
# Complete or Incomplete? II

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Essential Question:</th>
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<td>How do writers communicate thoughts to readers?</td>
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<th>Lesson Objective(s):</th>
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<tr>
<td>Students will be able to:</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Revise sentence fragments into complete sentences.</td>
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<thead>
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<th>Standards Correlation(s):</th>
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<tr>
<td>● L.3.3a. Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons.</td>
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<tr>
<td>● L.4.1f Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons.</td>
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## Lesson Sequence

<table>
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<th>Explanation:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tell the students: <em>Last time we sorted picture book titles into two groups: complete sentences and incomplete sentences or fragments. Today we’re going to see if we can turn the fragments into complete sentences. First, let’s get our titles sorted.</em></td>
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<th>Warm-up:</th>
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<td>OPTION 1: Sort the books as a whole class using a Total Participation Technique (TPT), such as “Touch your head if it’s a complete sentence; touch your tummy if it’s a fragment.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>OPTION 2: Have students work in small groups to sort a stack of books as in the previous lesson.</td>
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**Teacher Model:** Tell the students: *Now we’ll take one of our fragments and turn it into a complete sentence. I’ll go first.* Model using one of the picture book titles you have. Think aloud about how it could be changed into a complete sentence and then write your complete sentence on the board. Point out that your complete sentence has a capital letter at the beginning and end punctuation. Model with 2-3 titles.

Sample Think Aloud: *I know that a complete sentence needs to be a complete thought. When I read A Chair for My Mother, I feel like something is missing. I have a chair, but it's not doing anything and it doesn't say anything about the chair. Hmmm. I could say, A chair for my mother is pretty. Or I could add something to the beginning. Maybe I could say, I want to buy a chair for my mother. I could even just say, I want a chair for my mother.* (Write “I want a chair for my mother.” on the board.)

**Try it! Supported Practice:** Put students into mixed-ability groups of 2-4. Have students try changing fragments into complete sentences using one of the following options:

- **OPTION 1:** Have each group work with their own set of books, recording their sentences on a sheet of paper.
- **OPTION 2:** Show a title to the class. Have students work with their groups to write complete sentences on paper or small white boards. Have groups share out with the whole class before moving on to the next title.

**Formative Assessment:**

- Have students choose their best sentence to write on an exit ticket (masters at the end of this lesson).

**Additional Supports:**

- Give students who are having trouble titles that could be followed by “is ____________.” Have them fill in the blank to make complete sentences. Follow up with more challenging titles.
## Extra Challenges:

- Have students write a short story about a sentence they wrote.
- Have students see how many different sentences they can write for the same picture book title.
## Exit Tickets

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Two-Word Sentences

A video model lesson is available at this link: https://youtu.be/dSrpWZybnBY

Essential Question:

How do writers communicate thoughts to readers?

Lesson Objective(s):

Students will be able to:
- Compose a two word sentence independently.
- Match the verb to a singular subject or a plural subject.
- Identify the noun and verb.

Standards Correlation(s):

- L.3.3a Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons.
- L.3.1f Ensure subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement.
- L.3.1i Produce simple, compound, and complex sentences.
- L.4.1f Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons.

Materials:

models on chart paper; orange and green markers

Mentor Text Model: 

from *Body Battles* by Rita Golden Gelman

Hearts pump.
Ears hear.
Skin sweats.
Eyes tear.

Teacher Model:

Sun shines.
Waves crash.
Sand burns.
Kids splash.

Lesson Sequence

Notice: Post the mentor text model for all students to see. Invite students to share what they notice.
- Noticing can be done in pairs or in writing first, but should lead to whole-class sharing.
If students are having difficulty writing a two-word sentence, ask them what is there at the birthday party (or whatever setting they are writing about). Then ask them what that thing is doing. Caution: If students say presents, you might want to encourage them to name something else because it can be difficult for students to come up with something that presents do. Balloons, candles, children, and even horns would all be more active subjects for struggling students.

Optional Guiding Question: What do you notice about the types of words in each sentence?

| Describe and Name: | Give students the following explanation: 
| a. There are four sentences, each with two words. In each sentence, there is a noun -- the subject, what the sentence is about -- and a verb -- what the noun does.  
| b. Circle the nouns in orange and the verbs in green.  
| c. Each sentence communicates a complete thought. |

| Teacher Model: | Tell students: I wanted to see if I could write my own set of two-word sentences. Instead of writing about the human body, I wanted to write about a trip to the beach. I thought about the things I would see at the beach and what they would be doing. Here’s what I came up with. (Post your model.) When I was writing, I wanted it to be as much like what Rita wrote in Body Battles as possible. I made sure to have four sentences with two words each, a noun first (circle in orange), then a verb (circle in green). I also made sure I had capital letters at the beginning and periods at the end of each sentence. |

| Try it! | Tell students: Now I want you to try writing your own set of two-word sentences. You don’t have to write about the human body or the beach. Think about your current writing project and write about that. If you’re between projects now, try writing about a birthday party or recess at school. (Give students approximately 3 minutes to write. Early finishers can write more two-word sentences.)

If students are having difficulty writing a two-word sentence, ask them what is there at the birthday party (or whatever setting they are writing about). Then ask them what that thing is doing. Caution: If students say presents, you might want to encourage them to name something else because it can be difficult for students to come up with something that presents do. Balloons, candles, children, and even horns would all be more active subjects for struggling students.

| Sharing: | Have all the students pick their best two-word sentence and share it in a whip around. (If you have time, you can have them share all four of their sentences.) |
**Formative Assessment:**

Listen as students share. Listen for:
- a noun and a verb.
- subject-verb agreement.

Collect students’ writing. Look for:
- capital letters to begin the sentences.
- periods to end the sentences.

**Transfer Tips:**

- Once students successfully complete the lesson, let them know that they have proven that they know they need a capital letter to begin a sentence and end punctuation to end it. They are now responsible for doing this any time they need to write in complete sentences. This can be added to classroom editing checklists.
- Have students color code the nouns and verbs in their own writing.

**Additional Supports:**

- Subject-verb agreement -- For students who have trouble, write a two-word sentence with a singular noun. Then write the same sentence, but make the noun plural and change the verb to match. Repeat. Then have students change one of your sentences from a singular noun to a plural noun. Finally, have them try writing their own.
- Capital letters or end punctuation -- Give them a copy of the model(s), and have them draw a box around the capital letters and circle the periods. Then have them do the same on their writing.

**Extra Challenges:**

- See if students can make their second and fourth sentences rhyme (like the models).
- Challenge students to use interesting verbs. You can facilitate this by having them write as many two-word sentences as they can with the same noun.
- Have the students write two-word sentences that go with the science or social studies unit they’re currently studying.
More Than Two Words

Essential Question:
How do writers communicate thoughts to readers?

Lesson Objective(s):
Students will be able to:
- Compose a simple sentence independently.
- Identify the subject (noun) and verb.

Standards Correlation(s):

- L.3.3a Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons.
- L.3.1f Ensure subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement.
- L.3.1i Produce simple, compound, and complex sentences.
- L.4.1f Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons.

Materials:
models on chart paper; orange, green, blue, red markers

Mentor Text Model:
from Bat Loves the Night by Nicola Davies
Bat sneezes. The dusty scales got up her nose.

Teacher Model:
Frogs jump. The still water splashes when they land.

Lesson Sequence

Notice: Post the mentor text model for all students to see. Invite students to share what they notice.
- Noticing can be done in pairs or in writing first, but should lead to whole-class sharing.

2 This sentence uses “when” as a relative adverb, as designated in standard L.4.1a.
**Optional Guiding Question:** What similarities and differences do you notice about these two sentences?

**Describe and Name:**

Give students the following explanation:

a. *There are two sentences. The first is a two-word sentence like the ones we looked at last time. It’s got a noun-subject, bat, and a verb, sneezes. So the first sentence is about a bat, and the bat does something; it sneezes.* (Circle the noun in orange and the verb in green.)

b. *The second sentence is a little different. I know my sentence is about scales (circle in orange) and they did something. They “got” (circle “got” in green), but this sentence has more than two words. I know something about the scales; they’re dusty (circle in blue). I also know where they “got” - up her nose.*

c. *Even though this sentence is more than two words, I can still split it up into two parts. (Draw a line with a red marker between the words scales and got.) The dusty scales is what the sentence is about, the subject. Got up her nose tells me what happened, what the dusty scales did.* (OPTIONAL: We call that the predicate.)

**Teacher Model:**

Tell students: *I wanted to see if I could write my own sentences like Nicola. Here’s what I came up with.* (Post the teacher model.) *My first sentence is still a two-word sentence. Frogs is my subject (circle in orange) and jump is my verb (circle in green). In my second sentence, I imagined water splashing, but instead of writing, “Water splashes,” (circle “water” in orange and “splashes” in green) I made mine more like what Nicola wrote. I said what kind of water, the quiet water (circle “quiet” in blue). That’s the subject of my sentence. (Draw a red vertical line between “water” and “splashes”.) I also said more about the splashes; they are when they land. That’s how I ended up with, Frogs jump. The quiet water splashes when they land.*

**Try it!**

Tell students: *Now I want you to try writing your own sentences modeled after what Nicola Davies wrote in Bat Loves the Night. Start with a two-word sentence and then follow it up with another longer sentence. Remember a sentence needs to have a subject and a verb; it must be a complete thought. It should also begin with*
**a capital letter and have end punctuation.** (Give students 3-5 minutes to write. Students who finish early can try out more than one set.)

| Sharing: | Have students share with partners.  
OR  
Ask for volunteers to share with the whole class. |

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formative Assessment:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| ● Monitor and observe students as they are writing. Notice who might benefit from a small group lesson.  
● Collect student writing if desired. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transfer Tips:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● Have students choose three sentences from their own writing and see if they can draw a wall (the red line) to split the sentence into two parts, subject and predicate.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Additional Supports:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| ● Offer reminders about capitalization and end punctuation as needed.  
● If students are having trouble getting started, give them the two-word sentence and then have them write the following sentence. Good two-word sentences might be: Kids run. Wind blows. Lockers slam. Trays clatter. Crayons scribble. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extra Challenges:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| ● Have students color-code their own writing: orange for nouns, green for verbs, blue for adjectives.  
● Encourage students to write sentences that go with a topic of study in science, social studies, or mathematics.  
● See if students can identify cause and effect relationships from the model sentences first and then from their own sentences. |
More Than Two Words - Follow-up

**Mentor Text Model:** from *Lou Gehrig: The Luckiest Man* by David A. Adler

Lou stepped back from the microphones and wiped his eyes.

**Teacher Model:**

Anna ran to the swingset and hopped in the seat.

---

**Mentor Text Model:** from *Lou Gehrig: The Luckiest Man* by David A. Adler

He was losing weight. His hair was turning gray. He didn’t have to be told he was dying. He knew it.

**Teacher Model:**

Javier was spinning in circles. He was getting dizzy. He knew that he couldn’t go much longer. He would fall down.³

---

**Mentor Text Model:** from *Lou Gehrig: The Luckiest Man* by David A. Adler

Lou exercised. He took extra batting practice. He even tried changing the way he stood and held his bat.

**Teacher Model:**

Sheila baked. She cracked the eggs. She mixed in the flour and the vanilla.

³ This addresses standard L.4.1b, the progressive verb tense.
**Mentor Text Model:** from *Bat Loves the Night* by Nicola Davies

Her beady eyes open. Her pixie ears twitch. She shakes her thistledown fur.

**Teacher Model:**

Jackson’s empty stomach drops. His dry mouth screams. He squeezes his eyes shut tight.

---

**Mentor Text Model:** from *Night Driving* by John Coy

I watch the deer leap a fence and bound into a field.

**Teacher Model:**

I hear the footsteps run past the door and echo down the hall.
Multiple Verbs

Essential Question:

How do writers communicate thoughts to readers?

Lesson Objective(s):

Students will be able to:
- Compose a simple sentence independently.
- Use the conjunction “and”

Standards Correlation(s):

- L.3.3a Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons.
- L.3.1h Use coordinating and subordinating conjunctions.
- L.3.1i Produce simple, compound, and complex sentences.
- L.4.1f Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons.

Materials:

models on chart paper; orange, green, red markers

Mentor Text Model:

from *Night Driving* by John Coy

I watch the deer leap a fence and bound into a field.

Teacher Model:

I saw Lilah race down the waterslide and splash into the pool.

Lesson Sequence

Notice:

Post the mentor text model for all students to see. Invite students to share what they notice.
- Noticing can be done in pairs or in writing first, but should lead to whole-class sharing.

Optional Guiding Question: *What do you notice about nouns and verbs in this sentence?*
### Describe and Name:

Give students the following explanation:

*In this sentence, there are two important nouns who are doing something: the narrator -- I -- and the deer. (circle both in orange) The narrator watches (circle in green), but the deer does two things: It leaps (circle in green) and it bounds (circle in green). John Coy uses this word “and” to join them together. (NOTE: conjunctions are color coded white, but you can use red to mark them since white is probably impractical.)*

- If you wish, at this point you can introduce the term conjunction.

### Teacher Model:

Tell students: *I wanted to see if I could write my own sentence like John. Here’s what I came up with.* (Post the teacher model.) *I* (circle in orange) *am still doing something. I saw* (circle in green). *Instead of seeing a deer, I saw Lilah* (circle in orange) *race and splash* (circle race in green, underline and with red, circle splash in green). *I saw her race down the waterslide and splash into the pool. She did two things and I used the word “and” to put both of those things she does into one sentence.*

### Try it!

Tell students: *Now I want you to try writing your own sentence modeled after what John Coy wrote in Night Driving. Remember to begin with a capital letter and have end punctuation. You’ll also need a capital letter for a person’s name, like I used with Lilah. I’ll be looking for three verbs in your sentences as well as the word “and”.* (Give students 3-5 minutes to write. Students who finish early can try out more than one sentence.)

### Sharing:

You can have students share with partners or ask for volunteers to share with the whole class.

**OR**

Do a whiparound where each student shares their three verbs.

---

Some students may write compound sentences, such as, “I see birds twitter, and then they fly away.” These sentences are not wrong, but are a step beyond today’s lesson. You may wish to pull this group aside and point out that they need a comma before the.
**Formative Assessment:**

- Monitor as students write to see if they are including at least three verbs.
- Check to see which students are still struggling with capital letters and end punctuation.
- Collect student writing if desired.

**Transfer Tips:**

- Encourage students to use the sentences they wrote in their writing.
- Have students check to see if there are any sentences in their own writing they could combine into one sentence using the word “and”.

**Additional Supports:**

- Capital Letters and End Punctuation - For students still struggling with this, give them a laminated card like those found at the end of this lesson.
- For students having difficulty writing a sentence with multiple verbs, eliminate some of the words from the model. Provide them with the model, “I saw Lilah race and splash.”

**Extra Challenges:**

- Strong Verbs - Encourage students to use strong verbs. They can revise their sentences to include stronger verbs. They can also search for strong verbs in their own writing.
- Conjunctions and Commas Inquiry - Have students search for sentences from books that use the conjunction “and”. Students can work as a group to copy the sentences onto sticky notes. Then have them group the sentences into those that have a comma before the word “and” and those that don’t. See if students can figure out why some sentences include a comma and some don’t.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do my sentences have …</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a capital letter at the beginning?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>capital letters for names?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the word “I” capitalized?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>punctuation at the end?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Helping Verbs (Auxiliary Verbs) I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential Question:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How do writers communicate thoughts to readers?</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Objective(s):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students will be able to:</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Identify auxiliary verbs.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standards Correlation(s):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● L.4.1c Use modal auxiliaries (e.g., can, may, must) to convey various conditions.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Materials:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>highlighters (1 per student); worksheet w/ text from Night Driving by John Coy (at end of this lesson); worksheet projected or first three sentences written on chart paper; teacher model on chart paper; green marker</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentor Text Model:</th>
<th>Teacher Model:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>from Night Driving by John Coy</td>
<td>I saw Lilah race down the waterslide and splash into the pool.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. “How late can I stay up?”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. “Why are we going to drive at night?”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. “He would have liked knowing you.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Lesson Sequence

### Notice:
Distribute the worksheet to students and post the first three sentences for all students to see. Ask if students can identify the verbs in each sentence. Call on students and circle the main verbs in green (stay, going, drive, see). (NOTE: Most students will not identify the helping verbs, but if they do, underline them rather than circle them.)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Describe and Name:</th>
<th>Tell students:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. The verbs that are circled are all main verbs, but they have helping verbs, too. Helping verbs are verbs that go with a main verb and tell us if someone could, can, should, would, might, or may do something or that they have something or are something. (NOTE: The term modal auxiliary is not introduced to students. Modal auxiliary verbs are a specific type of auxiliary verb where the form of the verb doesn’t change depending upon who is doing the action, e.g. I can, you can, s/he can, etc. It is sufficient for students to know that there are helping verbs and be able to use them in their own speech and writing.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. In the first sentence, the helping verb is “can.” The boy is asking if he can do something. (Underline “can” in green and ask students to highlight it on their papers.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. In the second sentence, the helping verb is a little trickier since it’s not right next to the verb. The helping verb in this sentence is “are.” (Underline “are” in green and ask students to highlight it on their papers.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d. The third sentence is even trickier. When a form of to have, like had, have, or has, is used as a helping verb, it’s combined with another helping verb. In this case, the helping verbs are “would have.” (Underline “would have” in green and ask students to highlight it on their papers.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e. Be careful though. If you have a sentence like, “I have a test tomorrow,” “have” is NOT a helping verb because there is no other verb for it to help. In that case, it is a main verb.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Try it! | Tell students: Now I want you to identify helping verbs in the other sentences from Night Driving. You can do numbers 4-6 with a partner and do the rest on your own. Highlight the helping verbs in each sentence. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formative Assessment:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● Collect worksheets to see if students were successful at identifying the helping verbs in each sentence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Ask students to identify helping verbs in a piece of their own writing - either a work in progress or an entry from their writer’s notebook.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Supports:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>● If students need more practice, use a portion of text from another book that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contains a lot of helping verbs. <em>Dear Mrs. LaRue: Letters from Obedience School</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by Mark Teague is an excellent source.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>● Have students create a comic strip and include the words the following words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the speech bubbles: can, may, must, might, should, will, would.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Helping Verbs
Text from Night Driving by John Coy

Let’s Try it Together:

1. “How late can I stay up?”
2. “Why are we going to drive at night?”
3. “He would have liked knowing you.”

Work with a Partner:

4. My dad and I are driving west.
5. “Will we still make it to the mountains?”
6. “Do you want to rest awhile?” Dad asks.

Try it On your Own:

7. “Can you take the wheel?”
8. “We could drive without headlights.”
9. “Oh yeah. You can help change it.”
10. “He might have played in the big leagues, but he hurt his arm one summer when he threw too much.”
11. “We should see mountains by morning.”
12. “Are you getting tired?”
Answer Key

Helping Verbs

Text from Night Driving by John Coy

Let’s Try it Together:

1. “How late can I stay up?”

2. “Why are we going to drive at night?”

3. “He would have liked knowing you.”

Work with a Partner:

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Try it On your Own:

7. “Can you take the wheel?”

8. “We could drive without headlights.”

9. “Oh yeah. You can help change it.”

10. “He might have played in the big leagues, but he hurt his arm one summer when he threw too much.”

11. “We should see mountains by morning.”

12. “Are you getting tired?”
Helping Verbs (Auxiliary Verbs) II

Essential Question:
How do writers communicate thoughts to readers?

Lesson Objective(s):
Students will be able to:
- Use modal auxiliary verbs in their own writing.
- Choose which word to use based on the condition they want to express.

Standards Correlation(s):
- L.4.1c Use modal auxiliaries (e.g., can, may, must) to convey various conditions.

Materials:
Models written on chart paper; large sticky notes with words written on them (one each for could, would, will, and might); one worksheet for each student

Mentor Text Model:
from Night Driving by John Coy
“We should see mountains by morning.”

Teacher Model:
I know I should eat lots of green vegetables every day. I would eat more veggies if they were already cut up in my fridge. I think I will go to the store to buy some broccoli and celery after school. I could even spread peanut butter on the celery for an after-school snack.

Lesson Sequence

Explain:
Tell students: Sometimes a writer chooses specific words to let the reader know about different conditions. Some examples of conditions are whether something is certain or uncertain, or if someone is able to do something or asking permission. Today we’re going to take a look at some of those words and how they show different conditions.
**Describe and Name:**

Post the mentor text sentences, and tell students:

a. *Let’s start with “should” in the first sentence. When the boy’s dad tells him that they should see the mountains by morning, he’s letting the boy know what he expects to happen.*

b. *Imagine that he used the word “could” instead. (Put the sticky note with the word “could” on it over the word “should.”) If the dad said that they could see the mountains by morning, it shows that it’s possible, but not expected.*

c. *Might is a lot like could in this case. (Put the sticky note with the word “might” on it over the word “could.”) It shows that something will maybe happen.*

d. *The sentence would be different still if the dad said that they will see the mountains by morning. (Put the sticky note with the word “will” on it over the word “might.”) This shows certainty that something is going to happen.*

**Explore:**

Have students work with a partner to complete the worksheet.

**Teacher Model:**

Post the teacher model, and tell students: *I wrote my own sentences using helping verbs to show various conditions. First I’m telling about what I should do, what I know I’m supposed to do. (Underline “should.”) Then I tell what I would do, the possible situation that would lead me to do something. (Underline “would.”) Then I tell what I plan to do today with the word “will.” (Underline “will.”) Finally, I use the word could to explain something that I’m able to do and that I possibly will do. (Underline “could.”) I could spread peanut butter on the celery.*

**Try it!**

Ask students to write a short letter to a parent trying to convince the parent to get them a certain gift. They should include what they might be willing to do in exchange and what they would do with the gift. Tell students they must include at least four of the following words in their letter: can, may, must, might, should, will, would. After they finish writing, have them highlight the helping verbs.

**Formative Assessment:**

- Did students use helping verbs to convey various conditions in their writing?
**Additional Supports:**

- Brainstorm a list of things students could or would do to persuade their parents to get them a certain gift.

**Extra Challenges:**

- Have students create a comic strip and include the words the following words in the speech bubbles: can, may, must, might, should, will, would.
Helping Verbs Show Conditions

Read each scenario. Then circle the word that best fits in the sentence.

Scenario: The sun is shining in the morning, but the weather forecast predicted rain for the afternoon.

1. We might be able to play baseball after school.

Scenario: You are asking for permission to borrow a friend’s book after he is done with it.

2. I borrow your book when you finish it?

Scenario: You and a friend are talking about how wide snakes are able to open their mouths.

3. I wonder how wide pythons open their mouths.
Scenario: A girl is telling her mother what she plans to do if her mother gets her a pet turtle.

   could

4. If you got me a pet turtle, I clean my room every day.

   would

Scenario: A little boy is crying because his ice cream cone fell on the sidewalk.

   must

5. He be sad.

   could

Scenario: A boy is giving his little sister advice for how to have a good year in third grade.

   could

6. You turn your homework in on time every week.

   should

Scenario: A girl is telling her cousin what her mother has told her about her plans for the summer.

   will

7. Once you learn to swim, my mom bring us to the water park.

   can
Helping Verbs Show Conditions

Read each scenario. Then circle the word that best fits in the sentence.

Scenario: The sun is shining in the morning, but the weather forecast predicted rain for the afternoon.

2. We ________ be able to play baseball after school.
   - might
   - should

3. I wonder how wide pythons ________ open their mouths.
   - can
   - will

Scenario: You are asking for permission to borrow a friend’s book after he is done with it.

2. I borrow your book when you finish it?
   - Can
   - May
Scenario: A girl is telling her mother what she plans to do if her mother gets her a pet turtle.

   could

4. If you got me a pet turtle, I    clean my room every day.
   would

Scenario: A little boy is crying because his ice cream cone fell on the sidewalk.

   must

5. He    be sad.
   could

Scenario: A boy is giving his little sister advice for how to have a good year in third grade.

   could

6. You    turn your homework in on time every week.
   should

Scenario: A girl is telling her cousin what her mother plans to do this summer.

   will

7. Once you learn to swim, my mom    bring us to the water park.
   can
# Progressive Verb Tenses

## Essential Question:

How do writers communicate thoughts to readers?

## Lesson Objective(s):

Students will be able to:
- Form progressive verb tenses (NOTE: This lesson does not address progressive perfect tenses.)
- Use progressive verb tenses to indicate when an action takes place.

## Standards Correlation(s):

- L.4.1b Form and use the progressive (e.g., I was walking; I am walking; I will be walking) verb tenses.

## Materials:

models on chart paper; green marker

## Mentor Text Model:  
Teacher Model:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>from <em>Night Driving</em> by John Coy</th>
<th>Avery was running, and I was trying to catch him.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My dad stops talking, and I know he’s thinking about his dad.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Lesson Sequence

### Notice:

Post the mentor text model for all students to see. Invite students to share what they notice.
- Noticing can be done in pairs or in writing first, but should lead to whole-class sharing.

Optional Guiding Question: *What do you notice about the verbs in this sentence?*

### Describe and Name:

Give students the following explanation:

a. *This sentence is a compound sentence, and I want to focus on the second part. We have two main verbs in the second*
part, know (circle in green) and thinking (circle in green). We also have a helping verb, is. The word “is” is hidden in this contraction. (underline the ‘s in green.)

b. Writers can combine a helping verb with an -ing verb. We can use different forms of the verbs to tell about when things in a story happen.

Teacher Model:
Tell students: I wanted to see if I could write my own sentence like John. Here’s what I came up with. (Post the teacher model.) In my sentence, Avery was running, and I was trying to catch him. I used my helping verb (underline both “was” words with green) and my main verbs, running and trying (circle both words in green).

a. Hmmm. I said that we can use different forms of verbs to tell when things happen. When you read what John Coy wrote in Night Driving, you can tell that the action is happening right now. His dad is thinking about his dad RIGHT NOW.

b. Take a look at my sentence. Is that happening right now? (No. it happened already because I was trying to catch him.)

c. I’m going to change my sentence so that the action is happening right now. (Below your model, write: Avery is running and I am trying to catch him.) Now I am doing something, so the action is happening in the present, right now.

d. I can even change my sentence so it’s happening in the future. (Below your model, write: Avery will be running and I will be trying to catch him.) We will be doing something; it’s going to happen, but it hasn’t happened yet.

Try it!
Tell students: Now I want you to try writing your own sentence modeled after what John Coy wrote in Night Driving, but we’re going to try writing about the action in the past, present - right now, and future. So when you finish, you’ll actually have 3 sentences like my sentence about Avery running and my trying to catch him. (Give students 3-5 minutes to write. Students who finish early can try out more than one sentence.)

Sharing:
Have students share with partners.

OR

Collect student writing.
### Formative Assessment:
- Monitor as students write to see if they are correctly using the progressive tense.
- Collect student writing if desired.

### Transfer Tips:
- Encourage students to use the sentences they wrote in their writing.

### Additional Supports:
- Have students work in pairs to compose their sentences.
- Have students play charades, but they can only guess by saying a complete sentence using a progressive verb tense. (e.g. She is fishing.)
- Have students draw pictures of themselves doing something when they were little, now, and when they are old and then write a sentence for each picture using the progressive verb tense.

### Extra Challenges:
- Challenge students to write a story that uses all three progressive tenses (past, present, and future) in a way that makes sense.
# Compound Sentences

## Essential Question:

How do writers communicate thoughts to readers?

## Lesson Objective(s):

Students will be able to:
- Compose a compound sentence independently.
- Use a conjunction correctly.
- Use a comma before the conjunction in a compound sentence.

## Standards Correlation(s):

- L.3.3a Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons.
- L.3.1h Use coordinating and subordinating conjunctions.
- L.3.1i Produce simple, compound, and complex sentences.
- L.4.1f Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons.
- L.4.2c Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence.

## Materials:

models on chart paper; orange, green, red markers

## Mentor Text Model:

from *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters* by John Steptoe

She always sang as she worked, and some said it was her singing that made her crops more bountiful than anyone else's.

## Teacher Model:

Jesse chased and somersaulted over the ball when I threw it, and her energy made her more adorable than any other puppy.
**Lesson Sequence**

| Notice:               | Post the mentor text model for all students to see. Invite students to share what they notice.  
  - Noticing can be done in pairs or in writing first, but should lead to whole-class sharing.  
  Optional Guiding Questions: *What do you notice about the part of the sentence that comes before the comma? After the comma?*

| Describe and Name:    | Give students the following explanation:  
  a. *One thing that makes this sentence special is that I can split it into two sentences that each stand on their own. The first sentence is “She always sang as she worked.” That’s a complete sentence because it tells me the subject -- she -- and what she did. It’s also a complete thought.* (Underline this part of the sentence with any color.)  
  b. *Now we can look at this part of the sentence.* (Underline “some said it was her singing that made her crops more bountiful than anyone else's” with the same color used above.) *This is also a complete sentence by itself - or it would be if it had a capital letter at the beginning.*  
  c. *So this one sentence really has two complete sentences inside it. Those sentences are joined with comma and.* (Circle the comma and underline “and” in red. NOTE: conjunctions are color coded white, but you can use red to mark them since white is probably impractical.) *This type of sentence is called a compound sentence. Just like compound words join two words into one; a compound sentence joins two sentences into one. It uses a comma and a joining word, or conjunction, to do that.*

| Teacher Model:        | Tell students: *I tried writing my own compound sentence. Here’s what I came up with.* (Post the teacher model.) *My first sentence is, “Jesse chased and somersaulted over the ball when I threw it” (underline). The second complete sentence is, “her energy made her more adorable than any other puppy” (underline). I joined these two complete sentences into one sentence by connecting them with a comma and a conjunction, the word “and”* (circle the comma and underline “and” in red).
Try it!  
Tell students: *Now I want you to try writing your own compound sentence. Remember that you need two parts that could be their own complete sentences, and they should be joined by “comma and”.* (Give students 3-5 minutes to write. Students who finish early can try out more than one sentence.)

Sharing:  
Have students share with partners.  
OR  
Ask for volunteers to share out with the whole class.

**Formative Assessment:**

Collect student writing to see if students meet the following criteria:
- Two independent clauses (parts that could stand as complete sentences on their own)
- A comma and conjunction to join the two independent clauses

**Transfer Tips:**

- Have students check to see if there are any sentences in their own writing they could combine into a compound sentence. (Caution students not to try this with every sentence, since writers use a variety of types of sentences.)

**Additional Supports:**

- Pair students together. They should each write their own complete sentence on the same topic and then combine them into a compound sentence.
- Have students go back to their two word sentences. They should choose two and combine them into a compound sentence.

**Extra Challenges:**

- Conjunctions and Commas Inquiry - Have students search for sentences from books that use the conjunction “and”. Students can work as a group to copy the sentences onto sticky notes. Then have them group the sentences into those that have a comma before the word “and” and those that don’t. See if students can figure out why some sentences include a comma and some don’t.
- Other Conjunctions - Have students search for compound sentences in books that use joining words other than “and”. Other coordinating conjunctions follow the acronym FANBOYS (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so).
Compound Sentences - Follow-up

NOTE: All of these models use coordinating conjunctions.

Mentor Text Model: from *Lou Gehrig: The Luckiest Man* by David A. Adler

Lou was shy and modest, but people who watched him knew just how good he was.

Teacher Model:

The test was really difficult, but Kianna was sure she did well.

---

Mentor Text Model: from *Dear Mrs. LaRue: Letters from Obedience School* by Mark Teague

I know what Dr. Wilfrey says, but is it really wise to take risks with one's health?

Teacher Model:

Joe was probably disappointed that no one was throwing him a party, but did he really think we’d forgotten his birthday completely?

---

Mentor Text Model: from *Bat Loves the Night* by Nicola Davies

Bats' toes are shaped like hooks, so it's no effort for a bat to hang upside down.

Teacher Model:

Javier practices shooting baskets every day, so it's no surprise that he's one of the best players on the team.
**Mentor Text Model:** from *Night Driving* by John Coy

We drive awhile in silence, and I listen to the hum of the engine.

**Teacher Model:**

My brother and I tried to do our homework, and my sister ran around screaming like a crazy person.

---

**Mentor Text Model:** from *Night Driving* by John Coy

My dad tells stories about each person, so this game lasts a long time.

**Teacher Model:**

The sun beats down during the day, so my cousins and I all get slathered in sunscreen.

---

**NOTE:** This is a compound sentence, but instead of a conjunction, it uses a semicolon. Use of a semicolon is a high school standard (L.9-10.2a) so use this model at your discretion.

**Mentor Text Model:** from *Lou Gehrig: The Luckiest Man* by David A. Adler

Some people thought it was fitting that the Yankees did not play; this was the day of Lou Gehrig’s funeral.

**Teacher Model:**

The summer flew by; it was already time for back-to-school shopping.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas for Growth</th>
<th>Meets Expectations</th>
<th>Areas of Strength</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90% or better subject-verb agreement (e.g. “he likes”, not “he like”)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90% or better pronoun-antecedent agreement (e.g. “he” instead of “she” for a boy)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90% or better complete sentences (no fragments; few run-ons)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90% or better conventional mechanics - capitalization and end punctuation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses both simple sentences and compound sentences.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Other Notes:
Name ____________________

**Stupendous Sentences Rating Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject-verb agreement (e.g. “he likes”, not “he like”)</th>
<th>Well-below Grade-level Expectations</th>
<th>Nearly at Grade-level Expectations</th>
<th>Meets Grade-level Expectations</th>
<th>Exceeds Grade-level Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pronoun-antecedent agreement (e.g. “he” instead of “she” for a boy)</th>
<th>Well-below Grade-level Expectations</th>
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</table>

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<tr>
<th>Complete sentences (no fragments; few run-ons)</th>
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<th>Nearly at Grade-level Expectations</th>
<th>Meets Grade-level Expectations</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conventional mechanics - capitalization and end punctuation</th>
<th>Well-below Grade-level Expectations</th>
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</table>

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<tr>
<th>Uses both simple sentences and compound sentences.</th>
<th>Well-below Grade-level Expectations</th>
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</tbody>
</table>
DAZZLING DETAILS

This unit is focused on how writers add details to sentences. Specifically, students will explore ordering adjectives, using relative pronouns and relative adverbs, and writing prepositional phrases. Working with these concepts will require that students write complex sentences. While they began using commas in the compound sentences lesson of the previous unit, they will continue to explore comma usage as they add dazzling details to their own writing.

This unit has two essential questions: How do writers add details to their writing and how can writers make their writing more beautiful? By the end of this unit, students should understand that writers can add pieces (clauses or phrases) to basic sentences to convey more information.

The lessons in this unit would go well with lessons on word choice in writing and mood in reading.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential Questions:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● How do writers add details to their writing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● How can writers make their writing more beautiful?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential Understanding:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● Writers can add pieces (clauses or phrases) to basic sentences to convey more information.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit Assessment:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There are two unit assessments. The first is a checklist that can be used throughout the unit to see if students are applying skills in their independent writing. The second is a choice of either a rubric or a rating scale that can be applied to any writing sample.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Dazzling Details Unit Outline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Title</th>
<th>Learning Objectives Students Will be Able to:</th>
<th>Standards: Language: Conventions of Standard English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ordering Adjectives</td>
<td>• Use multiple adjectives in conventional order to describe a noun.</td>
<td>• L.4.1d Order adjectives within sentences according to conventional patterns (e.g., a small red bag rather than a red small bag).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparatives and Superlatives I</td>
<td>• Use comparative and superlative adjectives.</td>
<td>• L.3.1g Form and use comparative and superlative adjectives and adverbs, and choose between them depending on what is to be modified.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparatives and Superlatives II</td>
<td>• Use comparative and superlative adjectives and adverbs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative Pronouns</td>
<td>• Use relative pronouns to add details to their sentences.</td>
<td>• L.4.1a Use relative pronouns (who, whose, whom, which, that) and relative adverbs (where, when, why).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative Adverbs</td>
<td>• Use relative adverbs to add details to their sentences.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepositional Phrases I</td>
<td>• Use a prepositional phrase to describe a noun.</td>
<td>• L.4.1e Form and use prepositional phrases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepositional Phrases II</td>
<td>• Use a prepositional phrase to answer the questions, how, when or where?</td>
<td>• L.3.1h Use coordinating and subordinating conjunctions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Write complex sentences.</td>
<td>• L.3.1i Produce simple, compound, and complex sentences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• L.4.1e Form and use prepositional phrases.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ordering Adjectives

NOTE: Ordering adjectives is a skill that is automatic to most students who speak English as their first language; they know what sounds right, even if they can’t tell you why. Therefore, it is recommended to give students the pre-test included in this lesson. Students who get 5 or 6 correct on the pre-test may be exempted from this lesson.

**Essential Question:**
How do writers communicate thoughts to readers?

**Lesson Objective(s):**
Students will be able to:
- Use multiple adjectives in conventional order to describe a noun.

**Standards Correlation(s):**
- L.4.1d Order adjectives within sentences according to conventional patterns (e.g., a small red bag rather than a red small bag).

**Materials:**
Pocket chart; large phrases, cut apart into individual words (1 set); worksheets (1 per student); teacher model on chart paper

**Mentor Text Model:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phrases taken from:</th>
<th>Teacher Model:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Pirates</em> by Brian William</td>
<td>We hiked through the woods, trying to avoid the thorny green plants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Mufaro’s Beautiful Daughters</em> by John Steptoe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Miz Berlin Walks</em> by Jane Yolen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Lou Gehrig: The Luckiest Man</em> by David Adler</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Night Driving</em> by John Coy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Bat Loves the Night</em> by Nicola Davies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Lesson Sequence**

**Explore:**
Post your first three-word phrase, cut into individual words, for students to see. Switch the order of the adjectives, and ask the
Why is there sometimes a comma between two adjectives? Generally, if you can replace the comma with the word "and" and it still sounds correct, it’s okay to use a comma. If it sounds odd, don’t use a comma.

Describe and Name:

Give students the following explanation:

a. Sometimes a writer will use more than one adjective to describe something. In English we can use a lot of adjectives to describe one noun, but there is usually an order for those adjectives that sounds right. The more you read, the easier this will be since you’ll see what lots of other writers do and it will stick in your brain.

b. Meanwhile, I’ve got some hints to help make it easier. For example, when we use a number as an adjective, the number almost always goes first. That’s why we say two juicy bugs, not juicy two bugs.

c. When we have several adjectives to describe one noun, we usually put them in order from general to specific. For example, lots of things could be famous. That’s general. But, not very many things would be British. That’s pretty specific. Colors are also usually pretty specific.

d. One other important tip is about adjectives that describe size. Those adjectives usually go pretty early in the word order. Size adjectives go before just about everything except number words and opinion adjectives, like delicious or creepy.

Why is there sometimes a comma between two adjectives? Generally, if you can replace the comma with the word “and” and it still sounds correct, it’s okay to use a comma. If it sounds odd, don’t use a comma.
**Teacher Model:** Tell students: *I tried writing my own sentence using two adjectives to describe one noun. (Post teacher model.) I wrote about plants that were thorny and green, so I described them as thorny green plants. (Circle “thorny” and “green” in blue.)*

**Try it!** Tell students: *Now I want you to try writing your own sentence with two adjectives that describe one noun. You can write about whatever you choose, but if you can’t think of something to write about, try writing about a particular food or an item of clothing. (Give students approximately 3 minutes to write. Students who finish early can try out more than one sentence.)*

**Sharing:** Do a whiparound where each student shares one sentence they wrote with two or more adjectives.

**Formative Assessment:**

Listen for:
- the correct order of adjectives as students share.

Give the post-test found at the end of this lesson.

**Transfer Tips:**
- Have students review their own writing and find two places where they can add in multiple adjectives to describe one noun.

**Additional Supports:**
- Choose one noun and brainstorm a list of 3-5 adjectives to describe it. Have students use the words you brainstormed to create their own sentences. Repeat with as many nouns as necessary.

**Extra Challenges:**
- Have students write sentences using three or more adjectives to describe a single noun.
shiny black umbrella

famous British pirate

small fast ships
Name ____________________________

Ordering Adjectives Pre-test

Circle the phrase that shows a correct ordering of adjectives.

1. silly red noses
   OR
   red silly noses

4. delicious, piping-hot pizza
   OR
   piping-hot, delicious pizza

2. long, flowing hair
   OR
   flowing, long hair

5. solid oak floor
   OR
   oak solid floor

3. red small bag
   OR
   small red bag

6. purple big shoes
   OR
   big purple shoes
Ordering Adjectives Pre-test

Circle the phrase that shows a correct ordering of adjectives.

1. silly red noses
   OR
   red silly noses

2. long, flowing hair
   OR
   flowing, long hair

3. red small bag
   OR
   small red bag

4. delicious, piping-hot pizza
   OR
   piping-hot, delicious pizza

5. solid oak floor
   OR
   oak solid floor

6. purple big shoes
   OR
   big purple shoes
Ordering Adjectives Post-test

Circle the phrase that shows a correct ordering of adjectives.

1. large, slow galleons
   OR
   slow, large galleons
   4. straw-apple famous pies
      OR
      famous straw-apple pies

2. cotton flowery dress
   OR
   flowery cotton dress
   5. batting extra practice
      OR
      extra batting practice

3. hot summer eve
   OR
   summer hot eve
   6. four extra-long fingers
      OR
      extra-long four fingers
Ordering Adjectives Post-test

Circle the phrase that shows a correct ordering of adjectives.

1. large, slow galleons
   OR
   slow, large galleons

2. cotton flowery dress
   OR
   flowery cotton dress

3. hot summer eve
   OR
   summer hot eve

4. straw-apple famous pies
   OR
   famous straw-apple pies

5. batting extra practice
   OR
   extra batting practice

6. four extra-long fingers
   OR
   extra-long four fingers
Comparatives and Superlatives I

NOTE: This lesson can be split into two parts if desired.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential Questions:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| How do writers add details to their writing?  
How can writers make their writing more beautiful? |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Objective(s):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Students will be able to:  
● Use comparative and superlative adjectives. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standards Correlation(s):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● L.3.1g Form and use comparative and superlative adjectives and adverbs, and choose between them depending on what is to be modified.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Materials:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>comparative and superlative adjectives worksheet (1 copy for each student); teacher model on chart paper</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentor Text Model:</th>
<th>Teacher Model:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>multiple - see worksheet at the end of this lesson</td>
<td>I thought my rock was prettier than the one my brother found. In fact, I thought it must have been the prettiest one at the beach.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Lesson Sequence**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explore:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tell students: <em>Today we’re going to explore one way that authors make comparisons in text. First we need to identify the comparisons.</em> (Distribute the worksheet.) <em>Let’s do a few together and then you’ll be able to try the rest with your partner.</em> (Go through the first three questions on the worksheet as a whole group. Then have students finish the worksheet with a partner. Once everyone is finished - either immediately following or at a later time - move on to step two, Notice.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Notice: Tell students: *Now that we know what is being compared in each sample text, we can look at the word endings. Sometimes the authors add -er to the end of an adjective; sometimes they add -est to the end. Who has a hypothesis for why an author might use one ending or the other?* (Call on students.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Describe and Name:</th>
<th>Give students the following explanation:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. An author uses an -er ending when just two things are compared. These words are called comparative adjectives and they are used two compare what two things are like. For example, in number two, John Coy is comparing night and day. He writes that night is cooler.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Just above that in number one, David Adler writes “simplest task.” He uses the -est word ending because he’s comparing one task to all the other tasks. There are more than two things being compared, so he uses the -est word ending. This is called a superlative adjective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. NOTE: Students do not need to know the terms comparative and superlative; they just need to be able to form and use them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Teacher Model: | Tell students: *I tried writing my own comparison sentences. (Post your model.) First I wanted to compare two things, my rock and my brother’s, so I used an -er ending. Then I compared my rock to all the other rocks on the beach. Since I was comparing more than two things, I used the -est ending.* |

| Try it! | Tell students: *Now I want you to try writing your own comparison sentences. You need to write about a noun, a thing, that you’re comparing to one other thing, and then to lots of things. You can write about something that’s in a current writing project or another topic of your choice. If you can’t think of something to write about, try writing about a tree or a bird.* (Give students approximately 3 minutes to write. Students who finish early can try out more than one set of sentences.) |

| Sharing: | Do a whip-around and have each student share their comparison sentences. |
### Formative Assessment:

Listen for:
- Did students use a comparative adjective correctly?
- Did students use a superlative adjective correctly?

### Transfer Tips:

- You may wish to use this lesson in conjunction with a spelling lesson on forming comparative and superlative adjectives.

### Additional Supports:

- Bring in a collection of objects (buttons, coffee cups, fabric swatches, etc.) and have students write comparison sentences about the objects. You may wish to provide a word bank of base words adjectives that would be appropriate (e.g. small, tall, heavy, smooth, rough, pretty, ugly, etc.)

### Extra Challenges:

- Work with your music teacher to determine a list of adjectives to describe different sounds. Play some clips of music (or other sounds) and ask students to write sentences to compare different clips.
- Determine a list of adjectives to describe different lines. Have students create an art project (painting or drawing) with different lines and then write sentences to describe them using comparative or superlative adjectives.
Name _______________________________________

Comparative and Superlative Adjectives

Let’s Try it Together:

“He stayed at home, unable to do the simplest task.”
~ Lou Gherig: The Luckiest Man by David Adler

1. The author is comparing the simplest task to ____________________

__________________________________________________________________.

“It’s cooler when the sun is down and we have the road to ourselves.”
~ Night Driving by John Coy

2. The author is comparing the night to ____________________

__________________________________________________________________.

“Listening hard, Bat can hear every detail, the smallest twigs, the shape of leaves.”
~ Bat Loves the Night by Nicola Davies

3. The author is comparing __________________________

to ____________________________________________________.

Try it with a Partner:

“Well, child, I recall once upon a time an old woman lived on our street, oldest woman I’d ever seen.”
~ Miz Berlin Walks by Jane Yolen

4. The author is comparing __________________________

to ____________________________________________________.
"The pipistrelle bat’s body is no bigger than your thumb."
~ *Bat Loves the Night* by Nicola Davies

5. The author is comparing _____________________________
   to ____________________________________________________.

"Same moon, but out here, it’s so much brighter."
~ *Night Driving* by John Coy

6. The author is comparing _____________________________
   to ____________________________________________________.

"Of course, next evening, right after supper, I waited the longest time, eating an ice
cream on the porch."
~ *Miz Berlin Walks* by Jane Yolen

7. The author is comparing _____________________________
   to ____________________________________________________.

"Miz Berlin up and died soon after, and I think I know why: even good habits are hard to
break. Hearts break so much easier."
~ *Miz Berlin Walks* by Jane Yolen

8. The author is comparing _____________________________
   to ____________________________________________________.
Comparative and Superlative Adjectives

Let's Try it Together:

“He stayed at home, unable to do the simplest task.”
~ Lou Gherig: The Luckiest Man by David Adler

1. The author is comparing the simplest task to _____ all of the_____
   _____ other tasks ________________________________.

“It’s cooler when the sun is down and we have the road to ourselves.”
~ Night Driving by John Coy

2. The author is comparing the night to ____ the day_____
   ________________________________.

“Listening hard, Bat can hear every detail, the smallest twigs, the shape of leaves.”
~ Bat Loves the Night by Nicola Davies

3. The author is comparing _____ the smallest twigs_________ to
   ____ all of the other twigs______________________.

Try it with a Partner:

“Well, child, I recall once upon a time an old woman lived on our street, oldest woman I’d ever seen.”
~ Miz Berlin Walks by Jane Yolen

4. The author is comparing _______ this woman________ to
   __________ all the other women she’d seen____________.
“The pipistrelle bat’s body is no bigger than your thumb.”
~ Bat Loves the Night by Nicola Davies

5. The author is comparing ______ the pipistrelle bat’s body ______ to _______ your thumb (the reader’s thumb) ____________.

“Same moon, but out here, it’s so much brighter.”
~ Night Driving by John Coy

6. The author is comparing ______ the moon in the country ______ to ______ the moon where they came from (where they live) _______.

“Of course, next evening, right after supper, I waited the longest time, eating an ice cream on the porch.”
~ Miz Berlin Walks by Jane Yolen

7. The author is comparing ______ this time the girl waited ______ to _______ all the other times (the girl waited) ____________.

“Miz Berlin up and died soon after, and I think I know why: even good habits are hard to break. Hearts break so much easier.”
~ Miz Berlin Walks by Jane Yolen

8. The author is comparing _______ good habits _________ to _____________ hearts __________________________.
Comparatives and Superlatives II

Essential Questions:
How do writers add details to their writing?
How can writers make their writing more beautiful?

Lesson Objective(s):
Students will be able to:
● Use comparative and superlative adjectives and adverbs.

Standards Correlation(s):
● L.3.1g Form and use comparative and superlative adjectives and adverbs, and choose between them depending on what is to be modified.

Materials:
text models on chart paper; sticky notes

Mentor Text Model: Teacher Model:
from Mufaro’s Beautiful Daughters by John Steptoe

She always sang as she worked, and some said it was her singing that made her crops more bountiful than anyone else’s.

“The king has asked for the most worthy and the most beautiful.”

When she saw that the kitten was injured, she moved even more slowly toward it.

Lesson Sequence
Notice: Post the text model and tell students: You’ve already learned about how authors make comparisons using -er and -est endings. In these sentences, John Steptoe is still making comparisons, but he doesn’t do it by using word endings. What does he do instead? (Call on students.)
**Describe and Name:** Give students the following explanation: *John uses “more” or “most” in front of an adjective to make a comparison. Usually with short adjectives, we use the -er or -est endings, but with longer adjectives, like bountiful, we use more or most.*

**Teacher Model:** Tell students: *Writers can also compare using adverbs. Adverbs are words that usually end in “ly” and often tell us how someone does something. I wrote a sentence telling how someone was moving. (Post the teacher model.) In my sentence, I used the word “more” to show that she was moving slower after she saw the kitten was hurt than she was before she noticed it was hurt. So she was moving more slowly.*

**Try it!** Tell students: *Now I want you to try writing your own comparison sentences using more or most. Try using a long adjective like beautiful, expensive, scrumptious to help you get started. If you can, try using an -ly adverb in one of your sentences. Today you’ll be writing on sticky notes that we’ll post afterward. (Give students approximately 3-5 minutes to write. Students who finish early can try out more than one set of sentences.)*

**Sharing:** Have students post their sticky notes somewhere where other students can see them. Give students time to view others’ sentences.

**Formative Assessment:**

Look for:
- Did students use “more” or “most” to create a comparative or superlative adjective or adverb.

**Additional Supports:**
- Provide students with a written list of adverbs or adjectives which use the word “more” to form the comparative.

**Extra Challenges:**
- Have students search for comparatives and superlatives in books or other texts you have available. Then they can work together in pairs or small groups to categorize them according to how they are formed or how many items are being compared.
Relative Pronouns

Essential Questions:

How do writers add details to their writing?
How can writers make their writing more beautiful?

Lesson Objective(s):

Students will be able to:

● Use relative pronouns to add details to their sentences.

Standards Correlation(s):

● L.4.1a Use relative pronouns (who, whose, whom, which, that) and relative adverbs (where, when, why).

Materials:

models on chart paper; orange, green, pink, blue, red markers

Mentor Text Model:

from *Mufaro’s Beautiful Daughters* by John Steptoe

A man named Mufaro lived in this village with his two daughters, who were called Manyara and Nyasha.

Teacher Model:

On the farm we have three cats that are orange and white and two cats that are black and white.

Lesson Sequence

Notice: Post the mentor text model for all students to see. Invite students to share what they notice.

● Noticing can be done in pairs or in writing first, but should lead to whole-class sharing.

Optional Guiding Question: What do you notice about how the author includes details in his sentence?

Describe and Name:

Give students the following explanation:

a. *We know that Mufaro* (circle in orange) *lived* (circle in green)
in the village with his two daughters. (Circle “daughters” in orange.)

b. John Steptoe gives us more information about the two daughters with this clause, or part of a sentence, “who were called Manyara and Nyasha.” (Underline this clause in blue.)

c. Writers can use clauses that begin with words like who, which, or that to give more information about a noun.

d. Since we don’t need the information in the clause underlined in blue, the writer sets it apart from the rest of the sentence with a comma. (Circle the comma in red.)

Teacher Model:

Tell students: I tried writing my own sentence with a clause to give more detail about a noun in my sentence. Here is what I wrote. (Post the teacher model.)

a. The nouns I wanted to give more information about is “cats.” (Circle both “cats” in orange.) I gave more information about the cats by writing, “that are orange and white” and “that are black and white.” (Underline both clauses in blue.)

b. I don’t need a comma because the sentence needs these clauses to make sense. It wouldn’t make sense to just write, on the farm we have three cats and two cats, so I don’t want to separate out these clauses underlined in blue.

Try it!

Tell students: Now I want you to try writing your own sentences with clauses that give more information about a noun using the words that, who, or which. Give it a try. (Give students 3-5 minutes to write. Students who finish early can try out more than one sentence.)

Sharing:

Have students share with a partner.

OR

Do a whiparound share with each student sharing one sentence they wrote.
## Formative Assessment:

Listen for:
- Did students correctly use a relative pronoun?[^1]

Collect student writing if desired.

## Transfer Tips:

- Encourage students to use the sentences they wrote in their writing.
- Have students find places in their writing where they can add a phrase to give more information about a noun.

## Additional Supports:

- Give students a sentence frame to use, such as: The monster that __________ ran over to the girl who ____________.

## Extra Challenges:

- Have students search books for clauses beginning with that, who, which, whose, or whom. They can make a collaborative list of these clauses.
- Have students research the difference between who and whom.

[^1]: Just because a student uses the words that, who, or which, does not automatically mean it’s a relative pronoun. It needs to be used to begin a phrase or clause that gives more information about the noun that should immediately precede it.
Relative Pronouns - Follow-up

**Mentor Text Model:** from *Pirates* by Brian Williams

The famous pirate Blackbeard, whose real name was Edward Teach, attacked ships in the Caribbean.

**Teacher Model:**

My best friend in the whole world, whose face is always smiling, walked into class looking so sad.

---

**Mentor Text Model:** from *Pirates* by Brian Williams

Welshman Bartholomew Roberts, who was known as Black Bart, was one of the most successful pirates who ever lived.

**Teacher Model:**

Geno Phillip Cuthbert, who was known as the school bully, had found me alone in the bathroom.
Relative Adverbs

NOTE: Many students who speak English fluently use relative adverbs automatically. Therefore you should read student writing samples to determine if they need this lesson or not.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential Question:</th>
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<tbody>
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<th>Lesson Objective(s):</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students will be able to:</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Use relative adverbs to add details to their sentences.</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Materials:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>models on chart paper; brown, yellow, orange, green markers</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentor Text Model:</th>
<th>Teacher Model:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>from <em>Lou Gehrig: The Luckiest Man</em> by David A. Adler</td>
<td>The teacher asked when I planned to turn my homework in, but I didn’t know exactly how to answer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When reporters asked why he took himself out, Lou didn’t say he felt weak or how hard it was for him to run.</td>
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</table>

**Lesson Sequence**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Notice:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Post the mentor text model for all students to see. Invite students to share what they notice.</td>
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<td>● Noticing can be done in pairs or in writing first, but should lead to whole-class sharing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optional Guiding Question: <em>What do you notice about the part of the sentence that comes before the comma?</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Describe and Name:**

Give students the following explanation:

a. *In this sentence, David Adler uses a relative adverb to join two sentence parts, or clauses, together. Relative adverbs are the words where, when, or why used to join two clauses together. In this sentence, the writer used the word “why.”* (Circle in brown.)

b. *Let’s look at the two clauses it joins together. Before the word why, we have a noun, reporters, (circle in orange) and a verb, asked (circle in green). We also have a pronoun in the clause after the word why, he (circle in yellow). He did something; he took, so that’s our verb - took. (Circle “took” in green.)*

c. *So we have two clauses - each with a noun and a verb - joined together with the word “why”.*

**Teacher Model:**

Tell students: *I tried writing my own sentence using a relative adverb. Here is what I wrote. (Post the teacher model.)*

a. *I know that relative adverbs can be the words where, when, or why. The sentence David wrote used the word “why”, so I decided to try using the word “when.”* (Circle in brown.)

b. *I want to double check that this word is joining two clauses. If I look before the word “when,” I see a noun, teacher, (circle in orange) and a verb, asked (circle in green). After the word “when” I have a pronoun, I, (circle in yellow) and a verb, planned (circle in green). So I have both a noun or pronoun and a verb before the word “when” and after it. The word “when” joins those two clauses or parts of my sentence together. That makes it a relative adverb.*

**Try it!**

Tell students: *Now I want you to try writing your own sentences with the words when, where, or why in the middle of the sentence so that it joins two parts together. (Give students 3-5 minutes to write. Students who finish early can try out more than one sentence.)*

**Sharing:**

Have students work with a partner to review their sentences and be sure they have both a noun (or pronoun) and a verb both before and after the word when, where, or why in their sentence.
### Formative Assessment:
Collect student writing to see if students correctly used a relative adverb.

### Transfer Tips:
- Encourage students to use the sentences they wrote in their writing.

### Additional Supports:
- If students need a shorter sentence to work with, change the teacher model to:
  The teacher asked when I planned to turn my homework in.
- Ask students when, where, or why questions and have them practice answering the question in a complete sentence, using part of the question in their answer. This strategy (sometimes called Turn the Question Around, or TTQA) should help students use relative adverbs if you tell them to use the words when, where, or why in their answer. For example, if you ask, “Where is the eraser?” students can respond with, “The eraser is where you always keep it,” or, “The pencil box is where the eraser is.”

### Extra Challenges:
- Have students search for and copy sentences with the words when, where, or why. Then have them sort the sentences into those that function as relative adverbs and those that don’t. (HINT: They need to check clauses to see if there is a noun and verb both before and after the word.)
Prepositional Phrases I

A video model lesson is available at this link: https://youtu.be/O5dGTjuog7I

Essential Question:
How do writers add details to their writing? How can writers make their writing more beautiful?

Lesson Objective(s):
Students will be able to:
● Use a prepositional phrase to describe a noun.

Standards Correlation(s):
● L.4.1e Form and use prepositional phrases.

Materials:
models on chart paper; orange, green, pink, blue, red markers

Mentor Text Model: | Teacher Model:
--- | ---
from *Mufaro’s Beautiful Daughters* by John Steptoe | Late at night, a cat with a high-pitched meow crept through my yard. ⁵
Early one morning, a messenger from the city arrived. |  

Lesson Sequence

Notice:
Post the mentor text model for all students to see. Invite students to share what they notice.

● Noticing can be done in pairs or in writing first, but should lead to whole-class sharing.

Optional Guiding Question: *How does the author provide detail in this sentence?*

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⁵ Addresses 5th grade standard: L.5.2b Use a comma to separate an introductory element from the rest of the sentence.
| Describe and Name: | Give students the following explanation:  
| | a. Let’s look at the basic parts of this sentence. The first part, “Early one morning,” is really an introduction, so the writer uses a comma to set that apart. (Circle the comma in red.)  
| | b. Then we get to the main part of the sentence. The main subject or noun is “messenger.” (Circle in orange.) The main verb is what the messenger did; he arrived. (Circle “arrived” in green.)  
| | c. The author doesn’t just say that a messenger arrived. He answers the question, which one? The one from the city. (Circle “from” in pink.)  
| | d. “From” is preposition, a word that shows the relationship between two other words, in the case the relationship between the messenger and the city.  
| | e. The author uses this phrase, “from the city” (underline in blue) to describe the messenger. John Steptoe tells us which messenger.  
| Teacher Model: | Tell students: I wanted to see if I could write my own sentence and use a prepositional phrase to describe my main noun. Here’s what I came up with. (Post the teacher model.)  
| | a. I started with a time phrase, like John Steptoe did. Instead of, “Early one morning,” I wrote, “Late at night.” Then I put a comma since that first part is really separate from the main part of my sentence. (Circle the comma in red.)  
| | b. In the main part of my sentence, I have “cat” as my main noun (circle in orange) and “arrived” as my main verb (circle in green).  
| | c. I can ask the question, “Which cat?” My answer is the one with the high-pitched meow. (Circle “with” in pink and underline “with the high-pitched meow” in blue.) |
Some students may try to describe their nouns with adjectives rather than a prepositional phrase. While this is not wrong, it misses the objective of the lesson. Therefore it may be helpful to have a list of prepositions handy and ask students to try using one of those words in their sentences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Try it!</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tell students: <em>Now I want you to try writing your own sentences with prepositional phrases that answer the question, which one?</em> Start with a simple sentence and identify your main noun and main verb. <em>Then ask, “Which one?” about your noun. Give it a try.</em> (Give students 3-5 minutes to write. Students who finish early can try out more than one sentence.)</td>
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</table>

<table>
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<th>Sharing:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Do a whiparound share with each student sharing one sentence that includes a phrase to answer the question, “Which one?”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Formative Assessment:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listen for:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Did students correctly use a prepositional phrase?</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Transfer Tips:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● Encourage students to use the sentences they wrote in their writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Have students find places in their writing where they can add a phrase to answer the question, “Which one?”</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Additional Supports:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● Have students compose simple sentences and exchange them with one another to add a prepositional phrase.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Choose one noun and brainstorm with the group a list of prepositional phrases to describe that noun.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Prepositional Phrases I Follow-up

**Mentor Text Model:** from *Mufaro’s Beautiful Daughters* by John Steptoe

Later, as they were approaching the place where the two paths crossed, the old woman appeared and silently pointed the way to the city.

**Teacher Model:**

As they ducked into the bathroom across from the nurse’s office, the girls giggled uncontrollably thinking about the boy from the lunchroom.
Prepositional Phrases II

Essential Question:
How do writers add details to their writing?
How can writers make their writing more beautiful?

Lesson Objective(s):
Students will be able to:
- Use a prepositional phrase to answer the questions, how, when or where?
- Write complex sentences.

Standards Correlation(s):
- L.3.1h Use coordinating and subordinating conjunctions.
- L.3.1i Produce simple, compound, and complex sentences.
- L.4.1e Form and use prepositional phrases.

Materials:
models on chart paper; orange, yellow, green, pink, brown markers

Mentor Text Model:
from *Mufaro’s Beautiful Daughters* by John Steptoe

As the wedding party moved through the forest, brightly plumed birds darted about in the cool green shadows beneath the trees.

Teacher Model:
While everyone sang “Happy Birthday” to me, I looked around with embarrassment.

Lesson Sequence

Notice:
Post the mentor text model for all students to see. Invite students to share what they notice.
- Noticing can be done in pairs or in writing first, but should lead to whole-class sharing.

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6 In this case, “as” and “while” function as both prepositions and subordinating conjunctions.
7 Addresses standard L.5.2c Use underlining, quotation marks, or italics to indicate titles of works.
Optional Guiding Question: What do you notice about the part of the sentence that comes before the comma?

**Describe and Name:**

Give students the following explanation:

**a.** You’ve already learned about prepositional phrases that describe a noun be answering the question, which one? Today we’re going to learn about some other questions we can answer with prepositional phrases.

**b.** First, let’s look at the basic parts of this sentence. The main subject or noun is birds. (Circle “birds” in orange.) The main verb is what the birds did; they darted. (Circle “darted” in green.)

**c.** The author gives us a lot of additional information. The author tells us when this happened. It happened as the wedding party moved through the forest. (Circle “As” in pink.) “As” is the preposition. Remember prepositions show relationships between words, so in this case we know that two things were happening at the same time. The phrase “as the wedding party moved through the forest” (underline in brown) answers the question, when? This phrase isn’t really a whole sentence by itself since it begins with “as.” So John separated it from the main part of the sentence with a comma. (Circle the comma in red.)

**d.** That’s not the only information John Steptoe gives us. He also tells us where this happened. It happened in the cool green shadows beneath the trees. (Circle “in” and “beneath” in pink.) He uses prepositional phrases to answer the question, where?

**Teacher Model:**

Tell students: I tried writing my own sentence and use prepositional phrases to answer some questions.. Here’s what I came up with. (Post the teacher model.)

**a.** I started with a phrase that tells when the action happened. It happened while everyone sang “Happy Birthday” to me. (Circle “while” in pink and underline the entire phrase in brown.) This phrase answers the question, when? Since this phrase by itself isn’t a complete sentence, I follow it with a comma. (Circle the comma in red.)

**b.** The next part of my sentence has the main subject. In this case it’s a pronoun, a word that stands in for a noun, so I’ll
circle it with yellow. (Circle “I” in yellow.) So the main subject is I, and the action I take is looked. (Circle “looked” in green.)

c. When John Steptoe wrote his sentence, he used prepositional phrases to answer the questions, when and where? I could have written something like at my house or in the kitchen to answer where, but I answered a different question instead. I answered the question, how? How did I look around? With embarrassment. (Circle “with” in pink and underline “with embarrassment” in brown.)

d. So in the last lesson, you learned that prepositional phrases can answer the question, which one? Today you’ve learned that prepositional phrases can also answer the questions, when, where, or how?

**Try it!**

Tell students: Now I want you to try writing your own sentences with prepositional phrases that answer the questions, when, where or how? (Give students 3-5 minutes to write. Students who finish early can try out more than one sentence.)

**Sharing:**

Have students share with a partner.

OR

Call on a few volunteers to share with the whole class.

**Formative Assessment:**

Listen for:

- Did students correctly use a prepositional phrase?

**Transfer Tips:**

- Encourage students to use the sentences they wrote in their writing.
- Have students find places in their writing where they can add a phrase to answer the questions, where, when, or how?

**Additional Supports:**

- Brainstorm with the group a list of prepositional phrases that answer where or when. Have students use those in their writing.
- Have students read correct example sentences with an action and/or sound effect where the comma is. This will help them pay attention to where the comma belongs.
**Extra Challenges:**

- Have students write sentences with a very clear setting - time and/or place. Tell them to include where and when prepositional phrases. Then have them trade sentences with a partner to rewrite with a different setting and see how the prepositional phrases change. You can challenge the students to turn the rewrites into silly sentences and vote on which is silliest.
Prepositional Phrases II - Follow-up

Mentor Text Model: from *Mufaro’s Beautiful Daughters* by John Steptoe

After traveling for what seemed to be a great distance, Manyara came to a small clearing.

Teacher Model:

After waiting for everyone to wake up, we finally got to open presents.

Mentor Text Model: from *Miz Berlin Walks* by Jane Yolen

I felt like I was right there, on the bank, in the creek!

Teacher Model:

The puppy licked my face all over, on my nose, across my cheeks.

Mentor Text Model: from *Miz Berlin Walks* by Jane Yolen

On nice days she wore a flowery cotton dress. On cold days she wore a blue button coat. On rainy days she carried a shiny black umbrella with long silver ribs. On hot days she carried a paper fan.

Teacher Model:

In the morning the bugs were quiet. By mid-afternoon the bugs were a constant drone. By early evening the bugs were relentless.  

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8 Students may notice that these sentences do not include a comma after the introductory element. When an introductory element in a sentence is very short, the comma is optional. Including it is not wrong and may even be desired for clarification. The teacher model does not include a comma here in order to stay true to the mentor text model.
Mentor Text Model: from *Bat Loves the Night* by Nicola Davies

Over bushes, under trees, between fence posts, through the tangled hedge she swoops untouched.

Teacher Model:

Down the hall, out the door, over the grass, onto the swings she raced.

Mentor Text Model: from *Night Driving* by John Coy

Behind him, the sky is black. In front of us, it's purple.

Teacher Model:

At home, my brother and I hardly ever get along. At school, we'll stick by each other no matter what.

Mentor Text Model: from *Dear Mrs. LaRue: Letters from Obedience School* by Mark Teague

With fall here, I think about all the fine times we used to have in the park.

Teacher Model:

With the teacher's dismissal, I raced to the bus and forgot my homework in my locker.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Conventional order of adjectives</th>
<th>Forms comparatives and superlatives using -er/-est endings</th>
<th>Forms comparatives and/or superlatives using more or most</th>
<th>Uses relative pronouns (who, whose, whom, which, that)</th>
<th>Uses relative adverbs (where, when, why)</th>
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</table>
Name ____________________

**Dazzling Details Single-point Rubric**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas for Growth</th>
<th>Meets Expectations</th>
<th>Areas of Strength</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adds details to writing to help the reader make a picture in his or her mind</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uses prepositional phrases to describe nouns in a way that clarifies and improves the writing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uses prepositional phrases to describe how, when or where something occurs in a way that clarifies and improves the writing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uses a mix of simple, compound, and complex sentences</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Other Notes:
# Dazzling Details Rating Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Well-below Grade-level Expectations</th>
<th>Nearly at Grade-level Expectations</th>
<th>Meets Grade-level Expectations</th>
<th>Exceeds Grade-level Expectations</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adds details to writing to help the reader make a picture in his or her mind</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses a mix of simple, compound, and complex sentences</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Name ____________________
In this unit, students will learn to punctuate dialogue. It is a short unit, but essential for students to master. It would pair well with a reading unit on characterization. The essential question for this unit is, how do writers show who their characters are? By the end of the unit, students should know how to punctuate dialogue and have the essential understanding that we can learn about people (including characters in books) by what they do, say, and what others say about them.

**Essential Question:**

- How do writers show who their characters are?

**Essential Understandings:**

- We can learn about people (including characters in books) by what they do, say, and what others say about them.\(^9\)

**Unit Assessment:**

The assessment for this unit is a rubric or rating scale that can be applied to most narrative writing students complete.

NOTE: Most of the criteria addresses punctuation of dialogue, the focus of this unit. However, one indicator asks student writers to include dialogue that improves their writing. For students to be successful with this, they need exposure to and discussion of dialogue from both a reading and writing perspective as well as thoughtful revision of their writing. Without this discussion, students may include dialogue that is correctly punctuated but boring and purposeless.

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\(^9\) To truly gain this understanding, students will need additional lessons and experience with characterization and reading dialogue that is beyond the scope of this curriculum.
# Dynamic Dialogue Unit Outline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Title</th>
<th>Learning Objectives Students Will be Able to:</th>
<th>Standards: Language: Conventions of Standard English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is Dialogue?</td>
<td>• Identify which parts of a text are dialogue.</td>
<td>This lesson addresses a prerequisite skill for the following standards:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• L.3.2c Use commas and quotation marks in dialogue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• L.4.2b Use commas and quotation marks to mark direct speech and quotations from a text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuating Dialogue: The Basics</td>
<td>• Correctly punctuate dialogue with commas and quotation marks for speech tags at the beginning or end of dialogue.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuating Dialogue: Questions and Exclamations</td>
<td>• Correctly punctuate dialogue that is a question or an exclamation.</td>
<td>• L.3.2c Use commas and quotation marks in dialogue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• L.4.2b Use commas and quotation marks to mark direct speech and quotations from a text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuating Dialogue: Speech Tags in the Middle</td>
<td>• Correctly punctuate dialogue with a speech tag in the middle.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# What is Dialogue?

## Essential Question:
How do writers show who their characters are?

## Lesson Objective(s):
Students will be able to:
- Identify which parts of a text are dialogue.

## Standards Correlation(s):
- L.3.2c Use commas and quotation marks in dialogue.
- L.4.2b Use commas and quotation marks to mark direct speech and quotations from a text.

## Materials:
A shared text with dialogue, teacher comic strip sample and student comic strip worksheet (included at the end of this lesson)

## Mentor Text Model:
Any shared text with 2-4 characters speaking. This can be shared through projection or by providing a copy for each student. Excerpts of *Night Driving* by John McCoy or *Mufaro’s Beautiful Daughters* by John Steptoe would work well for this. Or find another text you would like to use.

## Lesson Sequence

### Explanation:
Tell students: *One way that authors tell us about characters in their stories is through dialogue. Dialogue is the words that characters say. Writers let readers know which words a character is speaking through quotation marks. We’re going to look at a text with quotation marks and practice reading with voices to help us know when different characters are speaking.*

### Teacher Model:
Model reading a portion of the text with dialogue. Read the dialogue parts with different dramatic voices for each, e.g. high-pitched, very deep, scratchy, with an accent, etc.
| Try it! | Tell students: *Now you’re going to try reading. We’ll assign groups of you to each read a different character’s dialogue. I’ll read anything that is NOT in quotation marks. That part of the text is called the narration.*
Assign groups to characters, e.g. table groups or rows, students wearing short-sleeves, birthday month, etc. Have the students read. You can even mix up the parts and do this activity a second time or in small groups. |
| --- | --- |
| Speech Bubbles | Tell students: *Now I want you to create your own comic strip with two characters speaking to one another. Your characters will use speech bubbles. You are only going to write down the things they actually say to one another, their dialogue. Here’s my example.*
Show your example and then give students their own worksheet. |
| Sharing: | Have students share with a partner. You may wish to use the comic strip worksheets for the next few lessons. |

**Formative Assessment:**

- Listen as students are reading to be sure they are reading when their character is supposed to be speaking.
- Collect speech bubbles. Review to be sure students included appropriate dialogue. It may be helpful to hold onto these for students to use over the next few lessons.

**Transfer Tips:**

- You can have students write dialogue that might appear in a story they are working on as a current writing project.

**Additional Supports:**

- Give students a sample of text with two characters speaking and two different colored highlighters. Have them highlight the words one character says in one color and the words another character says in the other color.
What are you doing after school today?

I have to watch my little brother. What about you?

I'm going swimming. I was hoping you could come...

Not today, but maybe on Thursday.

That would be great! I'll see if my mom can drive us to the lake.

Okay. Let me know what your mom says, but I'll plan on Thursday.
Name __________________________
Punctuating Dialogue: The Basics

Essential Question:
How do writers show who their characters are?

Lesson Objective(s):
Students will be able to:
● Correctly punctuate dialogue with commas and quotation marks for speech tags at the beginning or end of dialogue.

Standards Correlation(s):
● L.3.2c Use commas and quotation marks in dialogue.
● L.4.2b Use commas and quotation marks to mark direct speech and quotations from a text.

Materials:
Text models on chart paper, red marker, (optional: student comic strips from previous lesson)

Mentor Text Model:
from Night Driving by John Coy

"You sing as bad as you tip," says the waitress.
"Worse," says the cook, and everyone laughs.

Teacher Model:
"You did a great job at the talent show," said Sadie.
John replied shyly, "Thanks. I guess all the practice was worth it."

Lesson Sequence

Notice:
Post the mentor text model for all students to see. Invite students to share what they notice.
● Noticing can be done in pairs or in writing first, but should lead to whole-class sharing.
Optional Guiding Question: What do you notice about how the dialogue is punctuated in this text?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Describe and Name:</th>
<th>Give students the following explanation:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. You already know that the words people say are the dialogue. Those words go inside quotation marks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Let’s look at the first sentence. The waitress says something, and it’s like it’s own sentence. It gets a capital letter at the beginning, but instead of a period, it has a comma. (Circle the comma in red.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. Immediately after the comma is the other quotation mark. Quotation marks always go together in pairs, so we have one when the waitress starts speaking and one where she finishes, right after that comma with no space in between.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d. “Says the waitress” is the speech tag. It tells us who is doing the speaking. We don’t need to capitalize “says” because it is still part of the sentence; we don’t put a capital letter in the middle of sentence for no reason.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e. The second sentence works the same way. The cook only says one word, worse, and we put that word in quotation marks. We see again that we have the comma (circle in red) and then we finish the sentence with the speech tag and the rest of the sentence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f. There’s one other thing I want you to notice. Each time a new character speaks, John Coy starts a new paragraph. That’s a rule about dialogue. It might mean some paragraphs are very short, but it helps readers know that a new character is speaking if there is a new paragraph.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Model:</th>
<th>Tell students:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. I tried writing my own dialogue between Sadie and John. My first sentence works like what John Coy wrote in <em>Night Driving</em>. I have the part that Sadie says in quotation marks. There’s a comma (circle in red) just before the quotation marks, and my sentence ends with the speech tag.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|               | b. In my second sentence, I did something a little different. I put the speech tag at the beginning of the sentence. I still use a comma to separate the speech tag from the dialogue, but here my comma is right after the speech tag. (Circle the comma in red.) You can remember that commas like to hug the words they’re next to, with no spaces or other
c. So I have John replied shyly, comma, space, then finally I get my quotation marks.

d. Once the dialogue begins, I need a capital letter, because John is saying his own sentence. Think about it like a comic strip. The part the characters say would go in the speech bubbles. Speech bubbles have capital letters at the beginning of them. We need to do the same thing with capital letters in dialogue.

e. We also need to end our sentence with a period. In this case, John actually speaks two sentences, so we have two periods inside the quotation marks. Again, this is because this is what he says, and we punctuate that part just as if it were in a speech bubble.

f. The only time we use a comma instead of a period is if the sentence is not done yet because it still has a speech tag coming.

Try it!

Tell students: Now I want you to try writing your own sentences dialogue and speech tags. Try putting one speech tag before the dialogue and one after the dialogue. (Give students 3-5 minutes to write. Students who finish early can try out more than one sentence. You may wish to have students use the comic strips they created in the last lesson for dialogue. That way they can focus on correct punctuation rather than coming up with what to write.)

Sharing:

Have students get up and move, sharing what they wrote with at least three other students. Have them check each other’s punctuation and encourage them to fix their own mistakes if they notice any.

Formative Assessment:

Collect student writing and look for correct punctuation of dialogue.

Transfer Tips:

- Require students to use at least five pieces of dialogue in their next writing project.
### Additional Supports:

- Split this lesson into two parts, speech tags after dialogue and speech tags before dialogue.

### Extra Challenges:

- Have students create a list of words (through brainstorming, using a thesaurus, or searching books) to use instead of “said” and use them in their dialogue.

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**Punctuation Dialogue - The Basics - Follow-up**

**Mentor Text Model:** from *Night Driving* by John Coy

"We made it," I say. "Let's go set up the tent."

**Teacher Model:**

“I finished my assignment,” I said. “What can I do now?”
## Punctuating Dialogue: Questions and Exclamations

### Essential Question:
How do writers show who their characters are?

### Lesson Objective(s):
Students will be able to:
- Correctly punctuate dialogue that is a question or an exclamation.

### Standards Correlation(s):
- L.3.2c Use commas and quotation marks in dialogue.
- L.4.2b Use commas and quotation marks to mark direct speech and quotations from a text.

### Materials:
Text models on chart paper, red marker, (optional: student comic strips from previous lesson)

### Mentor Text Model:
from *Mufaro’s Beautiful Daughters* by John Steptoe

"Please," said the boy. "I am hungry. Will you give me something to eat?"
"I have brought only enough for myself," Manyara replied.
"But, please!" said the boy. "I am so very hungry."

### Teacher Model:

"Wait!" shouted Jeffrey. "Let me catch up to you."
"You’ll have to hurry," I called back.
"Where are you going?" Jeffrey said when he finally caught up.

### Lesson Sequence

**Notice:**
Post the mentor text model for all students to see. Invite students to share what they notice.
- Noticing can be done in pairs or in writing first, but should lead to whole-class sharing.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Optional Guiding Question: What do you notice about how the dialogue is punctuated in this text?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Describe and Name:** Give students the following explanation:  
  a. You’ve learned that if a speech tag comes after the dialogue, we use a comma, not a period, to separate the dialogue from the speech tag. We see that again in this text. (Circle the comma after myself in red.)  
  b. We only use a comma instead of a period. If there is an exclamation mark or question mark in dialogue, we keep it. (Circle the question mark and exclamation mark in red.) That’s because writers want readers to know if a character is excited about something or asking a question, so we always keep them in dialogue. This happens even if it’s just before a speech tag. |
| **Teacher Model:** Tell students:  
  a. I tried writing my own dialogue modelled after what John Steptoe wrote. Here’s what I came up with. (Post teacher model.)  
  b. I included an exclamation mark here (circle in red) and a question mark here (circle in red).  
  c. I still had one place where I have a comma at the end of my dialogue (circle the comma in red) because if it weren’t in dialogue it would have been a period.  
  d. But where there was an exclamation mark or a question mark, I left them. |
| **Try it!** Tell students: Now I want you to try writing your own dialogue that includes an exclamation mark and a question mark. (Give students 3-5 minutes to write. Students who finish early can write another dialogue exchange or extend their first exchange. You may give students their comic strips hand have them write those out if they need support in thinking about what to write.) |
| **Sharing:** Do a scoot share. Have students leave their writing visible at their seat and have everyone rotate to the next seat and read what is now in front of them. Have students scoot (rotate) three or four times. |
Formative Assessment:
Collect student writing and look for correct punctuation of dialogue.

Transfer Tips:
- Require students to use at least five pieces of dialogue in their next writing project.

Additional Supports:
- Have students create a comic strip using at least one question mark and one exclamation point. Then have them transfer the speech bubbles into prose dialogue with speech tags.

Extra Challenges:
- Give students a dialogue exchange from a book or use a student-written example, and have students determine what can be inferred from the dialogue. You may wish to direct them to focus on character traits.

Punctuating Dialogue - Questions and Exclamations - Follow-up

Mentor Text Model: from *Miz Berlin Walks* by Jane Yolen

"Was it an angel feather?" I asked, scarcely able to breathe.

Teacher Model:

“What is that thing?” I screeched, pointing at the spiny bug on the wall in front of me.
# Punctuating Dialogue: Speech Tags in the Middle

**Essential Question:**

How do writers show who their characters are?

**Lesson Objective(s):**

Students will be able to:
- Correctly punctuate dialogue with a speech tag in the middle.

**Standards Correlation(s):**

- L.3.2c Use commas and quotation marks in dialogue.
- L.4.2b Use commas and quotation marks to mark direct speech and quotations from a text.

**Materials:**

Text models on chart paper, red marker

**Mentor Text Model:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>from <em>Night Driving</em> by John Coy</th>
<th>Teacher Model:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Stopping for breakfast,&quot; Dad says, &quot;is my favorite part of driving at night.&quot;</td>
<td>“Looking for tadpoles,” Jenny said, “isn’t nearly as much fun as chasing jumping frogs.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Lesson Sequence**

**Notice:**

Post the mentor text model for all students to see. Invite students to share what they notice.
- Noticing can be done in pairs or in writing first, but should lead to whole-class sharing.

Optional Guiding Question: *What do you notice about how the dialogue is punctuated in this text?*

**Describe and Name:**

Give students the following explanation:
- You’ve learned that writers use commas to separate dialogue from speech tags. You already know how to do that
when the speech tag comes before the dialogue or after it. This sentence is a little different, because the speech tag is in the middle. We still use commas to separate the speech tag from the dialogue. It’s just that we need a comma before the speech tag (circle the first comma in red) and right after the speech tag (circle the second comma in red).

| Teacher Model: | Tell students:  
| | a. I tried writing my own dialogue with a speech tag in the middle. Here’s what I wrote. (Post teacher model.)  
| | b. I used a comma before the speech tag (circle the first comma in red) and right after the speech tag (circle the second comma in red).  
| | c. Remember, that you always need some sort of punctuation to separate the dialogue from the speech tag.  
| Try it! | Tell students: Now I want you to try writing your own dialogue that has a speech tag in the middle of the dialogue. (Give students approximately 3 minutes to write. Students who finish early can write more.)  
| Sharing: | Call on volunteers to share out to the whole class.  
| | OR  
| | Have students share with a partner.  

**Formative Assessment:**

Collect student writing and look for correct punctuation of dialogue.

**Transfer Tips:**

- Require students to use at least five pieces of dialogue in their next writing project.

**Additional Supports:**

- Have students read the models and include sound effects and/or hand motions where the commas belong. Then have them try the same sound effects or hand motions as they check their own work.
Extra Challenges:

- Have students write several sentences as a group and think about and discuss where it would or wouldn’t be okay to insert a speech tag in the middle of dialogue. Can they find any patterns?

Punctuating Dialogue - Speech Tags in the Middle - Follow-up

Mentor Text Model: from *Mufaro’s Beautiful Daughters* by John Steptoe

"If that should come to pass," Nyasha responded, "I will be pleased to serve you. But why do you say such things? You are clever and strong and beautiful. Why are you so unhappy?"

Teacher Model:

“If I can’t find my dog,” said Dimitri, “I’m not sure what I’ll do. My dog is my best friend. I can’t believe he ran away.”
Name ____________________

**Dynamic Dialogue Single-point Rubric**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas for Growth</th>
<th>Meets Expectations</th>
<th>Areas of Strength</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Includes dialogue in narrative writing so that it improves the writing (e.g. moves plot forward, shows character traits or emotions, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Correctly punctuates dialogue with commas and quotation marks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Correctly punctuates questions and/or exclamations in dialogue.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other Notes:
Name ____________________

Dynamic Dialogue Rating Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Well-below Grade-level Expectations</th>
<th>Nearly at Grade-level Expectations</th>
<th>Meets Grade-level Expectations</th>
<th>Exceeds Grade-level Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Includes dialogue in narrative writing so that it improves the writing (e.g. moves plot forward, shows character traits or emotions, etc.)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correctly punctuates dialogue with commas and quotation marks</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
REFERENCES


ANOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY


This picture book biography is narrative nonfiction about Lou Gehrig, a famous baseball player in the 1920s and 1930s, who was diagnosed with a deadly illness. It would make an excellent mentor text for how to structure a biography. Teachers can also use it to discuss themes of work ethic, courage, and gratitude. Lexile 750, Guided Reading Level M.


*Night Driving* is told from the point of view of a boy who takes a trip with his dad, and they drive overnight. Many students will be able to connect to taking a trip somewhere, even if the circumstances are different; this could be a springboard for brainstorming writing topics. There are several examples of figurative language and lots of imagery in the book. Lexile 520, Guided Reading Level NA.


This book mixes both narrative and informational text with two different print types used throughout the book. It follows the story of a pipistrelle bat on a typical night. Along with the story, there are short bits of information given about the bat’s characteristics and actions. This book would be an excellent fit with a science unit on animal adaptations. Lexile 640, Guided Reading Level M.

*Body Battles* is an informational text that would tie in well with a science unit on germs or the human body’s immune system. It covers mucus, skin, and earwax and their protective function as well as white blood cells. The book also discusses making healthy choices regarding diet, exercise, and substance abuse. Lexile 550, Guided Reading Level P.


This book is a retelling of a traditional folktale from Zimbabwe and was a 1988 Caldecott Honor book. It is a version of Cinderella and could be used for compare and contrast with other Cinderella stories. This book could also be a springboard to discuss themes of kindness, generosity, inner beauty, and jealousy. Lexile 790, Guided Reading Level N.


This picture book is written as a series of letters from a dog, Ike, to his owner, Mrs. LaRue, asking her to rescue him from obedience school. The illustrations are important in this book since they show a different reality than what Ike is describing in his letters. The book could be used as a mentor text for persuasive writing and letter writing. It also has several examples of sequence transition words. Lexile 730, Guided Reading Level N.


This informational text explores historical pirates. The book includes many text features, such as a glossary, bold print, sidebars, and captions, that could be used as teaching points. You could
also use the book as a springboard to engage students in discussing historical reality versus what is often presented in media. Lexile NA, Guided Reading Level NA.


This book is told from the point of view of a woman remembering her childhood walks with an old woman in the neighborhood. The book has strong imagery and includes dialect. It would fit in well with a unit on word choice. It would also work well to discuss themes of friendship, cross-generational relationships, and the power of story. Lexile 910, Guided Reading Level N.