

Module: Language

Lesson Title: Combining Sentences

Standards

Florida Adult Basic Education Language Standards	Level Expectation
Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening. (CCR.LA.ABE.3)	NRS Level 3 – Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening. d) Expand, combine, and reduce sentences for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style. (CCRS.LA.ABE.3.3.d)

Interpreting the Standard

1 Standards	2 Skills Included in the Standard	3 Concepts Included in the Standard	4 Through a Particular Context	5 Cognitive Demand/ Levels of Thinking	6 Sample Activity
Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening. (CCR.LA.ABE.3)	apply understand	language language in different contexts	fiction and nonfiction text and personal writings	DOK 3	Have students construct and deconstruct sentences. Have students analyze their own writing and combine sentences for effectiveness.
Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening. d) Expand, combine, and reduce sentences for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style. (CCRS.LA.ABE.3.3.d)	use expand, combine, reduce	knowledge of language sentences		DOK 2 DOK 3	

Objectives of the Lesson

Students will:

- Expand, combine, and reduce sentences for meaning
- Identify the different ways that writing can be revised
- Revise personal writings through combining sentences for more effective communication

Materials

- White board and markers
- Chart paper and markers
- **Handout A: Combining Sentences**
- **Handout B: Sample Answer Key**

Instructional Plan

Overview

Research has found that students increase their syntactic fluency and writing ability when introduced to sentence combining activities. Sentence combining is a process which all writers use upon revision and review. Sentence combining practice produces students who are able to write more interesting and complex sentences. This lesson focuses on constructing and deconstructing text.

Process

Introduce the lesson by writing the following sentences on the board or on chart paper:

There is a boy.
The boy is small.
There is a pond.
The boy fell.

Read the sentences aloud. Ask students what they think of the sentences (e.g., the sentences are short, choppy, repetitive, etc.).

Share with students that these sentences are often referred to as sentence kernels, just like the kernels of a cobb of corn – the parts that make up the whole.

Next, write the following on the board:

The small boy fell into the pond.

Ask students if the sentence that you have just written includes the information that was written in the four previous sentences. Students should agree that this is a more effective way to share the information.

Discuss the different things that you did in order to combine the short sentences into one more effective sentence. The following chart provides you with the information to share.

<i>Task – Combine the four sentences into one effective sentence.</i>	There is a boy. The boy is small. There is a pond. The boy fell.	<i>The small boy fell into the pond.</i>
<i>Combining</i>	You combined four sentences into one.	
<i>Rearranging</i>	You rearranged words, putting small before boy.	
<i>Subtracting</i>	You subtracted unnecessary words.	
<i>Expanding</i>	You expanded , adding into or who.	

Tell students that today they will be taking sentence kernels and combining them to create more effective sentences. Model how to combine sentence kernels in different ways. As you model, make sure to add figurative language when appropriate. For example, instead of writing: “The small boy fell into the pond”, you may wish to add an adjective. The created sentence would read as follows: “The small boy fell into the murky pond.”

You can either make up your own sentence kernels or use samples from **Handout A: Combining Sentences**.

Divide the class into small groups or teams. Provide each group with chart paper, markers, and a set of sentence kernels from **Handout A**. Note that there are different levels of sentence kernels from easiest on the first page of the handout to more difficult on the second page. Select the appropriate kernels to provide to your students.

Have each group combine the sentence kernels and post their final product. Have each group read aloud their finished sentence(s). Discuss how each combined sentence is more effective than the original group of sentences and the reasons why.

Sample Debriefing Questions

- Why is it important to revise when you write?
- What is a sentence kernel?
- What does it mean to combine sentences?
- How does combining sentences improve the readability of what is written?
- In what ways can you revise your writing?

Modifications for Different Levels

At lower achievement levels, provide students with sentence pairs to combine. Examples would be:

- The boy is young.
- The boy threw the ball.

- The bikes needed fixing.
- The bikes are red.

- The school is new.
- The school is dirty.

Have students combine the sentence pairs into one sentence.

Share with students the acronym for revision: ARMS. Model for students how when they are combining sentences they may need to:

- Add words
- Remove words
- Move words
- Substitute words

For students at higher achievement levels, have them practice deconstructing text. Divide the class into small groups or teams. Take four or five sentences (one for each small group) from works of fiction or nonfiction by contemporary writers. Have students deconstruct the complex sentences and rewrite them as simple ones. Next, type up the deconstructed sentences, indicating the title and author in parenthesis and distribute them to the class. Ask whether they recognize any of the titles or authors and then explain what you have done to the sentences. Encourage the groups to come up with various possibilities, and choose the sentence they like best. When all groups have finished, have one person from each group put its sentence on the board. Discuss the sentence and correct or refine it as necessary. Finally, give the class a second handout with the original sentences as the author wrote them. Emphasize that these sentences are not necessarily better than theirs and that the writers experimented like they did.

Assessments/Extensions

Have students revise their writings in class. Students should reread their work and assess whether sentences need to be combined in order to create a more effective writing sample. Have students discuss how they added, removed, moved, or substituted words, phrases, or sentences. Have students rewrite and share their revised writing.

Handout A: Combining Sentences

In this activity, there are a series of short, often choppy sentences (sentence kernels). Combine the sentence kernels into sentences where the ideas belong together. Some ideas may be expressed in a single sentence. Others may require that you use more than one sentence.

Sentence Kernels 1

- The griddle is black.
- The griddle is old.
- The griddle is greasy.

Sentence Kernels 2

- He was a student.
- The student was serious.
- The student's name was Devon.

Sentence Kernels 3

- I saw a movie.
- The movie was good.
- The movie was an action movie.

Sentence Kernels 4

- My older brother is an electrician.
- My older brother is Nate.
- My older brother is successful.

Sentence Kernels 5

- The car was green.
- The car was a sports car.
- The car suddenly skidded.
- The car hit the side of the road.

Sentence Kernels 6

- Sam had his eye on the used Mustang.
- He had seen it for several weeks.
- The salesperson had gotten used to seeing Sam.
- He saw him each afternoon around 4:00.

Sentence Kernels 7

- The column was based on interviews.
- The interviews happened before the game.
- Nancy interviewed the two players.
- They told Nancy they planned to arrive for the game.
- They planned to arrive by plane.

Sentence Kernels 8

- The sprinter approached the starting line.
- She stretched one last time.
- The starter called for runners to take their mark.
- She found her lane.
- She got into starting position.
- Finally, she heard the “pop” from the starter pistol.

Sentence Kernels 9

- The detective stood on the stage.
- He stared up at the box where President Lincoln had been assassinated.
- The box had been kept the same since that night.
- Klayman came to Ford’s theatre all the time.
- He studied its historic meaning.
- He listened to the park rangers tell the tourists all about it.

Handout B: Sample Answer Key

The following are samples of combined sentences. Students may have different combinations.

Sentence 1: Sample Answer

The old, black griddle is greasy.

Sentence 2: Sample Answer

Devon was a serious student.

Sentence 3: Sample Answer

I saw a good action movie.

Sentence 4: Sample Answer

My older brother, Nate, is a successful electrician.

Sentence 5: Sample Answer

The green sports car suddenly skidded and hit the side of the road.

Sentence 6: Sample Answer

As had become their daily 4:00 p.m. ritual, Sam eyed the used Mustang just as the salesperson stole a glance at him.

Sentence 7: Sample Answer

The column was based on interviews before the game in which the two players told Nancy they planned to arrive by plane for the game.

Sentence 8: Sample Answer

The agile sprinter approached the starting line, stretching her fine-tuned limbs one last time. As the gruff race official ordered runners to take their mark, the sprinter claimed her lane and assumed the starting position. With the pop of the starter's pistol, each muscle responded with force unequalled as she overtook each runner and burned past the finish line.

Sentence 9: Sample Answer

The slight young detective stood on the stage and stared up to the box in which President Lincoln had been assassinated. It had been kept pretty much as it was that fateful night. Klayman was no stranger to Ford's Theatre. He'd spent many hours there soaking in its historic meaning and listening to tourists' lectures delivered by park rangers.