

Subject Area Examples

ELA/Literature

The ants were busy on the ground, big black ones with shiny bodies, and little dusty quick ants. *From: "The Pearl" by John Steinbeck (Gr. 6-8)*

- The ants were busy.
- They were on the ground.
- There were big ones.
- The big ones were black.
- The big ones had shiny bodies.
- There were little ants.
- The little ones were dusty.
- The little ones were quick.

One quiet, Tuesday morning, I woke up to a pair of bright, dazzling shoes, lying right in front of my bedroom door. *From: Grade 4 Student Writing Sample*

- I woke up to a pair of shoes.
- It was Tuesday morning.
- The morning was quiet.

- The shoes were bright.
- The shoes were dazzling.
- The shoes were lying.
- They were lying in front of my door.
- The door was my bedroom door.

Science

The fundamental innovation underlying the astrolabe was the projection of an image of the sky (usually the northern hemisphere, centered on Polaris) on a plane corresponding to the earth's equator. *From: "Circumference..." by Nicholas Nicastro.(Gr. 9-10)*

- The innovation was the projection of an image.
- The innovation was fundamental.
- The innovation was of the astrolabe.
- The image was of the sky.

- The image of the sky was usually the northern hemisphere.
- The image was centered on Polaris.
- The image was on a plane.
- The plan corresponded to the earth's equator.

History/Social Studies

The fancy exterior decorations on just about every building were carved from wood, then painted to look like stone or marble. *From: "The Great Fire" by Jim Murphy. (Gr. 6-8)*

- The decorations were carved.
- The decorations were fancy.
- The decorations were exterior.
- They were carved from wood.
- They were on just about every building.

- Then the decorations were painted.
- They were painted to look like stone.
- Or they were painted to look like marble.

I have the honor of serving as president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, an organization operating in every southern state, with headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia. *From: "Letter from Birmingham Jail" by Martin Luther King, Jr.*

- I have honor.
- The honor is of serving as president.
- I am president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

- It is an organization.
- The organization operates in every southern state.
- Its headquarters are in Atlanta, Georgia.

Math

In this section, we will review the four basic operations of whole numbers --- addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division --- and discuss the use of exponents and the rule of order of operations in simplifying expressions. *From: "Introductory Algebra – 3rd Edition" by Franklin Wright and Bill New. (Gr 7-8)*

- We will review four operations.
- The operations will be basic.
- The operations will be of whole numbers.
- The operations include addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division.

- We will discuss the use of exponents.
- We will discuss the role of order of operations.
- The order of operations are for simplifying expressions.

In an isosceles trapezoid, both pairs of base angles are congruent and the diagonals are congruent. *From: "Geometry" - McGraw Hill/Glencoe. (Gr. 10)*

- Both pairs of base angles are congruent.
- The base angles are of a trapezoid.
- It is an isosceles trapezoid.

- The diagonals are congruent.
- The diagonals are of the same trapezoid.

Sample Activity

Fact Sheet: Whales

are among the most intelligent animals
have no ears
use sound signals to communicate
use sound signals to navigate
are the largest living creatures
strain plankton from the seawater
are mammals
can sometimes be found in fresh water
have voices
may become extinct
have teeth
eat fish
have fishlike bodies
have paddle-shaped flippers
range in size from the porpoise to the blue whale
can hold their breath up to two hours
are insulated by a layer of blubber, or fat
are aquatic animals
have lungs, not gills
have horizontal tail fins, unlike fish
are different from fish
have thick, smooth skin
can dive to depths of 4,800 feet
do not see very well
range from 4 feet to 100 feet in length
are social animals
may weigh as much as 150 tons
cannot smell
have nose openings, or blow holes, atop their heads
are hunted for oils in their bodies
live in all of the world's oceans

At level	Students are able to
A	use five facts in no more than four sentences.
B	use ten facts in no more than six sentences.
C	use fifteen facts in no more than eight sentences.
D	use twenty facts in no more than ten sentences.
E	use twenty-five facts in no more than twelve sentences.

From: "Creative Approaches to Sentence Combining" by William Strong. (1986).
ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills. National Council of Teachers of English.

Introducing Sentence Combining to Students

(adapted from Saddler, B. (2012). *Teacher's Guide to Effective Sentence Writing*. New York: Guilford Press)

Begin instruction with simple “kernel” sentences.

Examples:

British troops found fighting in America very challenging.
British troops were trained to fight wars in Europe.

Colonial soldiers would hide behind trees.
Colonial soldiers would fire at British troops.

Suggested wording to explain sentence combining to students (Saddler, p. 54-55):

“These sentences sound all right, but we can make them better. We are going to play with these sentences to make them sound better and more interesting. This play is called ‘sentence combining.’ When we practice combining sentences, we will do these things:

- **Combine** sentences together.
- **Change** words or parts of sentences.
- **Add** words or parts to the sentences.
- **Rearrange** words or parts of sentences.
- **Delete** words or parts of sentences.

Learning how to combine sentences in different ways will help you write more interesting sentences that sound better to readers. Good writers often play with their sentences to make them sound better, just as we are doing. One of the best parts about this activity is that there will usually be more than one solution to many of the practice problems.”

Critical Segments of a Typical Sentence-Combining Lesson

- **Teacher modeling**, in which you demonstrate to students how to combine sentences.
- **Scaffolded practice**, in which you and peer students guide students to develop multiple solutions to combining sentences.
- **Independent practice**, in which students combine sentences independently and then their work is discussed and supportively evaluated by the whole class.

*The two most important activities in sentence combining are (a) the initial creation of a combination and (b) the discussion or evaluation of the combination. The practical and supportive discussions and comparisons of the constructions students generate from the kernel sentence exercises are **the key** to helping the students understand the possible options for revising their own writing.*