

Home Study Guide
LANGUAGE EXPRESSIONS PRE-TEST

Adjectives - A

Adjectives modify (describe) nouns or pronouns by answering questions such as how many, what kind, or which one. In the sentence "Evelyn left the quiet room," the word "quiet" describes the room; "quiet" is the adjective.

Help the student understand adjectives by having him or her underline both the adjectives and the words they modify (describe) in sentences such as:

Sentence: We drove the blue car down a bumpy road.

Ask the student which words describe the car and the road. Explain that "blue" and "bumpy" are adjectives. Blue describes the car, while bumpy describes the road.

Adjectives - B

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Adjectives - F

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Help the student understand adjectives by having him or her underline both the adjectives and the words they modify (describe) in sentences such as:

Sentence: The sad young child looked at his aunt.

Ask the student which words describe the child. Explain that "young" and "sad" are adjectives because they describe the child.

Adjectives - G

Adjectives modify nouns or pronouns by answering questions such as how many, what kind, or which one. In the sentence "We have lived in five states," the word "five" describes the word "states." Five is the adjective describing states, the noun.

Adjectives can be used to compare people or things. There are three degrees of comparison: positive, comparative, and superlative.

A positive adjective describes one noun. Examples: strong, careful, happy, generous

A comparative adjective compares two nouns. Examples: stronger, more careful, happier, more generous

A superlative adjective compare more than two nouns. Examples: strongest, most careful, happiest, most generous.

Most one syllable adjectives form their comparative and superlative degrees by adding "er" and "est" to the end of the word.

Some two-syllable adjectives form their comparative and superlative degrees by adding "er" and "est," while others use "more" and "most."

Adjectives of more than two syllables form their comparative and superlative degrees by using "more" and "most" or "less" and "least."

It is important for students to use adjectives in their positive and comparative forms.

Using a newspaper or magazine article of interest to the student, ask the student to circle the nouns in the sentence and then underline the adjectives that modify (describe) them.

To review and reinforce adjectives used to compare, have students set up a chart of comparative adjectives.

For example:

positive: dirty

comparative: dirtier

superlative: dirtiest

Now have the students use these adjectives in sentences of their own.

Adjectives - H

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For example:

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Now have the students use these adjectives in sentences of their own.

Adverbs - A

Adverbs modify verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs by answering the questions how, when, or where.

In the following sentence, the adverb is underlined.

Ella left early.

Early is the adverb, and it answers the question, When did Ella leave?

In order for the student to understand adverbs, he or she must recognize them in sentences. Create your own sentences, or use sentences from books the student is reading. Have him or her underline the adverb in each sentence.

Example:

Mary ran quickly down the street.

The adverb is quickly, and it answers the question, How did Mary run down the street?

Doug arrived late to the party.

The adverb is late, and it answers the question, When did Doug arrive at the party?

Adverbs - B

Adverbs modify verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs by answering the questions how, when, or where.

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The adverb is late, and it answers the question, When did Doug arrive at the party?

Adverbs - E

Adverbs modify verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs by answering questions such as how something was done or how something was felt. In the sentence "Evelyn quietly left the room," the word "quietly" describes how Evelyn left; "quietly" is the adverb.

It may be helpful to develop a list of adverbs. Help the student use these words in creative sentences:

Word: Quickly

Sentence: We _____ hid from the man.

Sentence with adverb modifier: We quickly hid from the man.

Word: Extremely

Sentence: It is _____ cold today.

Sentence with adverb modifier: It is extremely cold today.

Adverbs - F

Adverbs modify verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs by answering questions such as how something was

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Sentence: It is _____ cold today.

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Adverbs - G

Adverbs modify (describe) verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs by answering questions such as how, when, where, why, how often. In the sentence, "The family ate their dinner quickly," the word "quickly" describes how the family ate; "quickly" is the adverb.

Many adverbs are used to make comparisons. The three degrees of comparison are: positive, comparative, and superlative.

A positive adverb describes one thing. Examples: fast, slowly

A comparative adverb compares two things. Examples: faster, more slowly

A superlative adverb compares more than two things. Examples: fastest, most slowly

Most one-syllable adverbs form their comparative and superlative forms by adding "er" and "est."

Adverbs of more than one syllable usually form the comparative and superlative forms by using "more" and "most."

It is important for students to understand both adverbs and how they are used to make comparisons. Have students make a list of words that answer/describe how, when, where, how often, or how much.

For example: quickly, later, repeatedly, generously

Have the students use these words in sentences of their own. They can self-check to make sure the words describe verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs.

Next, have the students use one of their adverbs in three different comparative sentences.

Example:

Mark arrived late.

Mark arrived later than Benjamin.

Mark was the latest to arrive at the party.

Adverbs - H

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Articles - A

An article is a type of adjective. It is a grammatical marker that comes before a noun. Articles are: a, an, and the.

A, and an are indefinite articles. They refer to any item in a category. A is used in front of a consonant sound. An is used in front of a vowel sound.

Example: Please buy me a bike. (any bike)

The is a definite article. It is used to refer to a particular thing.

Example: Please buy me the bike. (a particular bike)

It may be helpful to develop flash cards to help the student practice using articles correctly. On the front, write a noun with a blank space in front of it. On the back, write the correct article.

Front Side: ____ apple

Back Side: an

It may also be helpful to have the student brainstorm a list of nouns that begin with vowel sounds. Then have the student practice saying the article an before each noun.

Articles - B

An article is a type of adjective. It is a grammatical marker that comes before a noun. Articles are: a, an, and the.

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Concluding Sentence - A

A concluding sentence should restate the main idea and briefly summarize the paragraph.

Recognizing an effective concluding sentence in reading materials will help students write their own concluding sentences. Choose a paragraph from a story or textbook the student uses at school. Have the student point out the concluding sentence. To make sure the concluding sentence is effective, ask the student if it restates the main idea and summarizes the information in the paragraph.

Once the student can successfully pick out an effective concluding sentence, he or she can begin to write his or her own sentences. Give the student a paragraph, and have them write the final sentence.

For example:

Jonathan went to the zoo on Saturday. He laughed at the monkeys and fed the elephants. Finally, he went to a show and learned about endangered animals. _____.

A possible answer could be:

Jonathan had fun at the zoo watching the animals and learning about endangered species.

Concluding Sentence - B

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Once the student can easily recognize concluding sentences, they can begin writing their own. Give the student a topic sentence. Have them write three sentences about that topic. Finally, have them write a concluding sentence that restates the main idea and briefly summarizes the rest of the paragraph.

Concluding Sentence - C

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Recognizing an effective concluding sentence in reading materials will help students write their own concluding sentences. Choose a paragraph from a story or textbook the student uses at school. Have the student point out the concluding sentence. To make sure the concluding sentence is effective, ask the student if it restates the main idea and summarizes the information in the paragraph.

Once the student can easily recognize concluding sentences, they can begin writing their own. Give the student a topic sentence. Have them write three sentences about that topic. Finally, have them write a concluding sentence that restates the main idea and briefly summarizes the rest of the paragraph.

Conjunction

A conjunction is a word that connects words or groups of words. Conjunctions demonstrate relationships between words, but they do not have objects. For example, in the sentence "You should wear red or blue," the word "or" is a conjunction. In the sentence "You should wear either red or blue," "either" and "or" are correlative conjunctions. Correlative conjunctions (either/or, neither/nor, etc.) work together as a pair.

Have the student identify the conjunctions in sentences:

Sentence: Michele and Jason went to the party.

Conjunction: and

Sentence: The house is near both the river and the highway.

Correlative Conjunctions: both, and

When the student has developed an understanding of conjunctions, have him or her apply this knowledge by labeling the conjunctions in reading materials and spoken language.

Sentence: It is neither here nor there.

Correlative Conjunctions: neither, nor

Fragment/Run-On Sentences - A

A sentence is a group of words that expresses a complete thought.

A fragment is an incomplete sentence that cannot stand alone because it conveys partial meaning. For example, "A movie about kids" or "likes fun music" are fragments.

A run-on sentence is a sentence that contains too much information. "My dad baked a cake it tasted great without frosting" is a run-on sentence.

Review the student's writing, and discuss which sentences are complete and which aren't. Create a list of the student's sentence fragments, and work with the student to rewrite each one. The following is an example:

Fragment: Last night cold

Run-on: Last night it was cold and we went to the beach and we wore sweaters.

Correct: Last night it was very cold. We went to the beach and had to wear sweaters.

Fragment/Run-On Sentences - B

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Fragment/Run-On Sentences - F

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Idioms - A

An idiom is an expression with a meaning that extends beyond literal definitions. The sentence, "You could have knocked me over with a feather," is an idiom that means, "I was shocked."

Develop a list of idioms that are commonly used in the student's conversations. Your local library may be able to provide you with idioms that are familiar to children in the student's grade level. Frequent reading will familiarize the student with common idioms. Here is a short list to get you started:

My eyes popped out of my head.

I was tickled pink.

My anger only added fuel to the fire.

It went from bad to worse: I was out of the frying pan and into the fire.

That's the pot calling the kettle black.

Idioms - B

An idiom is an expression with a meaning that extends beyond literal definitions. The sentence, "You could have knocked me over with a feather," is an idiom that means, "I was shocked."

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Idioms - C

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Idioms - D

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Indirect/ Direct Objects

Objects of verbs complete meaning in sentences. A direct object receives the action of the verb. In the sentence, "She read that book last summer," the direct object is "book." "Book" is the object which received the action; the book was read.

An indirect object tells to whom, for whom, to what, or for what an action is done. In the sentence, "She gave Jim her book," the indirect object is "Jim." The giving was done for "Jim."

A technique for improving the student's understanding of indirect and direct objects is to have him or her find the verb and indirect or direct object in sentences. For example:

Sentence: Julie gave her dog a bath.

The verb is "gave." What was given? What does the verb "gave" refer to? Julie gave her dog a bath, so "bath" is the direct object of the verb. Who was given a bath? The dog was given a bath, so "dog" is the indirect object.

Discuss the sentence with the student, asking questions such as these to focus his or her attention on how verbs operate in sentences. Once he or she understands the concepts of indirect and direct objects, help the student locate them in his or her reading assignments.

Interjection

An interjection is a word or group of words used to express feelings. For example, in "Oh, now I see him," the interjection is "Oh." Or, in "Wow! We won the election," "Wow" is the interjection.

It may be helpful to use the list of common interjections below to develop a series of sentences and have the student identify the interjections. Or, provide the student with an interjection, and have him or her verbalize a sentence using the preposition.

Wow
Oh
Ow
Yikes
Hey

Also, have the student identify the interjection in sentences:

Sentence: Hey! I really need your attention.

Interjection: Hey

Metaphors - A

A metaphor is a statement in which one thing is compared to another to suggest similarity and/or create a specific effect. An example of a metaphor is, "The store is a zoo." This metaphor conveys that the store is crowded more vividly than simply stating, "The store is busy."

Improve the student's understanding of metaphors by helping him or her create unique sentences using metaphors. Remember, a metaphor does not use the words "like" or "as." For example:

Metaphor: The dog is a monster.
Meaning: The dog is unruly and hard to handle.

Encourage the student to use metaphors while telling stories and discussing events.

Metaphors - B

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Metaphors - C

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Encourage the student to use metaphors while telling stories and discussing events.

Modifiers - A

Modifiers give additional information about nouns, pronouns, and verbs. Modifiers are adjectives, adverbs, and phrases that help to describe what has been seen and heard.

The underlined words are modifiers:

James likes scary movies.

The car skidded quickly across the road.

It is important for the student to learn correct placement of modifiers in a sentence. To practice, have the student write a sentence that describes an activity. Next have the student underline the modifier and the word that is being modified. Finally, have the student draw a line connecting the modifier and the word it is modifying. Is the modifier next to the word it is modifying, or is it far away? The goal is to have the student place the modifier next to the word it is modifying.

My brother ran down the street quickly.

Since quickly modifies ran, quickly should be placed closer to ran.

Correct: My brother ran quickly down the street.

Modifiers - B

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Modifiers - C

Modifiers give additional information about nouns, pronouns, and verbs. Modifiers are adjectives, adverbs, and phrases that help to describe what has been seen and heard.

The underlined words in the following sentences are modifiers:

" I enjoy eating broiled fish," and "The boy played the drums loudly."

When using modifiers, place words, phrases, or clauses as close as possible to the words they describe. Failure to do so often results in a misplaced modifier. When this happens, a sentence will sometimes mean something that was not intended.

Example: "My sister told me her plans to get married while we were babysitting." (It sounds like she will be getting married while babysitting.) The correct placement of the modifier would be: "While we were babysitting, my sister told me her plans to get married."

Make students aware of misplaced modifiers by asking them to create sentences containing a modifier (a phrase or word). If the sentence isn't correct, remind them to think about the placement of the modifier. It should be placed as close as possible to the word it's describing.

Dangling modifiers are words, phrases, or clauses that begin a sentence and are set off by commas. However, they modify the wrong word.

Example: "While talking on the phone, the potatoes boiled over." (Were the potatoes talking on the phone?)

It is important for students to learn the correct placement for modifiers. You can make a fun activity out of this for students. Using one of the examples, challenge students to create five such sentences, containing misplaced modifiers. Then have them correct the sentences by moving the modifiers.

Modifiers - D

Modifiers give additional information about nouns, pronouns, and verbs. Modifiers are adjectives, adverbs, and phrases that help to describe what has been seen and heard.

Examples of modifiers include: "I enjoy eating broiled fish," and "The boy played the drums loudly".

When using modifiers, place words, phrases, or clauses as close as possible to the words they describe. Failure to do so often results in a misplaced modifier. When this happens, a sentence will sometimes mean something that was not intended.

Example: "My sister told me her plans to get married while we were babysitting." (It sounds like she will be getting married while babysitting.) The correct placement of the modifier would be: "While we were babysitting, my sister told me her plans to get married."

Dangling modifiers are words, phrases, or clauses that begin a sentence and are set off by commas. However, they modify the wrong word. For example, "While talking on the phone, the potatoes boiled over." (Were the potatoes talking on the phone?)

Ask students to choose a couple of articles from a magazine or newspaper and circle the misplaced modifiers. (They will probably be surprised how many they will find.) Then, for each one, have them draw an arrow to the word that it was meant to modify. Point out that the confusion often occurs because the modifier is too far away from the word it was intended to modify.

Nouns

A noun is a part of speech that describes a person, place, or thing. In the sentence, "Sally went to Spain in an airplane," "Sally," "Spain," and "airplane" are all nouns. A singular noun is one person, place, or thing. A plural noun is two or more persons, places, or things.

A possessive noun is a noun that "owns" something else in the sentence. For example, in "The airplane's engine was loud," the plane "owns" the engine.

It may be helpful to develop flash cards that identify the different noun forms. For example:

Front: car
Back: singular noun
Example: The car is red.

Front: car's
Back: possessive noun
Example: The car's paint is red.

Front: cars

Back: plural noun

Example: The cars are red.

Nouns (Possessive/ Plural) - A

A noun is a part of speech that describes a person, place, or thing. In the sentence, "Sally went to Spain in an airplane," "Sally," "Spain," and "airplane" are all nouns. A singular noun is one person, place, or thing. A plural noun is two or more persons, places, or things.

A possessive noun is a noun that "owns" something else in the sentence. For example, in "The airplane's engine was loud," the plane "owns" the engine. Possessive nouns are often shown with apostrophes.

It may be useful to develop flash cards for improving the student's understanding of possessive and plural nouns:

Front: Miguel owns that car.

Back: That is Miguel's car.

When there is use of the possessive, the question "Who owns it?" can be asked and answered.

Nouns (Possessive/ Plural) - B

A noun is a part of speech that describes a person, place, or thing. In the sentence, "Sally went to Spain in an airplane," "Sally," "Spain," and "airplane" are all nouns. A singular noun is one person, place, or thing. A plural noun is two or more persons, places, or things.

A possessive noun is a noun that "owns" something else in the sentence. For example, in "The airplane's engine was loud," the plane "owns" the engine. Possessive nouns are often shown with apostrophes.

It may be useful to develop flash cards for improving the student's understanding of possessive and plural nouns:

Front: Miguel owns that car.

Back: That is Miguel's car.

When there is use of the possessive, the question "Who owns it?" can be asked and answered.

Nouns (Possessive/ Plural) - C

A noun is a part of speech that describes a person, place, or thing. In the sentence, "Sally went to Spain in an airplane," "Sally," "Spain," and "airplane" are all nouns. A singular noun is one person, place, or thing. A plural noun is two or more persons, places, or things.

A possessive noun is a noun that "owns" something else in the sentence. For example, in "The airplane's engine was loud," the plane "owns" the engine. Possessive nouns are often shown with apostrophes.

It may be useful to develop flash cards for improving the student's understanding of possessive and plural nouns. Give the student a word and ask him or her to use the word (in writing or verbally) as a possessive noun and then as a plural noun.

Front: Computer

Back: Plural: There are two computers on the desk.

Front: Computer

Back: Possessive: That computer's keyboard is broken.

Remind the student that one method of distinguishing a plural noun from a possessive noun is by asking an ownership question. Using an example like the one above, ask the student who or what "owns" the keyboard. The answer is the computer, so the -s at the end of computer indicates a possessive noun.

Nouns (Subject/Predicate)

Every sentence can be divided into two parts, a subject and a predicate. The subject represents who or what the sentence is about. The predicate represents what happened or what was done. In the sentence, "Betsy ran to school," "Betsy" is the subject, and "ran to school" is the predicate.

Nouns may be used as the subject of a sentence. For example, in the sentence "The boy ran to the house," the subject of the sentence is "boy."

Predicate nouns are nouns contained in the predicate that explain or identify the subject. For example, in the sentence "San Jose is a city in California," the predicate noun is "city." Predicate words are connected to a subject by linking verbs.

Read through a variety of sentences with the student. While reading, discuss sentence structure. Explain that sentences can be divided into two parts, the subject and the predicate. In the sentence below, help the student determine that "Joan" is the subject and "is a student in that school" is the predicate.

Sentence: Joan is a student in that school.

Subject: Joan

Predicate: is a student in that school

Once he or she understands how subjects and predicates are determined, help him or her find nouns in both the subject and predicate portions of sentences.

In the sentence above, "Joan" is the subject noun and "student" is the predicate noun. Review subject noun and predicate noun identification orally. Read a sentence aloud. Ask the student to listen and then identify the subject and predicate nouns. Discuss why he or she thinks a specific word is the subject or predicate noun. Determine his or her rationale for making these distinctions. Have the student practice identifying subject and predicate nouns by using sentences from his or her schoolbooks as well.

Paragraph Coherence - A

A coherent paragraph contains precise and related information. The student should be able to determine whether information does or does not belong in a specific paragraph.

It may be helpful to develop a series of interesting paragraphs that each contain one sentence that does not belong with the rest of the sentences. Help the student determine which sentence does not belong, and why. It is important for the student to remember that each paragraph should focus on one topic. Every sentence should be about the main topic of the paragraph.

In the following paragraph, the underlined information does not belong, because the paragraph is about Joey's experience climbing a tree. The paragraph is not about oak trees.

Joey climbed up the tree. He climbed very high. Oak trees grow throughout the United States. He was afraid to climb back down. His older sister had to help him out of the tree.

Paragraph Coherence - B

A coherent paragraph contains precise and related information. The student should be able to determine whether information does or does not belong in a specific paragraph.

It may be helpful to develop a series of interesting paragraphs that each contain one sentence that does not belong with the rest of the sentences. Help the student determine which sentence does not belong, and why. It is important for the student to remember that each paragraph should focus on one topic. Every sentence should be about the main topic of the paragraph.

In the following paragraph, the underlined sentence does not belong because it is about the sun. The paragraph is not about the sun; it is about astronomers.

Some people like to study the stars. The sun is a star. They are called astronomers. Astronomers use telescopes to get a closer look at the stars.

Paragraph Coherence - C

A coherent paragraph contains precise and related information. The student should be able to determine whether information does or does not belong in a specific paragraph.

It may be helpful to develop a series of interesting paragraphs that each contain one sentence that does not belong with the rest of the sentences. Help the student determine which sentence does not belong, and why. It is important for the student to remember that each paragraph should focus on one topic. Every sentence should be about the main topic of the paragraph.

In the following paragraph, the underlined sentence does not belong because it is not directly related to the main idea of the paragraph.

My sister plays the violin. The violin is a difficult instrument to make. Some violins take years to build. First you must find the right wood. Then you have to carve it and glue it carefully together. Although it takes a long time, the beautiful music the violin makes is well worth the wait.

Past Participles - A

A participle is a verb that always operates as an adjective. The past participle demonstrates an action that happened in the past. In the sentence, "Delayed, she rushed to the airport terminal," the word "delayed" is the past participle and "rushed" is the operating verb.

Help the student develop sentences that include past participles. Work with the student, and help him or her distinguish the past participle from the verb of each sentence he or she creates. Start by giving the student the list of words below. Ask him or her to create two sentences for each word. One sentence should use the word as a verb, the other should use the word as a past participle.

smile
think
amuse

Words used as verbs:

1. She smiled at the bus driver.
2. He thought about the correct answer.
3. Amuse the children while I get the cake.

Words used as past participles:

1. Having smiled at the driver, she boarded the bus.
2. Having thought about the answer, he raised his hand.
3. Amused at the show, they stayed for the second act.

Past Participles - B

A participle is a verb that always operates as an adjective. The past participle demonstrates an action that happened in the past. In the sentence, "Delayed, she rushed to the airport terminal," the word "delayed" is the past participle and "rushed" is the operating verb.

Help the student develop sentences that include past participles. Work with the student and help him or her distinguish the past participle from the verb of each sentence he or she creates. Start by giving the student the list of words below. Ask him or her to create two sentences for each word. One sentence should use the word as a verb, the other should use the word as a past participle.

smile
think
amuse

Words used as verbs:

1. She smiled at the bus driver.
2. He thought about the correct answer.
3. Amuse the children while I get the cake.

Words used as past participles:

1. Having smiled at the driver, she boarded the bus.
2. Having thought about the answer, he raised his hand.
3. Amused at the show, they stayed for the second act.

Personal Pronouns - A

A personal pronoun is a word used in place of a noun to refer to a person, place, or thing without naming it. In the sentence "Fred said he would drive to work," the word "he" is the personal pronoun used to refer to "Fred."

A method for increasing the student's understanding of personal pronouns is to develop a sentence with all personal pronouns omitted. Help the student correctly complete the sentences. The following is an

No Personal Pronoun: Janet said ___ would take care of the dog.

With Personal Pronoun: Janet said she would take care of the dog.

Personal Pronouns - B

A personal pronoun is a word used in place of a noun to refer to a person, place, or thing without naming it. In the sentence "Fred said he would drive to work," the word "he" is the personal pronoun used to refer to "Fred."

A method for increasing the student's understanding of personal pronouns is to develop a sentence with all personal pronouns omitted. Help the student correctly complete the sentences. The following is an example:

No Personal Pronoun: Janet said ___ would take care of the dog.

With Personal Pronoun: Janet said she would take care of the dog.

Predicate of Sentence - A

Every sentence can be divided into two parts, a subject and a predicate. The subject represents who or what the sentence is about. The predicate represents what happened or what was done. In the sentence, "Betsy ran to school," "Betsy" is the subject and "ran to school" is the predicate.

It may be beneficial to have the student locate predicates in his or her reading materials or in spoken language. Ask him or her to tell you who or what is involved in a given sentence. This will lead to subject identification. Next, ask what happens to or with the subject. The portion of a sentence that describes what happens to or with the subject is the predicate. For example:

Sentence: The runner crossed the finish line.

Subject: runner

Predicate: crossed the finish line

Or, the student may enjoy acting out a sentence. For instance, have the student act out "The student walked across the room." After he or she has walked across the room, have the student identify himself or herself as the subject and "walked across the room" as the predicate.

Predicate of Sentence - B

Every sentence can be divided into two parts, a subject and a predicate. The subject represents who or what the sentence is about. The predicate represents what happened or what was done. In the sentence, "Betsy ran to school," "Betsy" is the subject and "ran to school" is the predicate.

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Sentence: The runner crossed the finish line.

Subject: runner

Predicate: crossed the finish line

Or, the student may enjoy acting out a sentence. For instance, have the student act out "The student walked across the room." After he or she has walked across the room, have the student identify himself or herself as the subject and "walked across the room" as the predicate.

Predicate of Sentence - C

Every sentence can be divided into two parts, a subject and a predicate. The subject represents who or what the sentence is about. The predicate represents what happened or what was done. In the sentence, "Betsy ran to school," "Betsy" is the subject and "ran to school" is the predicate.

It may be beneficial to have the student locate predicates in his or her reading materials or in spoken language. Ask him or her to tell you who or what is involved in a given sentence. This will lead to subject identification. Next, ask what happens to or with the subject. The portion of a sentence that describes what happens to or with the subject is the predicate. For example:

Sentence: The runner crossed the finish line.

Subject: runner

Predicate: crossed the finish line

Or, the student may enjoy acting out a sentence. For instance, have the student act out "The student walked across the room." After he or she has walked across the room, have the student identify himself or herself as the subject and "walked across the room" as the predicate.

Predicate of Sentence - D

Every sentence can be divided into two parts, a subject and a predicate. The subject represents who or what the sentence is about. The predicate represents what happened or what was done. In the sentence, "Betsy ran to school," "Betsy" is the subject and "ran to school" is the predicate.

It may be beneficial to have the student locate predicates in his or her reading materials or in spoken language. Ask him or her to tell you who or what is involved in a given sentence. This will lead to subject identification. Next, ask what happens to or with the subject. The portion of a sentence that describes what happens to or with the subject is the predicate. For example:

Sentence: The runner crossed the finish line.

Subject: runner

Predicate: crossed the finish line

Or, the student may enjoy acting out a sentence. For instance, have the student act out "The student walked across the room." After he or she has walked across the room, have the student identify himself or herself as the subject and "walked across the room" as the predicate.

Predicate of Sentence - E

Every sentence can be divided into two parts, a subject and a predicate. The subject represents who or what the sentence is about. The predicate represents what happened or what was done. In the sentence, "Betsy ran to school," "Betsy" is the subject and "ran to school" is the predicate.

It may be beneficial to have the student locate predicates in his or her reading materials or in spoken language. Ask him or her to tell you who or what is involved in a given sentence. This will lead to subject identification. Next, ask what happens to or with the subject. The portion of a sentence that describes what happens to or with the subject is the predicate. For example:

Sentence: The runner crossed the finish line.

Subject: runner

Predicate: crossed the finish line

Or, the student may enjoy acting out a sentence. For instance, have the student act out "The student walked across the room." After he or she has walked across the room, have the student identify himself or herself as the subject and "walked across the room" as the predicate.

Predicate of Sentence - F

Every sentence can be divided into two parts, a subject and a predicate. The subject represents who or what the sentence is about. The predicate represents what happened or what was done. In the sentence, "Betsy ran to school," "Betsy" is the subject and "ran to school" is the predicate.

It may be beneficial to have the student locate predicates him or her to tell you who or what is involved in a given sentence. This will lead to subject identification. Next, ask what happens to or with the subject. The portion of a sentence that describes what happens to or with the subject is the predicate. For example:

Sentence: The runner crossed the finish line.

Subject: runner

Predicate: crossed the finish line

Or, the student may enjoy acting out a sentence. For instance, have the student act out "The student walked across the room." After he or she has walked across the room, have the student identify himself or herself as the subject and "walked across the room" as the predicate.

Preposition

A preposition relates its object to some other word in the sentence. The noun or pronoun after the preposition is the object of the preposition. For example, in the sentence, "The bag is in the car," the preposition is "in." Words often used as prepositions include: about, above, at, beneath, in, toward, upon, with, etc.

It may be helpful to use the list of prepositions below to develop a series of sentences and have the student identify the prepositions. Or, provide the student with a preposition, and have him or her verbalize a sentence using the preposition.

after
against
around
at
behind
below
between

but
by
from
out

The following is an example:

Sentence: Mark is sitting on the box.
Preposition: on

When the student has developed an understanding of prepositions, have him or her apply this knowledge by labeling the prepositions in reading materials and spoken language.

Sentence: I am going to sit upon this lawn chair through the afternoon.
Preposition: upon, through

Pronouns (Indefinite)

A pronoun is a word used in place of a noun or other pronoun.

Indefinite pronouns are pronouns that do not refer to a specific person or thing. The following are some common indefinite pronouns:

some
all
everybody
anyone
no one

It may be helpful to explain the use of indefinite pronouns to the student. Develop a series of sentences and help him or her identify the pronoun types. Consider the following examples:

Sentence: Stacy doesn't know anything about sports.
Pronoun: anything is the indefinite pronoun

It may also be helpful to point out such pronouns in casual speech.

Pronouns (Possessive)

A pronoun is a word used in place of a noun or other pronoun. Possessive pronouns are used to show ownership. Examples of possessive pronouns include its, your, their, and whose.

It is important that the student is able to correctly identify the possessive pronoun in a sentence. For example, have him or her complete the following sentences:

Sentence: Lonnie brought _____ dog to the park.
Answer: her (possessive pronoun)

Sentence: _____ dog is that?
Answer: Whose (possessive pronoun)

Students may be confused and use "who's" (the contraction for the words "who" and "is") instead of "whose."

Have the student practice using possessive forms of pronouns by studying the following examples.

The stadium gave free tickets to (it's/its) staff.

Correct pronoun: its

(Whose/Who's) candy is on the table?

Correct pronoun: Whose

(Their/They're) going to wear (their/they're) new school clothes today.

Correct pronouns: They're and their

When are you going to wear (you're/your) new school clothes?

Correct pronoun: your

It may also be helpful to point out possessive pronouns in casual speech.

Pronouns (Subject/Object)

Pronouns are words that are used to take the place of a noun or another pronoun.

Subject pronouns are: I, you, he, she, we, they, it. They are used as the subject of a sentence.

Object pronouns are: me, you, us, him, her, them, it. They are used as objects in a sentence.

Practice with pronouns by reading the following sentences aloud. Ask the student to name the missing pronoun or read the student both words in the parentheses and ask the student to identify the correct pronoun.

(She/Her) is not going to the park.

Correct pronoun: She

You want to speak with Michael? This is (him/he).

Correct pronoun: he

The flower is for (I/me).

Correct pronoun: me

The horse kicked (her/she).

Correct pronoun: her

I helped (them/they) with the work.

Correct pronoun: them

Pronouns - A

A pronoun is a word used in place of a noun or another pronoun.

1. Donna went for a walk.

2. She went for a walk.

In the second sentence, she is a pronoun that takes the place of the noun Donna.

The antecedent of a pronoun is a noun or another pronoun for which the pronoun stands. For example, in "Bob is late, but he is ready to work," the personal pronoun is "he" and the antecedent is "Bob."

There are several types of pronouns.

Personal pronouns refer to specific persons or things. For example, in "Karen ate pizza. She was hungry," the word "she" is a personal pronoun that refers to "Karen."

Reflexive pronouns are personal pronouns that have "-self" or "-selves" added to the end. In the sentence, "Bob finished the homework himself," the reflexive pronoun is "himself."

Indefinite pronouns are pronouns that do not refer to a specific person or thing. Someone, anybody, and, everyone are indefinite pronouns. For example, in "Someone stole my wallet!", the word "someone" is the indefinite pronoun.

A demonstrative pronoun is used to single out one or more nouns referred to in the sentence. This, that, these, and those are demonstrative pronouns. For example, in "These potato chips are salty," the word "these" is a demonstrative pronoun.

Interrogative pronouns are used to ask a question. Who, whom, and which are interrogative pronouns. For example, in "Which shoes are mine?", the word "which" is an interrogative pronoun.

Possessive pronouns are used to show ownership, but they never have an apostrophe. Ours, his, their, and her are possessive pronouns. For example, in "Those are his pencils," the word "his" is a possessive pronoun.

It may be helpful to develop a series of sentences with the pronouns omitted. Help the student correctly insert the pronouns. For example:

Sentence: Kris went to the game. _____ brought her little brother with her.
Pronoun: She (personal pronoun)

Sentence: Randy left _____ baseball glove at home.
Pronoun: his (possessive pronoun)

Sentence: _____ left an earring on the playground.
Pronoun: Someone (indefinite pronoun)

Sentence: _____ pair of shoes belongs to James?
Pronoun: Which (interrogative pronoun)

Sentence: That beach blanket is _____.
Pronoun: ours (possessive pronoun)

Pronouns - B

A pronoun is a word used in place of a noun or another pronoun.

1. Donna went for a walk.
2. She went for a walk.

In the second sentence, she is a pronoun that takes the place of the noun Donna.

The antecedent of a pronoun is a noun or another pronoun for which the pronoun stands. For example, in "Bob is late, but he is ready to work," the personal pronoun is "he" and the antecedent is "Bob."

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Sentence: Kris went to the game. _____ brought her little brother with her.

Pronoun: She (personal pronoun)

Sentence: Randy left _____ baseball glove at home.

Pronoun: his (possessive pronoun)

Sentence: _____ left an earring on the playground.

Pronoun: Someone (indefinite pronoun)

Sentence: _____ pair of shoes belongs to James?

Pronoun: Which (interrogative pronoun)

Sentence: That beach blanket is _____.

Pronoun: ours (possessive pronoun)

Pronouns - C

A pronoun is a word used in place of a noun or another pronoun.

1. Donna went for a walk.

2. She went for a walk.

In the second sentence, she is a pronoun that takes the place of the noun Donna.

The antecedent of a pronoun is a noun or another pronoun for which the pronoun stands. For example, in "Bob is late, but he is ready to work," the personal pronoun is "he" and the antecedent is "Bob."

There are several types of pronouns.

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Interrogative pronouns are used to ask a question. Who, whom, and which are interrogative pronouns. For example, in "Which shoes are mine?", the word "which" is an interrogative pronoun.

Possessive pronouns are used to show ownership, but they never have an apostrophe. Ours, his, their, and her are possessive pronouns. For example, in "Those are his pencils," the word "his" is a possessive pronoun.

It may be helpful to develop a series of sentences with the pronouns omitted. Help the student correctly insert the pronouns. For example:

Sentence: Kris went to the game. _____ brought her little brother with her.

Pronoun: She (personal pronoun)

Sentence: Randy left ____ baseball glove at home.

Pronoun: his (possessive pronoun)

Sentence: _____ left an earring on the playground.

Pronoun: Someone (indefinite pronoun)

Sentence: _____ pair of shoes belongs to James?

Pronoun: Which (interrogative pronoun)

Sentence: That beach blanket is _____.

Pronoun: ours (possessive pronoun)

Pronouns - D

A pronoun is a word used in place of a noun or other pronoun. An antecedent is the noun or other

pronoun for which a pronoun stands. Pronouns and their antecedents must agree in number (singular or plural). For example:

Sentence: The runners lined up in their places.
Antecedent: runners
Pronoun: their

Note that in the above example, both the antecedent (runners) and the pronoun (their) are plural. A singular version of the same sentence is:

Sentence: The runner lined up in his place.
Antecedent: runner
Pronoun: his

It may be helpful to develop a series of sentences with the antecedent and/or pronoun omitted. Help the student complete the following sentence with the appropriate pronoun:

Jill and Rachel brought _____ cousin.

The correct answer is "their" (possessive pronoun).

Or, have the student match each of the antecedents below with the appropriate sentence:

everybody
girl
scientists
you

1. The _____ left their equipment at the convention.
2. The _____ watched her brother play chess.
3. _____ brought his or her own music to the party.
4. Will _____ give me your phone number?

Correct sentences:

1. The scientists left their equipment at the convention.
2. The girl watched her brother play chess.
3. Everybody brought his or her own music to the party.
4. Will you give me your phone number?

Pronouns - E

A pronoun is a word used in place of a noun or other pronoun. An antecedent is the noun or other pronoun for which a pronoun stands. Pronouns and their antecedents must agree in number (singular or plural). For example:

Sentence: The runners lined up in their places.
Antecedent: runners

Pronoun: their

Note that in the above example, both the antecedent (runners) and the pronoun (their) are plural. A singular version of the same sentence is:

Sentence: The runner lined up in his place.

Antecedent: runner

Pronoun: his

It may be helpful to develop a series of sentences with the antecedent and/or pronoun omitted. Help the student complete the following sentence with the appropriate pronoun:

Jill and Rachel brought _____ cousin.

The correct answer is "their" (possessive pronoun).

Or, have the student match each of the antecedents below with the appropriate sentence:

everybody

girl

scientists

you

1. The _____ left their equipment at the convention.
2. The _____ watched her brother play chess.
3. _____ brought his or her own music to the party.
4. Will _____ give me your phone number?

Correct sentences:

1. The scientists left their equipment at the convention.
2. The girl watched her brother play chess.
3. Everybody brought his or her own music to the party.
4. Will you give me your phone number?

Pronouns - F

A pronoun is a word used in place of a noun or another pronoun.

1. Donna went for a walk.
2. She went for a walk.

In the second sentence, she is a pronoun that takes the place of the noun Donna.

The antecedent of a pronoun is a noun or another pronoun for which the pronoun stands. For example, in "Bob is late, but he is ready to work," the personal pronoun is "he" and the antecedent is "Bob."

There are several types of pronouns.

Personal pronouns refer to specific persons or things. For example, in "Karen ate pizza. She was hungry," the word "she" is a personal pronoun that refers to "Karen."

Reflexive pronouns are personal pronouns that have "-self" or "-selves" added to the end. In the sentence, "Bob finished the homework himself," the reflexive pronoun is "himself."

Indefinite pronouns are pronouns that do not refer to a specific person or thing. Someone, anybody, and everyone are indefinite pronouns. For example, in "Someone stole my wallet!", the word "someone" is the indefinite pronoun.

A demonstrative pronoun is used to single out one or more nouns referred to in the sentence. This, that, these, and those are demonstrative pronouns. For example, in "These potato chips are salty," the word "these" is a demonstrative pronoun.

Interrogative pronouns are used to ask a question. Who, whom, and which are interrogative pronouns. For example, in "Which shoes are mine?", the word "which" is an interrogative pronoun.

Possessive pronouns are used to show ownership, but they never have an apostrophe. Ours, his, their, and her are possessive pronouns. For example, in "Those are his pencils," the word "his" is a possessive pronoun.

Share the following lists of subject and object pronouns with students.

Performer/Subject Pronouns: I, you, he, she, it, we, they, who

Pronouns that receive action: me, you, him, her, it, us, them, whom

Write several sentences leaving blanks for the pronouns. Ask students to supply the correct pronoun by looking at the position of the pronoun in relation to the verb. Usually, pronouns that come before the verb will be subjects (or performers), and pronouns that appear after the verb will be objects.

Have students practice matching antecedents with indefinite pronouns, focusing on whether they are singular or plural by writing several sentences like the one below. Leave out either the antecedent or the pronoun and ask them to "plug in" a correct word.

Example:

The dogs are eating their dinner quickly because they played outside all day.

Ask, "is the antecedent singular or plural?" Answer: plural

"So what will the pronoun have to be?" Answer: plural

Pronouns - G

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2. She went for a walk.

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Possessive pronouns are used to show ownership, but they never have an apostrophe. Ours, his, their, and her are possessive pronouns. For example, in "Those are his pencils," the word "his" is a possessive pronoun.

It may be helpful to develop a series of sentences with the pronouns omitted. Help the student correctly insert the pronouns. For example:

Sentence: Stacy and Kris brought ____ brother to the game.

Pronoun: their (personal pronoun)

Sentence: Randy left ____ baseball glove at home.

Pronoun: his (personal pronoun)

Sentence: ____ left an earring on the playground.

Pronoun: Someone (indefinite pronoun)

Sentence: ____ pair of shoes belongs to James?

Pronoun: Which (interrogative pronoun)

Sentence: That beach blanket is ____.

Pronoun: ours (personal pronoun)

Revise

Balanced sentences:

Correctly and effectively written sentences are balanced.

A balanced sentence is one in which related ideas, descriptions, or related actions are presented in the same form.

This is called parallelism.

The following sentence is not "balanced." Why?

"He liked drawing and to eat."

The related actions (drawing and to eat) are not expressed in the same form. One action word ends with "ing," the other uses "to," which is a different form.

Either form is correct; however, the same form must be used for both action words.

Both of the following sentences are correct:

"He liked drawing and eating."

"He liked to draw and to eat."

The example above involves actions, but the same rule applies for descriptive words. The following example is incorrect:

"Susan is outgoing and has talent."

The related descriptions are not parallel. "is outgoing" and "has talent" are different forms.

The following would be correct:

"Susan is outgoing and talented."

The following activity will improve the student's ability to balance sentences and coordinate thoughts.

Orally, provide the students with a sentence such as "I like to daydream, plant flowers, and listen to opera music."

Ask the student to construct a similar sentence with his or her own favorite activities.

Point out inconsistencies in related actions, descriptions, or ideas.

You can also provide students with an unfinished sentence and ask them to complete it.

For example: "I think Spanish class is _____, _____, and _____."

Sentence Combining - A

A sentence expresses one complete thought. Sentence combining requires students to create complete sentences from two separate sentences while avoiding fragments and run-ons. At this level, sentence combining involves adding conjunctions such as "and."

A method for improving the student's ability to correctly structure a sentence is to develop short, but complete, sentences. Help the student combine these short sentences into one correct sentence:

Sentence 1: Bob is 12 years old.

Sentence 2: He is in the eighth grade.

Combine: Bob is 12 years old and in the eighth grade.

Sentence Combining - B

A sentence expresses one complete thought. Sentence combining requires students to create complete sentences from two separate sentences while avoiding fragments and run-ons. At this level, sentence combining involves adding conjunctions such as "and."

A method for improving the student's ability to correctly structure a sentence is to develop short, but complete, sentences. Help the student combine these short sentences into one correct sentence:

Sentence 1: Bob is 12 years old.

Sentence 2: He is in the eighth grade.

Combine: Bob is 12 years old and in the eighth grade.

Sentence Combining - C

A sentence expresses one complete thought. Sentence combining requires students to create complete sentences from two or more separate sentences while avoiding fragments and run-ons. At this level, sentence combining involves adding conjunctions such as "and."

A method for improving the student's ability to correctly structure a sentence is to develop short, but complete, sentences. Help the student combine these short sentences into one correct sentence:

Sentence 1: Bob is 12 years old.

Sentence 2: He is in the eighth grade.

Combine: Bob is 12 years old and in the eighth grade.

Sentence Combining - D

A sentence expresses one complete thought. Sentence combining requires students to create complete sentences from two or more separate sentences while avoiding fragments and run-ons. At this level, sentence combining involves adding a phrase or clause, using conjunctions for smooth transitions, combining adjectives, and compound predicates, subjects, objects, and sentences.

You can help the student strengthen his or her skills by creating short, individual sentences. Then have the student combine the sentences in the best way possible.

Example:

1. Jane's mother is ill.
2. Jane's mother's name is Agatha.
3. Jane is going to the hospital to visit her mother.

You can combine the sentences by adding a phrase.

Because her mother, Agatha, is ill, Jane is going to visit her in the hospital.

Example:

1. Harry is taking an exam on Saturday.
2. Jonathan is taking an exam on Saturday.
3. Jonathan asked Harry for a ride to the exam on Saturday.

You can combine the sentences by adding a conjunction.

Jonathan asked Harry for a ride to the exam on Saturday because both of them are taking it.

Sentence Sequence - A

A coherent paragraph contains precise and related information presented in a reasonable order. Sentence sequencing consists of arranging several sentences from one paragraph into logical order.

A method for improving this skill is to develop a series of sentences and help the student arrange the sentences in the correct order. Remind the student to look for clues in each sentence, such as the word "first" or "next." For example:

Sentence 1: After lunch we went to the movies.

Sentence 2: We began our day by going to Jerry's for lunch.

Sentence 3: We ate Jerry's famous burgers.

The correct sentence sequence is 2, 3, 1.

Sentence Sequence - B

A coherent paragraph contains precise and related information presented in a reasonable order. Sentence sequencing consists of arranging several sentences from one paragraph into logical order.

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Sentence Sequence - E

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Sentence 2: We began our day by going to Jerry's for lunch.

Sentence 3: We ate Jerry's famous burgers.

The correct sentence sequence is 2, 3, 1.

Sentence Sequence - F

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Sentence 2: We began our day by going to Jerry's for lunch.

Sentence 3: We ate Jerry's famous burgers.

The correct sentence sequence is 2, 3, 1.

Sentence Sequence - G

A coherent paragraph contains precise and related information presented in a reasonable order. Sentence sequencing consists of arranging several sentences from one paragraph into logical order.

A method for improving this skill is to develop a series of sentences and help the student arrange the sentences in the correct order. Remind the student to look for clues in each sentence, such as the word "first" or "next." For example:

Sentence 1: After lunch we went to the movies.

Sentence 2: We began our day by going to Jerry's for lunch.

Sentence 3: We ate Jerry's famous burgers.

The correct sentence sequence is 2, 3, 1.

Sentence Sequence - H

The sequence, or order of the sentences contained in a paragraph, is often important to its meaning. Many times, if sentences aren't arranged in the proper sequence, the paragraph won't make sense. This is true if you are reading a paragraph written by someone else or writing a paragraph yourself.

Always arrange your details in the most logical or effective order. One popular method of sentence sequencing is called chronological order. You arrange your details in the order in which they happened (first, second, next, then, last, etc.). This is especially important if you are retelling an event or explaining the steps involved in a process.

One natural way to practice recognizing correct and incorrect sequencing is to retell a well-known fairytale. Switch the order of events around so that they are out of sequence. Ask the student to point out the improper sequence and correct it.

Then give the student a chance to do the same.

This is an activity that can be done at almost any time or in any place because it is oral. You can do this on the way to school, while waiting for a dental appointment, etc.

An activity involving sequencing that can be done on paper involves summarizing the parts of a process. For instance, you might ask the student to write down the steps involved in mastering a computer or video game. At first, the student can simply write down the steps in order in numbered sentences. As the student becomes more proficient, ask him or her to write the steps in a paragraph from beginning to end. The student should begin focusing on transition words such as: first, second, then, also, finally. These transition words help the flow of the paragraph.

Sentence Types

There are four types of basic sentences: interrogative, declarative, imperative, and exclamatory.

An interrogative sentence asks a question: "Have you seen this movie?"

A declarative sentence makes a statement: "His hair is long."

An imperative sentence tells someone to do something: "Clean your room."

An exclamatory sentence expresses strong feelings: "I won the race!"

It may be beneficial to help the student develop a dialogue between several characters. Use the four sentence types to express what the characters want or how they feel. For example:

Hal: My stomach hurts. (declarative)

Mom: Did you eat too much cake? (interrogative)

Dad: Take some medicine. (imperative)

Hal: I don't want any medicine! (exclamatory)

Similes - A

A simile is a direct comparison between two unlike things used to create a dramatic effect. Similes use the words "like" or "as." For example: "The store is like a zoo."

A way to improve the student's understanding of similes is to help him or her create sentences using similes. Remember, a simile uses the words "like" or "as." For example:

Simile: Jane's hair is like gold.

Meaning: Jane's hair is the color of gold (blond).

or

Simile: Raul's car is as old as the Egyptian pyramids.

Meaning: Raul's car is very old.

Encourage the student to use similes while telling stories and discussing events.

Similes - B

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Similes - C

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Meaning: Raul's car is very old.

Encourage the student to use similes while telling stories and discussing events.

Subject of Sentence - A

The subject of a sentence tells who or what the sentence is about. The subject performs the action (represented through a verb) in the sentence. In the sentence "John swims in the lake," the subject of the sentence is "John."

A fun method for improving the student's understanding of this concept is to have him or her act out sentences. For example, in the sentence, "the student ran out the door," the subject is "the student" and the predicate (the action part of the sentence) is "ran out the door." Have the student listen to this sentence and actually run out the door. Help him or her understand himself or herself as the subject and the running out the door as the predicate (action).

Once he or she understands the concept of subject, help the student locate the subject of the sentence in his or her reading assignments. Ask the student questions regarding who or what the sentence is about. Focus his or her attention on separating sentences into two parts: who/what the sentence is about and what was done or what happened involving the subject.

Subject of Sentence - B

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Subject of Sentence - C

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Subject of Sentence - D

The subject of a sentence tells who or what the sentence is about. The subject performs the action

(represented through a verb) in the sentence. In the sentence "John swims in the lake," the subject of the sentence is "John."

A fun way to help the student with understanding this concept is to select popular reading material. Have the student use a favorite magazine, newspaper, or comic book. Choose ten sentences that contain simple subjects and rewrite them on his or her own paper. Then have the student underline the subject of the sentence.

Next, have the student use the same subject in a sentence that he or she creates.

Subject of Sentence - E

The subject of a sentence tells who or what the sentence is about. The subject performs the action (represented through a verb) in the sentence. In the sentence "John swims in the lake," the subject of the sentence is "John."

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Next, have the student use the same subject in a sentence that he or she creates.

Subject of Sentence - F

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Next, have the student use the same subject in a sentence that he or she creates.

Subject-Verb Agreement - A

The subject of a sentence tells who or what the sentence is about. The subject performs the action (represented through a verb) in a sentence. In "John swims in the lake," the subject of the sentence is "John."

The verb is the action word in a sentence. In the sentence, "Jason surfs often," the action word is "surfs."

The verb tense of a sentence must agree with the single or plural subject of the sentence. For example, in "The girls were going to school," the subject (girls) is plural, so the verb, "were," must also be plural.

A beneficial method for improving the student's understanding of subject-verb agreement is to create sentences with all verbs omitted. Help the student insert the correct verbs. For example:

No Verb: The children ____ to the zoo yesterday.

Verb: The children went to the zoo yesterday.

Subject-Verb Agreement - B

The subject of a sentence tells who or what the sentence is about. The subject performs the action (represented through a verb) in a sentence. In "John swims in the lake," the subject of the sentence is "John."

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No Verb: The children ____ to the zoo yesterday.

Verb: The children went to the zoo yesterday.

Subject-Verb Agreement - D

The subject of a sentence tells who or what the sentence is about. The subject performs the action (represented through a verb) in a sentence. In "John swims in the lake," the subject of the sentence is "John."

The verb is the action word in a sentence. In the sentence, "Jason surfs often," the action word is "surfs."

The verb tense of a sentence must agree with the single or plural subject of the sentence. For example, in "The girls were going to school," the subject (girls) is plural, so the verb, "were," must also be plural.

A beneficial method for improving the student's understanding of subject-verb agreement is to create sentences with all verbs omitted. Help the student insert the correct verbs. For example:

No Verb: The children ____ to the zoo yesterday.

Verb: The children went to the zoo yesterday.

Subject-Verb Agreement - E

When the subject (the person place or thing in a sentence) matches the verb (the action of a sentence) in number, the subject and verb are in agreement. If the subject is singular, then the verb must also be singular. Likewise, if the subject is plural, then the verb must also be plural.

Example: "He wants to go."

The subject (he) is singular. The verb (wants) is singular.

Example: "They want to go."

The subject (they) is plural. The verb (want) is plural.

Here is a sentence in which the subject and verb don't agree:

"We loves to run on the beach."

It is incorrect because the subject (we) is plural, but the verb is singular (loves).

Create sentences in which students must "plug in" both the subject and verb. By doing so, they will realize the connection, that singular subjects require singular verbs, and plural subjects require plural verbs. After students become confident, try creating sentences that contain a phrase after the subject to make the exercise more challenging.

Example: Every day _____ to school.

If the sentence has a plural subject, they must be sure that the verb is plural.

"Every day Jacob's mom and dad drive him to school." Plural subject (mom and dad), plural verb (drive).

If the sentence has a singular subject, they must be sure that the verb is singular.

"Every day Juanita drives to school." Singular subject (Juanita), singular verb (drives).

Subject-Verb Agreement - F

When the subject (the person place or thing in a sentence) matches the verb (the action of a sentence) in number, the subject and verb are in agreement. If the subject is singular, then the verb must also be singular. Likewise, if the subject is plural, then the verb must also be plural.

Example: "He wants to go."

The subject (he) is singular. The verb (wants) is singular.

Example: "They want to go."

The subject (they) is plural. The verb (want) is plural.

Here is a sentence in which the subject and verb don't agree:

"We loves to run on the beach."

It is incorrect because the subject (we) is plural, but the verb is singular (loves).

Have students choose a magazine or newspaper article. Ask students to find sentences that contain phrases and modifiers within sentences in the article and cross them out. Remind students that phrases

and modifiers do not affect the subject. Then ask them to circle the subject and verb in these sentences, identifying whether they are singular or plural.

This will help students to focus on sentences containing distracting modifiers and prepositional phrases that get in between the subject and the verb and often confuse people.

Subordinate Clause/Conjunction

A subordinate clause cannot stand alone as a sentence and does not express a complete thought.

Example:

I slammed the phone down on the receiver because I was angry.

"Because I was angry," is a subordinate clause. It cannot stand alone as a sentence.

Some clauses are introduced by subordinating conjunctions. A subordinating conjunction relates the clause to the word or words it modifies.

In the above example, the word "because" is a subordinating conjunction.

Have the student make different "flash cards" that he or she can combine to make complete sentences with subordinate clauses. They can write a short complete sentence on one card. On another they can write a subordinating conjunction. On a third card they can write a subordinate clause. They can then combine the cards into different sentences and better understand how the three different aspects work together.

Here are some ideas to get you started:

Short sentences:

Mary went to the store.

Pat stayed at home.

The turtle swam through the ocean.

Subordinating conjunctions:

after

until

before

Subordinating clauses:

her early morning run

laying her eggs on the beach

he felt better

Topic Sentence - A

The topic sentence of a paragraph contains the main idea and attracts the reader's interest.

Understanding how to write effective topic sentences will help the student identify topic sentences in reading materials. The student can practice writing effective topic sentences using common strategies such as including surprising facts, questions, or commands to gain a reader's attention.

Beginning a paragraph with an unusual or surprising fact will encourage a reader to continue reading. For example, if the paragraph is about school cafeteria food, the topic sentence can start with a fact about the

food: "Two out of three students polled state they prefer not to eat a school lunch." Such a surprising fact will catch the reader's interest and prompt them to read on.

Using the question method, the paragraph could begin, "How many students like our cafeteria food?" The reader's first thought may be to wonder, "How many?" and he or she will read on.

Finally, using a command to begin a paragraph is a dramatic method: "Stay away from cafeteria food!" The reader's logical response to such a command would be "Why?"

After practicing these topic sentence strategies in his or her own writing, the student will become a lively writer and more proficient at identifying topic sentences in reading materials.

Topic Sentence - B

The topic sentence of a paragraph contains the main idea and attracts the reader's interest.

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Topic Sentence - D

The topic sentence of a paragraph contains the main idea and attracts the reader's interest.

Understanding how to write effective topic sentences will help the student identify topic sentences in reading materials. The student can practice writing effective topic sentences using common strategies such as including surprising facts, questions, or commands to gain a reader's attention.

Beginning a paragraph with an unusual or surprising fact will entice a reader. For example, if the paragraph is about school cafeteria food, the topic sentence can start with a fact about the food: "Two out of three students polled state they prefer not to eat a school lunch." Such a surprising fact will catch the reader's interest and prompt them to read on.

Using the question method, the paragraph could begin, "How many students like our cafeteria food?"
The reader's first thought may be to wonder, "How many?" and he or she will read on.

Finally, using a command to begin a paragraph is a dramatic method: "Stay away from cafeteria food!"
The reader's logical response to such a command would be "Why?"

After practicing these topic sentence strategies in his or her own writing, the student will become a captivating writer and more proficient at identifying topic sentences in reading materials.

Topic Sentence - E

The topic sentence of a paragraph contains the main idea and attracts the reader's interest. A concluding sentence restates or summarizes the main idea of the passage.

Understanding how to write effective topic sentences will help the student identify topic sentences in reading materials. The student can practice writing effective topic sentences using common strategies such as including surprising facts, questions, or commands to gain a reader's attention.

Beginning a paragraph with an unusual or surprising fact will entice a reader. For example, if the paragraph is about school cafeteria food, the topic sentence can start with a fact about the food: "Two out of three students polled state they prefer not to eat a school lunch." Such a surprising fact will catch the reader's interest and prompt them to read on.

Using the question method, the paragraph could begin, "How many students like our cafeteria food?"
The reader's first thought may be to wonder, "How many?" and he or she will read on.

Finally, using a command to begin a paragraph is a dramatic method: "Stay away from cafeteria food!"
The reader's logical response to such a command would be "Why?"

After practicing these topic sentence strategies in his or her own writing, the student will become a captivating writer and more proficient at identifying topic sentences in reading materials.

Similarly, students need to understand how to develop an appropriate concluding sentence for a paragraph. Have the student pick a favorite hobby or activity. Ask him or her to write a 4-6 sentence paragraph explaining the reasons they enjoy this hobby or activity. Next, have the student write a concluding sentence for this paragraph. It may help the student to start the concluding sentence with one of the following phrases:

These are some of the reasons why I like...

In conclusion, this is why I enjoy...

As you can see, _____ is fun for many reasons.

Transitions - A

Transitions are words or phrases that connect one idea to the next idea. First, next, after, and finally are examples of transitions.

Ask the student to write simple directions for an activity with which they are familiar, such as making a sandwich, or making a bed. Then provide them with this list of transitions:

first

next

then

also

as soon as

after

finally

last

Next, ask the student to insert a transition in the beginning of each step. Help the student to determine if the transitions he or she chose are appropriate for the passage.

Transitions - B

Transitions are words or phrases that connect one idea to the next idea. First, next, after, and finally are examples of transitions.

Ask the student to write simple directions for an activity with which they are familiar, such as making a sandwich, or making a bed. Then provide them with this list of transitions:

first

next

then

also

as soon as

after

finally

last

Next, ask the student to insert a transition in the beginning of each step. Help the student to determine if the transitions he or she chose are appropriate for the passage.

Usage (Editing) - A

Double negatives and redundancies are often accepted in informal English, but they are not used in standard English.

The sentence, "I don't have no homework," contains a double negative error. "I don't have any homework," is correct because it contains only one negative.

Redundant information is repeated information. For example, "We're going to the park so since we're going to the park I'll bring my bike," is a sentence that contains redundant information.

In speaking, many people use the word "ain't." In formal writing, however, this is considered an inappropriate verb form. The correct usage is "am not," or "are not." For example, in the sentence, "I ain't going to clean my room," we can replace "ain't" with "am not."

Subject-verb inconsistencies occur when the subject is singular and the verb is plural, or when the subject is plural and the verb is singular. For example, in the sentence, "John eat vegetables," John, the subject, is singular. Eat, the verb, is plural. We can replace "eat" with "eats."

It may be helpful to develop a series of sentences that contain double negatives and redundancies. Help the student determine the errors and correctly rewrite the sentences.

Incorrect: We don't never have steak.

Correct: We never have steak.

Incorrect: We never get to have steak so since we never have steak my brother decided to cook steak for us.

Correct: We never get to have steak, so my brother decided to cook some for us.

Usage (Editing) - B

Double negatives and redundancies are often accepted in informal English, but they are not used in standard English.

The sentence, "I don't have no homework," contains a double negative error. "I don't have any homework," is correct because it contains only one negative.

Redundant information is repeated information. For example, "We're going to the park so since we're going to the park I'll bring my bike," is a sentence that contains redundant information.

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It may be helpful to develop a series of sentences that contain double negatives and redundancies. Help the student determine the errors and correctly rewrite the sentences.

Incorrect: We don't never have steak.

Correct: We never have steak.

Incorrect: We never have steak so since we never have steak my brother decided to cook steak for us.

Correct: We never have steak, so my brother decided to cook steak for us.

Usage (Editing) - C

Double negatives and redundancies are often accepted in informal English, but they are not used in standard English.

The sentence, "I don't have no homework," contains a double negative error. "I don't have any homework," is correct because it contains only one negative.

Redundant information is repeated information. For example, "We're going to the park so since we're going to the park I'll bring my bike," is a sentence that contains redundant information.

In speaking, many people use the word "ain't." In formal writing, however, this is considered an inappropriate verb form. The correct usage is "am not," or "are not." For example, in the sentence, "I ain't going to clean my room," we can replace "ain't" with "am not."

Subject-verb inconsistencies occur when the subject is singular and the verb is plural, or when the subject is plural and the verb is singular. For example, in the sentence, "John eat vegetables," John, the subject, is singular. Eat, the verb, is plural. We can replace "eat" with "eats."

It may be helpful to develop a series of sentences that contain double negatives and redundancies. Help the student determine the errors and correctly rewrite the sentences.

Incorrect: We don't never have steak.

Correct: We never have steak.

Incorrect: We never have steak so since we never have steak my brother decided to cook steak for us.

Correct: We never have steak, so my brother decided to cook steak for us.

Usage (Editing) - D

Double negatives result when a negative word is added to a statement that is already negative. The sentence, "We don't want no ice cream," contains a double negative error.

"We don't want any ice cream," is correct because it only contains one negative.

Redundant information is information that is repeated. For example, "We never get free time in school so since we never have free time Angela doesn't want to come to school anymore," contains redundant information. A better sentence would be, "Because we never have free time, Angela doesn't want to come to school anymore."

Subject-verb disagreement occurs when a subject in a sentence-the person or thing doing the action-does not match the verb in number (both singular or both plural).

For example, "The girls wants to eat her ice cream," has a plural subject and singular verb, making it incorrect. "The girls want to eat their ice cream," has a plural subject and plural verb, making it correct.

Verb tense indicates the time of the action described in the sentence. Something that has already happened is past tense, "We ran." An event that is happening currently is called present tense, "We run." An event that will happen is referred to as future tense, "We will run."

In speaking, many people use the word "ain't." In formal writing, however, this is considered an inappropriate verb form. The correct usage would be "am not," or "are not." For example, in the sentence, "I ain't going to clean my room," we can replace "ain't" with "am not."

Write several sentences containing examples of redundancies, double negatives, subject-verb disagreement, and incorrect verb tenses. Ask students to point out what is wrong with each sentence. After they identify why the sentence is incorrect, help them rewrite the sentence correctly.

Examples:

We went to the store to get ice cream, and since we went to the store we bought hot fudge, too.

Malorie doesn't want no one bothering her little brother.

The duckling, having strayed from the flock, are lost.

Jennifer and Thomas will run yesterday.

Possible corrections:

Since we went to the store to get ice cream, we bought hot fudge, too.

Malorie doesn't want anyone bothering her little brother.

The duckling, having strayed from the flock, is lost.

Jennifer and Thomas ran yesterday.

Usage (Sentence Structure) - A

Double negatives, redundancies, and a variety of verb forms are often accepted in informal English, but are not used in standard English.

The sentence, "I don't have no homework," contains a double negative error. "I don't have any homework," is correct because it only contains one negative.

Redundant information is repeated information. For example, "We're going to the park so since we're going to the park I'll bring my bike," is a sentence that contains redundant information.

It may be beneficial to develop a series of sentences that contain double negatives, redundancies, and incorrect verb tenses. Help the student determine the errors and correctly rewrite the sentences.

Incorrect: We don't never have steak.

Correct: We never have steak.

Incorrect: We never have steak so since we never have steak my brother decided to cook steak for us.

Correct: We never have steak, so my brother decided to cook steak for us.

Incorrect: We was having steak for dinner when the doorbell rang.

Correct: We were having steak for dinner when the doorbell rang.

Usage (Sentence Structure) - B

Double negatives, redundancies, and a variety of verb forms are often accepted in informal English, but are not used in standard English.

The sentence, "I don't have no homework," contains a double negative error. "I don't have any homework," is correct because it only contains one negative.

Redundant information is repeated information. For example, "We're going to the park so since we're going to the park I'll bring my bike," is a sentence that contains redundant information.

It may be beneficial to develop a series of sentences that contain double negatives, redundancies, and incorrect verb tenses. Help the student determine the errors and correctly rewrite the sentences.

Incorrect: We don't never have steak.

Correct: We never have steak.

Incorrect: We never have steak so since we never have steak my brother decided to cook steak for us.

Correct: We never have steak, so my brother decided to cook steak for us.

Incorrect: We was having steak for dinner when the doorbell rang.

Correct: We were having steak for dinner when the doorbell rang.

Usage (Sentence Structure) - C

Double negatives, redundancies, and a variety of verb forms are often accepted in informal English, but are not used in standard English.

The sentence, "I don't have no homework," contains a double negative error. "I don't have any homework," is correct because it only contains one negative.

Redundant information is repeated information. For example, "We're going to the park so since we're going to the park I'll bring my bike," is a sentence that contains redundant information.

It may be beneficial to develop a series of sentences that contain double negatives, redundancies, and incorrect verb tenses. Help the student determine the errors and correctly rewrite the sentences.

Incorrect: We don't never have steak.

Correct: We never have steak.

Incorrect: We never have steak so since we never have steak my brother decided to cook steak for us.

Correct: We never have steak, so my brother decided to cook steak for us.

Incorrect: We was having steak for dinner when the doorbell rang.

Correct: We were having steak for dinner when the doorbell rang.

Usage (Sentence Structure) - D

Double negatives, redundancies, and a variety of verb forms are often accepted in informal English, but are not used in standard English.

The sentence, "I don't have no homework," contains a double negative error. "I don't have any homework," is correct because it only contains one negative.

Redundant information is repeated information. For example, "We're going to the park so since we're going to the park I'll bring my bike," is a sentence that contains redundant information.

The sentence, "We was having steak for dinner when the doorbell rang," contains a subject/verb agreement error. The correct verb is were. Since the subject We is plural, the verb must also be plural.

It may be helpful to develop a series of sentences that contain double negatives, redundancies, and incorrect verb forms. Help the student determine the errors and correctly rewrite the sentences.

Incorrect: We don't never have steak.

Correct: We never have steak.

Incorrect: We never have steak so since we never have steak my brother decided to cook steak for us.

Correct: We never have steak, so my brother decided to cook steak for us.

Incorrect: We was having steak for dinner when the doorbell rang.

Correct: We were having steak for dinner when the doorbell rang.

Verb Phrase

A helping verb is a word that aids the main verb in a sentence. Forms of be, have, and do are often used as helping verbs.

A verb phrase is an action verb plus the helping verb.

In the following sentence the verb phrase is underlined.

Christie has eaten all of the fruit.

"Has" is the helping verb, while "has eaten" is the verb phrase.

Using a story or textbook from the student's class, find five sentences with verb phrases. Have the student create a chart like the one below. First, rewrite the sentences on his or her own paper, then underline the verb phrase in each sentence. Finally, write out the verb phrase, the helping verbs, and then the main verb.

Example:

Scientists will have studied DNA for many years before they fully understand it.

verb phrase: will have studied

helping verbs: will, have

main verb: study

Verb Tense - A

A verb expresses an action that may or may not be visible. In "Samantha pushed the bike," "pushed" is a visible action verb. "Pushing" is something that can be observed. In "Samantha needed a new bike," "needed" is the verb, but it expresses an invisible action.

Verb tense demonstrates the time of the action indicated in a sentence. Verb tense indicates that an action has happened (past tense), is happening (present tense), or will happen (future tense). For example, "run" is present tense, past tense is "ran," and future tense is "will run."

It may be useful to develop a series of sentences with the verb omitted. Help the student correctly insert the appropriate verb tense into the sentence. For example:

Verb: to do

Sentence: I ____ that yesterday.

With Correct Verb Tense: I did that yesterday.

Or, rewrite sentences from the student's textbooks and storybooks with the verb from each sentence omitted. Remind the student that key words like "yesterday" dictate tense (see above).

Verb Tense - B

A verb expresses an action that may or may not be visible. In "Samantha pushed the bike," "pushed" is a visible action verb. "Pushing" is something that can be observed. In "Samantha needed a new bike," "needed" is the verb, but it expresses an invisible action.

Verb tense demonstrates the time of the action indicated in a sentence. Verb tense indicates that an action has happened (past tense), is happening (present tense), or will happen (future tense). For example, "run" is present tense, past tense is "ran," and future tense is "will run."

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Verb: to do

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With Correct Verb Tense: I did that yesterday.

Or, rewrite sentences from the student's textbooks and storybooks with the verb from each sentence omitted. Remind the student that key words like "yesterday" dictate tense (see above).

Verb Tense - C

A verb expresses an action that may or may not be visible. In "Samantha pushed the bike," "pushed" is a visible action verb. "Pushing" is something that can be observed. In "Samantha needed a new bike," "needed" is the verb, but it expresses an invisible action.

Verb tense demonstrates the time of the action indicated in a sentence. Verb tense indicates that an action has happened (past tense), is happening (present tense), or will happen (future tense). For example, "run" is present tense, past tense is "ran," and future tense is "will run."

It may be useful to develop a series of sentences with the verb omitted. Help the student correctly insert the appropriate verb tense into the sentence. For example:

Verb: to do

Sentence: I ___ that yesterday.

With Correct Verb Tense: I did that yesterday.

Or, rewrite sentences from the student's textbooks and storybooks with the verb from each sentence omitted. Remind the student that key words like "yesterday" dictate tense (see above).

Verb Tense - D

A verb expresses an action that may or may not be visible. In "Samantha pushed the bike," "pushed" is a visible action verb. "Pushing" is something that can be observed. In "Samantha needed a new bike," "needed" is the verb, but it expresses an invisible action.

Verb tense demonstrates the time of the action indicated in a sentence. Verb tense indicates that an action has happened (past tense), is happening (present tense), or will happen (future tense). For example, "run" is present tense, past tense is "ran," and future tense is "will run."

It will be helpful to students if you give them the list of verbs below and ask them to write all seven tenses of the verbs in a chart. Then have students put each verb tense in a separate sentence.

Verbs: walk, act, work, fish, laugh, listen, sneeze

Example:

Present: walks, She walks to my house.

Past: walked, She walked to my house.

Future: will walk, She will walk to my house tomorrow.

Present perfect: has walked, She has walked to my house in the past.

Past perfect: had walked, She had walked to my house in the rain.

Future perfect: will have walked, She will have walked to my house eight times.

Present perfect progressive: will have been walking, She will have been walking for three miles when she arrives at my house.

Verb Tense - E

A verb expresses an action which may or may not be visible. In "Ellen drank the glass of juice," "drank" is a visible action verb. "Drinking" is something that can be observed. In "Ellen wanted another glass of juice," "wanted" is the verb, but it expresses an invisible action.

Verb tense demonstrates the time of the action indicated in a sentence. Verb tense indicates that an action has happened (past tense), is happening (present tense), or will happen (future tense). For example, "talk" is present tense. Past tense is "talked," and future tense is "will talk."

It will be helpful to students if you give them the list of verbs below and ask them to write all seven tenses of the verbs in a chart. Then have students put each verb tense in a separate sentence.

Verbs: walk, act, work, fish, laugh, listen, sneeze

Example:

Present: walks, She walks to my house.

Past: walked, She walked to my house.

Future: will walk, She will walk to my house tomorrow.

Present perfect: has walked, She has walked to my house in the past.

Past perfect: had walked, She had walked to my house in the rain.

Future perfect: will have walked, She will have walked to my house eight times.

Present perfect progressive: will have been walking, She will have been walking for three miles when she arrives at my house.

Verbals

A verbal is a word that is formed from a verb, but it acts as another part of speech. Verbal types are infinitives, participles, and gerunds.

An infinitive verbal usually appears with the word "to" before it. In the sentence "We wanted to swim," "wanted" is the past tense verb, and the word "swim," which is often used as a verb, is acting as an infinitive.

A participle verbal always acts as an adjective. In "Smiling, Don blew out his birthday candles," the past tense verb is "blew," and the word "smiling" is acting as the participle. "Smiling" is an adjective that is modifying the noun "Dan."

A gerund verbal is used as a noun. In "Running is my favorite activity," the present tense verb is "is," and the word "running" is acting as a gerund. Although "running" is most often an action word used as a verb, in this case, "running" is a thing, so it is a noun.

It may be helpful to develop a series of sentences that omit a verbal. Help the student select the correct verbal, and identify it as an infinitive, participle or gerund.

Verbs

A verb expresses action that may or may not be visible. In "Samantha pushed the bike," "pushed" is a visible action verb. "Pushing" is something that can be observed. In "Samantha needed a new bike," "needed" is the verb, but it expresses an invisible action.

Verb tense demonstrates the time of the action indicated in a sentence. Verb tense relays that an action has happened (past tense), is happening (present tense), or will happen (future tense). For example, "run" is present tense. Past tense is "ran," and future tense is "will run."

The verb tense in a given sentence must correspond in number to the subject of the sentence. In the sentence, "John is tall," "John" is a singular noun and "is" is the singular verb. However, in "They are tall," "They" is the plural noun, so a plural verb must be used. In this sentence, the plural verb is "are."

It may be useful to develop a series of sentences with the verb omitted. Help the student correctly insert the appropriate verb tense into the sentence. For example:

Verb: to do

Sentence: I ____ that yesterday.

With Correct Verb Tense: I did that yesterday.

Or, rewrite sentences from the student's textbooks and storybooks with the verb from each sentence omitted. Remind the student that key words like "yesterday" dictate tense (see above) and the subject number (singular or plural) dictates verb number. For instance:

Verb: to be

Sentence 1: I ____ at the zoo yesterday.

Subject: "I" (singular)

Verb: was

Verb: to be

Sentence 2: They ____ at the zoo yesterday.

Subject: "They" (plural)

Verb: were

Verbs (Irregular)

A verb is a word that tells about action, or that tells what someone or something is.

There are three principal verb parts: the present tense, the past tense, and the past participle.

For all regular verbs, the past and past participle tenses are made by adding -d or -ed to their present form. For example, walk becomes walked.

Verbs that do not use the -d or -ed ending are called irregular verbs. For example, run becomes ran.

It may be useful to develop a series of sentences with the verb omitted. Help the student correctly insert the appropriate verb tense into the sentence. For example:

Verb: to walk

Sentence: I _____ home yesterday.

Correct form: walked.

For irregular verbs, rewrite or read sentences from the student's textbooks and storybooks with the irregular verb from each sentence omitted. For example:

Verb: to bring

Sentence 1: I _____ a lunch to the zoo yesterday.

Correct form: brought

Verb: to know

Sentence 2: They _____ about Grandpa's surprise party.

Correct form: knew

Verbs (Main)

A verb expresses action which may or may not be visible. In "Samantha pushed the bike," "pushed" is a

visible action verb. "Pushing" is something that can be observed. In "Samantha needed a new bike," "needed" is the verb, but it expresses an invisible action.

Verbs describe something that is happening, that has happened, or that will happen. A verb may consist of one word or a combination of words. Sometimes a main verb is combined with helping verbs to create a verb phrase. For example, in "We are driving to town," the word "are" is the helping verb and "driving" is the main verb. Together they make up the verb phrase.

It may be useful to explain verbs to the student. Develop a series of sentences and help him or her correctly identify the main and helping verbs. The following is an example:

Sentence: I should have brought a sweater.

In this sentence, "should have" are words which make up the helping verb and "brought" is the main verb.

Word Referents - Noun/Pronoun - A

Word referents are words, often pronouns, that refer to a specific noun. For example, "Tom owns a set of golf clubs. He got them as a gift." The word "them" in the second sentence is the word referent for "golf clubs."

Help make the student aware of word referents and their usage by noting them in the student's speech and reading materials. Also, develop exercises with sentences that omit word referents and help the student to complete the sentences. For example:

Word Referent Omitted: Georgia won two tickets. _____ are for a play.

Word Referent Included: Georgia won two tickets. They are for a play.

Word Referents - Noun/Pronoun - B

Word referents are words, often pronouns, that refer to a specific noun. For example, "Tom owns a set of golf clubs. He got them as a gift." The word "them" in the second sentence is a word referent for "golf clubs."

Help make the student aware of word referents and their usage by noting them in the student's speech and reading materials. Also, develop exercises with sentences that omit word referents and help the student to complete the sentences. For example:

Word Referent Omitted: Tom won two tickets. _____ are for a play.

Word Referent Included: Tom won two tickets. They are for a play.