

## A SENTENCE A DAY OVERVIEW

### A Sentence A Day

#### Introduction:

The need for explicit specific teaching of sentence structure is essential for students to be able to develop an understanding of written language. A sentence a day provides students with a scaffold to develop and improve their own writing skills by moving through modelled, guided and independent writing activities. These short daily activities allow teachers to provide feedback and to support student learning.

Many teachers have encountered students' writing where sentences fail to make sense often due to lack of correct structure or where sentences tend to run on.

Just as we need to explicitly and specifically teach the purpose, structure and language features of various text types (e.g. recounts, narratives, information reports, procedures, expositions), so we must also teach the purpose, structure and language features of simple, compound and complex statements as well as questions and exclamations.

In fact, there is little point in teaching a child how to write a discussion, an explanation or even a recount if they cannot consistently construct sentences with correct structure which make sense.

#### Links with the English K-6 Syllabus

It is important to remember that we are reporting on student achievement of outcomes, not on text types. So it is essential that recording of student achievement is done throughout the teaching and learning cycle.

The English K-6 Syllabus .14 - Learning About Writing Outcomes and Indicators have a focus on language structures and features. By using the sentence a day strategy teachers have an opportunity to track and monitor student achievement of these outcomes by recording student responses to questions about their writing.

For example - WES1:14

#### Text structure

- Identifies a word, letter, space
- Identifies a sentence

#### Grammar

- Talks about the words that indicate who or what in a text
- Talks about the action words in a text
- Talks about words that tell when, where and how actions take place

#### Conventions

- Identifies beginning, capital letter, full stop, question mark and exclamation mark

These indicators can be modelled through the sentence a day strategy and student achievement can be recorded by asking questions about the students writing.

"Run your finger over a word in your writing"

"Point to the beginning of your sentence"

"Tell me which word is the action word in your sentence"

### The object of the sentence a day strategy

The object of the sentence a day strategy is to improve the standard of composition and writing through regular practice at forming a sentence correctly. The emphasis is at all times on individual work. However, teacher modelling and joint construction is equally important, especially in the early years and with students who experience difficulty constructing sentences.

The most effective way a child can learn to write English is by constant practice in the writing of English with appropriate teaching, feedback and follow up.

### The importance of teaching grammar

There is little point in teaching grammar in isolation from talking, listening, reading and writing. However, teaching a child grammar provides a foundation for expression in talking and writing and for understanding communications which they receive by listening or reading. Grammar also provides the child with a special language which they can use to explore their own use of language and to ultimately improve their use of it.

In teaching the writing of sentences it is essential that students are taught correct word order.

English is a Subject-Verb-Object (where necessary) (SVO) language

To find the subject ask "Who?" or "What?" before the verb

For example: The boy jumped over the fence (The object is unnecessary but is stated)  
                  S      V          O

The boy jumped (The object is unnecessary and is not stated)  
          S      V

The boy is happy (The object is necessary to meaning)  
          S      V      O

### General teaching points for a sentence a day

In order to write correctly and fluently students must be sure of what is required to make a good sentence out of the idea they are trying to express. Students must know the requirements of good sentence structure and must realise the importance of the fact that the sentence must make sense to those who read it.

Constant checking is required on sentence beginnings and endings before correct forms become habit. Continual practice of compound sentences will do much to eliminate the common error of incomplete sentences occurring at this stage. Reading a sentence orally to others will help in determining whether the sentence is sensible or not. This oral reading should be done by the student themselves.

When dealing with a new type of sentence make sure the students know what is required of them by providing a scaffold or pattern of the sentence type. Do not go onto the new type of sentence until the majority have mastered the technique. More able writers can find interest in using new vocabulary to enhance their sentences.

Scope and sequence of sentence types

Generally speaking, the sequence for teaching and practising sentences is set out in the table below. It is important to ensure mastery of simple sentences before embarking on compound sentences and so on. Simple questions and exclamations can be taught concurrently with simple sentences.

Statements	Questions	Exclamations
<p>Statements – give information</p> <p>Simple sentences</p> <p>*contain one verb group</p> <p>My dog has fleas.</p> <p>The exhausted boy with the filthy, torn clothes climbed with the greatest care from the raging torrent onto the huge boulders beside the waterfall.</p>	<p>Questions – ask for an answer</p> <p>Simple questions</p> <p>Did you make a cake?</p>	<p>Exclamations – are used for emphasis. They allow expression of feeling.</p> <p>What a beautiful day!</p>
<p>Compound sentences</p> <p>*contain two messages (two verb groups) joined by a <u>conjunction</u></p> <p>*are counted as simple sentences in the BST writing assessment</p> <p>I did my homework <u>and</u> watched television.</p> <p><u>When</u> she was paid Mum bought me a new coat.</p> <p>I like spaghetti <u>but</u> my sister hates it.</p>	<p>Question tags</p> <p>You did your homework, didn't you?</p>	<p>Commands – tell us to do something.</p> <p>Come here now!</p> <p><u>Note commands often have an unstated but implied subject</u></p> <p><u>You</u> come here now!</p>
<p>Complex sentences</p> <p>*consist of an <u>independent clause</u> and a dependent clause</p> <p>While the train was pulling out <u>a young boy jumped aboard.</u></p> <p>The dependent clause does not make sense on its own.</p>		

Early Stage One

Suggested sentence starters.

1. I am .....(individuals' names)
2. I am ..... a boy .....a girl
3. I can.....
4. I can see a .....
5. I like.....
6. Mum can.....
7. Dad can.....
8. Look at the.....
9. Look at my.....
10. Here is a .....
11. Here is the.....
12. I can go to.....
13. It is.....
14. This is.....
15. A.....can.....
16. He can.....
17. She can.....
18. I went.....
19. I'm.....
20. My.....
21. I saw.....
22. I go to.....
23. A dog can.....
24. There is.....

Have sentence starters and high frequency words on cards for students that require support with their writing.

Construction

- Modelling of sentences. Include the use of sentences from authentic texts that demonstrate the sentence structure being taught.

e.g. There's a Sea in My Bedroom by Margaret Wild – descriptive language.

'But he liked collecting shells. He had fan-shaped ones, some that looked like trumpets and some that looked like curved animals' teeth. They were yellow and grey and pink and purple.'

- Joint construction of sentences. Write words on cards so that a range of sentence structures can be demonstrated.

I	am	catching	tadpoles	.
---	----	----------	----------	---

(present tense)

I	caught	tadpoles	.
---	--------	----------	---

(past tense)

Adjectives: Use adjectives to make sentences more interesting (e.g. big, grey elephant)

This is my bag.

This is my green, school bag.

Recounts: Use scaffolds and joint construction to ensure inclusion of

When ( Past tense)

Today; Yesterday; On the weekend; Last Thursday etc.

We went to the library.

Yesterday we went to the library.

Who (including modelling of correct pronoun reference)

I; We; My family; My brother; Mum and Dad; My friend etc.

I went to Bella's party. She is my friend.

What (action word)

played; climbed; went shopping; ran; watched TV; played soccer

Last week we played duck-duck-goose.

Where (provides orientation information)

at school; at home; at the shops; in the park etc.

Last night we went to a restaurant. After eating dinner we went home.

Display previously constructed sentences for students to use as a model and for reading practice.  
For emergent writers begin by having them trace over dotted or outline of words in the sentence.

This is my house

Provide a match to sample for them to glue words to.

This	is	my	house	.
------	----	----	-------	---

Next provide sentence on a strip of paper for them to copy from.

This is my house.
-------------------

Then remove some known words from the strip for them to write independently.

This is \_\_\_\_\_ house.

my

## Stage One

These examples are suggestions. They are not exhaustive. Teachers are likely to be doing many or all of these activities already. They are meant as a guide to assist sentence work and as ideas for sentence starters.

Remember to ensure sentence starters are relevant to student experiences and cover topics that meet the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Start with very clear examples that demonstrate the concept. Discuss each example then introduce non-examples

Concept – noun	This is my favourite book.
Definition – a noun is a word that names.	Highlight nouns on an enlarged text.
Make a list of examples.	boy, girl, tree, pencil, chair
Provide non-examples.	is, then, big – This is my favourite big.

1. Write a sentence like mine.

(Simple statement with a capital and a full stop.)

Specifically teach the Subject-Verb-Object pattern.

My /sister/ plays/ with a /ball/. (S/V/O)

/Sema/ laughed/ at the /clown/. (S/V/O)

2. A statement tells you a complete message. Write a statement about yourself.

I am good at running.

I can count to 20.

\*Write a statement about a game you like playing.

\*Write a statement about your favourite food.

\*Write a statement about your classroom.

\*Write a statement about your favourite place.

3. Complete the sentence by adding an object and a verb to the subject.

\*The old lady

\*The funny clown

\*The small kitten

\*The big goldfish

\*The red car

\*A jet plane

4. Statement sentences begin with a capital letter and end with a full stop. Make the sentences correct by adding a capital and a full stop in the correct places.

\* my sister has a shirt like mine

\* we ate dinner at the table

\* we went to the movies last week

\* the classroom door was locked

## Process

- Modelling of sentence structure

Include the use of sentences from authentic texts that demonstrate the sentence structure being taught.

- Joint construction of sentences

Write words on cards so that additional examples that demonstrate how modifications can be made to sentences. These additional examples will provide more able students with an opportunity to develop their skills further while less able students select only one example to model their writing on.

(when) Yesterday after school	(what) we played soccer	(where) at the park.
(what) The girl played soccer	(when) on the weekend	(where) at the park.
(where) At the park	(when) on Saturday	(what) we played soccer.

- Individual construction of sentences

Teachers should use this time to correct student errors by referring them back to the original scaffold or model. Correction at this point is more likely to have an impact on student progress than an error that has been marked at a later date.

5. Make these sentences sensible. (Putting the words in the correct order)

Teach the students to look for the verb first then look for a likely subject for the verb and finally add the object. Model the process for the students then involve the class or group in jointly reconstructing the sentence before expecting them to independently reconstruct jumbled sentences.

Begin with three word sentences and progress to four word and longer sentences.

Students who have difficulty with expressive language and visual perception would benefit from having the sentence on cardboard, one word per card so they can physically manipulate the word order.

- monsters. I like
- funny. You are
- melts. cream Ice
- drink My cold. Is
- pizza? like Do you
- television. watched We the
- came us. visit to Uncle Joseph
- mum and me Dad bike. gave a

6. A question is a sentence that asks you something. Write a question like this:

- Can you jump high?
- Do you have a red pencil?
- How does a plane fly?
- Is she your friend?
- What is your favourite colour?
- Which book will you read?

7. Writing questions: Often picture prompts can be useful to support the writing of questions. Clip art or picture books can be used to provide a stimulus for question writing. Ask students to write a question to get more information about the picture.



Where does the tiger live? What does the tiger eat? What is the tiger looking at? Who is the tiger stalking?

Write a question about:

- the teacher in the next room
- your brother/sister/friend
- the dog in the park
- the weather

- your friend's pet or toy
- your dinner
- your pencil case
- a television show
- the school canteen
- an ice cream

8. A statement is a sentence that tells you a complete message. Write a statement about:

- your mother or father
- your pencil case
- your bag
- your bedroom
- your lunch
- your favourite place

9. Write a sentence using one of these beginnings:

- The little puppy
- Yesterday
- The fire engine
- That big dog
- The laughing boy
- My friend Rachel
- The red car
- The cricket player
- The fisherman
- Our best holiday was

10. Write a question beginning with:

- Who
- Where
- How
- What
- When
- Why

11. Nouns are words which name people, places, things, animals, times etc. Common nouns are the names we give to types of things. For example; your mother's name might be Debbie. Common nouns for your mother might include lady, woman, mother, and mum.

Write a sentence using these common nouns:

- girls, ball, playground
- boy, bike, hill
- mother, children, movies
- lady, car, flat tyre
- man, boat, river
- teacher, children, library

12. Nouns used to name a place, a person or the title of something are known as proper nouns. Proper nouns start with a capital letter.

Write a sentence using these proper nouns:

- Julia, Sue-Min, Penrith
- Mazda, Sydney, Toyota
- Uncle Zoran, Auntie Nadia, Christmas Day
- Mum, Elias, Dr Smith
- Penrith Plaza, Thursday, Jamie
- January, Dream World, Alisha

13. Write a question using these common nouns:

- bananas, mango, pears
- pencils, scissors, glue
- swings, seesaw, climbing frame
- dogs, cats, goldfish
- lounge, television, coffee table
- oven, mixer, spoon

14. Write a question using these proper nouns:

- Friday, Saturday
- New South Wales, Sydney
- Maths, Spelling
- Olympic Games, Beijing



15. Write a sentence containing:

- a common noun
- a common noun at the end
- a common noun which names a time
- two common nouns
- a common noun which names a place
- a common noun which names an animal

16. Verbs are words that tell us what is happening or what is. Different types of verbs include:

Action verbs – They danced all night.

Thinking verbs – She forgot his name.

Feeling verbs – Sarah likes fruit salad.

Saying verbs – He whispered softly.

Relating verbs – Whales are mammals.

Write a sentence using these verbs:

- ran
- fell
- love
- sang
- ate
- give

17. A verb is sometimes made up of more than one word. These are called a verb group.

For example – The dog was running after the postman.

Write a sentence using the following verb groups:

- was taking
- will be driving
- was tasting
- was giving
- is shining
- is writing

18. Authors often use adjectives(words used to describe nouns)to make their writing more interesting and to give more information to the reader.

For example: The old man sat under the big tree.

Use adjectives to describe the underlined nouns in these sentences to make them more interesting.

- The boy ran across the playground.
- A car was parked outside the house.
- The boy rode his bike along the path.
- The bird built a nest.
- The girl played with her friend.
- The cow ate the grass.
- The shopkeeper sold fruit.
- He swept the floor with a broom.

19. A compound sentence is made when two simple sentences have been joined by a conjunction.

For example: The children played in the garden. The adults sat inside.

The children played in the garden and the adults sat outside.

Join these sentences using 'and':

- I swept the floor. I dusted the shelves.
- I played soccer. I scored a goal.
- Sema packed her bag. She put on her scarf.
- Sam washed his dog. He took her for a walk.
- We went for a drive in the car. We had a picnic.
- I coloured in. My friend played with the boys.

20. Supplementary sentence starters:

- My favourite television show is..... I like it because.....
- The kindest person I know is.....I think they are kind because....
- The funniest thing I ever saw was.....
- My favourite food is.....I like it because.....
- My favourite animal is.....because.....
- My favourite sport is.....
- I am very frightened when.....
- I wish someone would help me to.....
- The most fun I have ever had was when.....
- My favourite colour is....because.....
- One day I would really like to.....
- I am proud of myself when....because.....
- The best thing about school is.....
- My favourite part of the day is.....because.....
- One thing I'm really good at is.....

Simple and compound sentences should be highlighted through the use of authentic texts. Many picture books provide appropriate examples of simple and compound sentences. Students should master simple sentences before moving onto compound sentences.

Always provide a scaffold or model for sentence types. Have them written on strips of card around the room and provide students with the opportunity to sort the sentences into simple and compound sentences. This provides an opportunity for students to talk about why sentences are simple or compound.

## Stage Two

These examples are suggestions. They are not exhaustive. Teachers are likely to be doing many or all of these activities already. They are meant as a guide to assist sentence work and as ideas for sentence starters.

Remember to ensure sentence starters are relevant to student experiences and cover topics that meet the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students.

1. Write a sentence like mine.

(Simple statement with a capital and a full stop.)

Specifically teach the Subject-Verb-Object pattern. Do not progress until the students have mastered the writing of simple S/V/O sentences.

My /dog/ runs/ in the /park/. (S/V/O)

My /dad/ drives/ a /van/.

His /friends/ play/ soccer/.

2. A statement tells you a complete message. Write a statement about yourself.

I like playing soccer on Saturdays.

I am good at Maths.

\*Write a statement about a game you like playing.

\*Write a statement about your favourite food.

\*Write a statement about your classroom.

\*Write a statement about your favourite place.

3. Complete the sentence by adding an object and a verb to the subject.

\*The sad girl

\*The happy boy

\*The big black dog

\*The grumpy old man

\*The tiny blue bird

\*A fast train

4. Statement sentences begin with a capital letter and end with a full stop. Make the sentences correct by adding a capital and a full stop in the correct places.

\* dad and mum bought me a new bike

\* we went to the park last Saturday

\* the house was empty and spooky

\* the playground was full of children

## Process

- Modelling of sentence structure

Include the use of sentences from authentic texts that demonstrate the sentence structure being taught.

- Joint construction of sentences

Write words on cards so that additional examples that demonstrate how modifications can be made to sentences. These additional examples will provide more able students with an opportunity to develop their skills further while less able student select only one example to model their writing on.

(when) Yesterday after school	(what) we played soccer	(where) at the park.
(what) The girl played soccer	(when) on the weekend	(where) at the park.
(where) At the park	(when) on Saturday	(what) we played soccer.

- Individual construction of sentences

Teachers should use this time to correct student errors by referring them back to the original scaffold or model. Correction at this point is more likely to have an impact on student progress than an error that has been marked at a later date.

5. Make these sentences sensible. (Putting the words in the correct order)

Teach the students to look for the verb first then look for a likely subject for the verb and finally add the object. Model the process for the students then involve the class or group in jointly reconstructing the sentence before expecting them to independently reconstruct jumbled sentences.

Students who have difficulty with expressive language and visual perception would benefit from having the sentence on cardboard, one word per card so they can physically manipulate the word order.

- ball wool. played with The kitten the of
- searched for lost toy. through the We house the
- hot a day melts. cream ice An on
- chocolate My hot. Is yummy
- went Saturday. the park to We last
- cartoons television. watched We the on
- came us. visit to Uncle Joseph
- new mum and me Dad bike. bought a

6. A question is a sentence that asks you something. Write a question like this:

- Can you write neatly?
- Do you know your phone number?
- How does a vacuum cleaner work?
- Is he your friend?
- What is your favourite colour?
- Which movie will you watch?

7. Writing questions: Often picture prompts can be useful to support the writing of questions. Clip art or picture books can be used to provide a stimulus for question writing. Ask students to write a question to get more information about the picture.



Where is this house? What is the house made of? When was the house built? Who lives in the house?

Write a question about:

- your next door neighbour
- your cousin/grandmother/grandfather
- your pet
- your friends lunch box
- your pencil case
- a car in the car park
- the weather
- a movie star
- a chart on the classroom wall
- a book in your room

8. A statement is a sentence that tells you a complete message. Write a statement about:

- your mother or father
- your pet
- your pencil case
- your sister or brother
- your dinner
- your favourite place

9. Write a question about:

- that old man
- the car parked outside
- a train
- the dog in the street
- the children on the swing
- a bus

10. Write a sentence about an outing you have enjoyed.

11. Write a sentence using one of these beginnings:

- The cheeky little kitten
- My friend Talia
- Our wattle trees
- That savage dog
- The speeding car
- The little old lady
- The news reader
- The fisherman
- The fire engine
- The laughing boy

12. Write a question beginning with:

- Who
- Where
- How
- What
- When
- Why

13. Nouns are words which name people, places, things, animals, times etc. Common nouns are the names we give to types of things. For example; your mother's name might be Debbie. Common nouns for your mother might include lady, woman, mother, and mum.

14. Write a sentence using these common nouns:

- girls bikes road
- boy rope hill
- father children shops
- dog ball park
- man boat lake
- spade plant garden

15. Write a sentence using these proper nouns:

- Canberra Australia
- Penrith Plaza Thursday
- Uncle Johan Aunty Stena Christmas Day
- Riley Zac America

16. Write a question using these common nouns:

- strawberries apples pears
- textas books paper
- swings slippery dip seesaw
- pigs chickens cows
- lounge pillow television
- computer mouse printer

17. Write a question using these proper nouns:

- Friday Saturday Sunday
- Llandilo Public School
- Mrs Brooks Maths
- New South Wales Queensland
- Centennial Park Sydney
- Jenny Sarah Woolworths

18. Write a sentence containing:

- a common noun
- a common noun at the end
- a common noun which names a time
- two common nouns
- a common noun which names a place
- a common noun which names an animal

19. By changing the word order in a question, it can be made into a sentence.

For example: Did you catch the ball?                      You did catch the ball.

Change these questions into sentences:

- Do you like ice cream?
- Is she two years old?
- Is it blue with white stripes?
- Can you play chess?
- Is he fishing?
- Am I helping cook dinner?

20. Verbs are words that tell what is happening. Phillip was happy.

For example: The dog barked at the postman.

Write a statement using the following verbs:

- built
- strolled
- slept
- watched
- played
- noticed
- laughed
- wrote
- listened
- ate

21. A verb is sometimes made up of more than one word. These are called a verb group.

For example: The dog was running after the postman.                      Phillip will be happy.

22. Nouns and verbs must agree for a sentence to make sense.

For example: I am going shopping. (This makes sense.)

I are going shopping. (This doesn't make sense.)

Write these sentences out correcting them so they make sense.

- We is going to visit our friends.
- They was running in the race.
- After the barbeque last night Mum washes the dishes.

23. Authors often use adjectives(words used to describe nouns)to make their writing more interesting and to give more information to the reader.

For example: The young man sat under the apple tree.

Use adjectives to describe the underlined nouns in these sentences to make them more interesting.

- The boy ran across the road.
- A puppy rolled across the grass.
- A house stood at the corner of two streets.
- The car drove along the road.
- The girl played with her kitten.
- Children played in the water.
- The book contained many pictures.
- The lady put on her coat.

25. Authors often use adverbs (words used to describe verbs, adjectives or other adverbs) to make their writing more interesting and to give the reader more information. Use adverbs to describe the underlined verb in these sentences so that they are more interesting.

- The dog ran across the road. (Tell how it ran)
- The girl played with her kitten. (Tell how she played)
- A puppy ran across the grass. (Tell how it ran)
- Children splashed in the water. (Tell how they splashed)
- The sun rose in the sky. (Tell how it rose)
- The boy read the question. (Tell how he read)
- The car drove along the road. (Tell how it drove)
- The lady walked to the shop. (Tell how she walked)
- The spider spun a web. (Tell how it spun its web)
- The boy played his Nintendo. (Tell how he played his Nintendo)

26. Sometimes to make their writing more interesting an author will add an adverbial phrase (usually a 'where phrase' or a 'when phrase') to give the reader extra information.

For example: Stacey played skipping with Tessa in the park.

Write a sentence ending with:

- at the picnic
- during the storm
- near the school
- under the desk
- above the clouds
- after school
- across the street
- next to the bed
- beneath the deep sea
- inside the cave

27. Sometimes to make their writing more interesting an author will begin a sentence with an adverbial phrase (usually a 'where phrase' or a 'what phrase').

For example: In her room Jana hid her money in a drawer.

Write a sentence beginning with:

- Before the game
- In the early morning
- At midday
- For the rest of the movie
- After the eggs hatched
- During the holidays
- At sunset
- During the concert
- From the beginning of the story
- On television in the afternoon

28. Use an adjective to describe the noun when you write a sentence about:

- A possum and start with At dawn...
- A sports person and start with As the ball bounced....
- A dog and start with When he heard the whistle....
- A mother and start with While she was working...
- A teacher and start with As the bell rang....
- A shopper and start with With ten dollars in his hand...
- A boat and start with Far out at sea.....

29. A compound sentence is made when two simple sentences have been joined by a conjunction.

For example: The kids swam in the ocean. The adults sat on the beach.

The kids swam in the ocean and the adults sat on the beach.

Join these sentences using 'and'.

- He sat behind his dog. He gently stroked its fur.
- Sam saw her friend. She waved to her.
- Mr and Mrs Harris went to New Zealand. They had a good time.
- She sat in the corner by herself. She played quietly.
- Alison hit the ball hard. She made a home run.

30. Compound sentences can also be made by joining two simple sentences with the word 'but'.

For example: The boys wanted to play outside. It was raining.

The boys wanted to play outside but it was raining.

Join these sentences using 'but'.

- Gerry would like to go with you. She has to go to the dentist.
- Anthony fell off his bike. He was not seriously hurt.
- Jena thought the roller coaster was exciting. Ann was afraid.
- Lucas searched everywhere for his watch. He could not find it.
- Angelina went to the shops. She could not find what she wanted.

31. Write two simple sentences. Join them using 'and' or 'but' to make one compound sentence.

32. Compound sentences can also be made by joining two simple sentences with the word 'because'.

For example: The boy hurt himself. He was running on the concrete.

The boy hurt himself because he was running on the concrete.

Complete these sentences:

- Mum was happy because
- Calvin was given a prize because
- We started to run because
- We quickly helped Dad get the washing in because

Join these sentences using because:

- Rani plays the piano well. He practises every day.
- Ally is not at school today. She is sick.
- My brother is excited. It is his birthday.
- The children came inside to play. It is very windy outside.

33. Compound sentences can also be made by joining two simple sentences with the word 'while'.

For example: The children wiped up. Dad washed the dishes.

The children wiped up while Dad washed the dishes.

Complete these sentences:

- Peter mowed the lawn while
- We minded our friends' dogs while
- Taylor waited while
- We sheltered near the shops while

Join these sentences using 'while'.

- My cousin stayed with us. Her parents were away.



- We must wait here. Dad is buying the bait.
- Bella was very helpful. Her mother was in hospital.
- Scott found some interesting shells. He was playing on the beach.
- Kamil scored a goal. He was playing soccer.

Conjunctions and connectives join words, phrases or clauses. Different types of conjunctions are used to express different types of relationships between ideas in a sentence.

Some examples are:

<u>when</u>	<u>where</u>	<u>how</u>	<u>why</u>	<u>adding</u>	<u>comparing</u>
after	where	by	although	also	however
finally	wherever	as if	so that	including	except for

34. Exclamations are sentences which express strong feeling. They end in an exclamation mark (!)

For example: What a beautiful day! How lovely your work is!

Write an exclamation about:

- a fantastic drawing
- Ben yelling angrily
- an exciting football match
- Yun-sin playing well
- the slippery rocks
- a delicious meal

Start with:

- What a
- How
- What an
- How
- How
- What a

35. Exclamations can also be sentences which give a command. Commands often have unstated but implied subject.

For example: Stop that! (You stop that!) Come here now! (You come here now!)

We use commands to get things done, to obtain goods or services, and so on:

For example: Pass the salt, please. Tell me his name! Answer the phone.

Write a command that might be given:

• to stop children from going into deep water	• to have soldiers march forward
• to warn visitors at a hospital to be quiet	• to warn people about dangerous animals

Or we can make a statement which implies a request.

For example: You might like to hold that for me. The phone's ringing.

Supplementary sentence starters:

- The best I've ever done in sport is...
- The nicest thing I ever did for anyone was....
- The best story I ever read was.....I like it so much because...
- The things I hate doing the most in the world is.....because....
- When I am angry I.....
- What I am most interested in doing in all the world is.....
- The cleverest thing I ever did was.....
- If I won a million dollars I would.....

- The worst dream I ever had was.....
- Sometimes I feel shy when....
- A peaceful place I like to go is....because....
- If I could buy one person a gift I'd but a.....because...
- If I could change one thing in the world I'd change.....
- The worst pain I ever felt was when....
- The best meal I ever had was...
- Friends are important to me because.....
- One thing I'd like to know is....
- Someone I'd really like to meet is.....because....
- Something I learnt recently is....
- Sometimes I feel really frustrated when....
- My favourite singer is....because....
- The hardest thing I ever had to do was.....

### Stage Three

These examples are suggestions. They are not exhaustive. Teachers are likely to be doing many or all of these activities already. They are meant as a guide to assist sentence work and as ideas for sentence starters.

Remember to ensure sentence starters are relevant to student experiences and cover topics that meet the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students.

#### 1. Simple sentences

Specifically teach the Subject-Verb-Object pattern. Do not progress until the students have mastered the writing of simple S/V/O sentences.

Write a simple sentence. (Simple statement with a capital and a full stop.)

• about yourself	• about a cat
• about a storm	• about a shopper
• about a soccer player	• about a dancer
• about a party	• about a race
• about your favourite hobby	• about a lost girl

#### 2. Write a simple question about:

• your school	• your sister's/brother's party
• your teacher's desk	• your friend's pen

#### 3. Write a simple sentence which is a command:

For example: Stop that!                      Come here now!

4. A compound sentence is one with two verb groups. Use a conjunction to join two simple sentences into one compound sentence.

For example: The boy hurt himself. He was running on the concrete.

The boy hurt himself because he was running on the concrete.

Use one of these conjunctions:

• and	• although
• but	• as soon as
• while	• whenever

### Process

- Modelling of sentence structure

Include the use of sentences from authentic texts that demonstrate the sentence structure being taught.

- Joint construction of sentences

Write words on cards so that additional examples that demonstrate how modifications can be made to sentences. These additional examples will provide more able students with an opportunity to develop their skills further while less able student select only one example to model their writing on.

(when) Yesterday after school	(what) we played soccer	(where) at the park.
(what) The girl played soccer	(when) on the weekend	(where) at the park.

(where) At the park	(when) on Saturday	(what) we played soccer.
---------------------	--------------------	--------------------------

- Individual construction of sentences

Teachers should use this time to correct student errors by referring them back to the original scaffold or model. Correction at this point is more likely to have an impact on student progress than an error that has been marked at a later date.

5. Write a sentence which has the subject:

- |                    |                  |
|--------------------|------------------|
| • Those dead trees | • A computer     |
| • The unhappy boy  | • The fish       |
| • Amanda           | • The truck      |
| • The frog         | • The desk       |
| • The bird         | • The television |
| • The horse        | • The chair      |

6. Supply an interesting subject (noun group) for these predicates (sentence endings with a verb and object).

• ...flapped its wings angrily.	• .....left early in the morning.
• ....run as fast as the wind.	• .....swam beside the beautiful coral reef.
• ....heard the news yesterday.	• .....swept through the town leaving a disaster behind it.

7. Authors use time and place phrases to add more information and interest to their sentences.

For example: We played.

After dinner we played in the lounge room until bedtime.

Write sentences using these time and place phrases:

• before lunch	• at the park
• during the storm	• in the darkness
• while the show was on	• under the table

Write sentences using time and place phrases of your own.

8. Compound sentences have two messages, each with their own verb or verb group. Conjunctions join simple sentences to form compound sentences. The words 'who' and 'which' are conjunctions. We use 'who' for people and 'which' for things. For example: The boy was running on the concrete. He was hurt badly.

The boy who was running on the concrete was hurt badly.

The girl had to choose a book. The book had to give information about ships.

The girl had to choose a book which gave information about ships.

Use the correct conjunctions to join these sentences.

• The clouds slowly covered the sun. The sun was setting in the west.
• The dog ran to its owner. The owner was calling him.
• Michael wanted to chop down the tree. The tree was dead.
• Juan waved to Stacey. Stacey was coming down the street.
• Ben laughed at the joke. Sam told the joke.

9. Write a sentence:

- |  |
|--|
| • with 'which' joining two ideas   |
| • with 'who' joining two ideas   |
| • beginning with a time or place phrase and using 'who' in the middle to join two ideas about a person.            |
| • beginning and ending with a time or place phrase and with 'which' in the middle joining two ideas about a thing. |

10. Sometimes more than one word is needed to express the nuances of meaning of the verb (e.g. tried to establish, must have been thinking). It is then called a verb group.

Compound sentences have two verb groups.

For example: We travelled to Bathurst to visit my Aunty Jane.

Jemima was running across the playground when she fell over.

Write a compound sentence:

- |  |
|--|
| • containing the verbs <u>sent</u> and <u>travelled</u>    |
| • containing the verbs <u>were running</u> and <u>rang</u> |
| • contain the verbs <u>told</u> and <u>laughed</u>         |

11. Authors often use adverbs (words used to describe verbs, adjectives or other adverbs) in order to make their writing more interesting. Use adverbs to describe the underlined verb in these sentences so that they are more interesting.

• The boy ran in the race.	Tell how he ran.
• The children played with the ball.	Tell how he played.
• A dog barked at the postman.	Tell how it barked.
• Children laughed as they played.	Tell how they laughed.
• The crowd yelled at the soccer team.	Tell how they yelled.
• The boy wrote the sentence.	Tell how he wrote.
• The bus drove along the road.	Tell how it drove.
• The old man walked to the shop.	Tell how he walked.
• The lion crept up on its prey.	Tell how it crept.
• The girl played her drums.	Tell how she played her drums.

12. Add interesting adjectives to these sentences. See if you can add two or even three adjectives.

- |  |
|--|
| • The _____ boy would not help his sister carry the parcels. |
| • The _____ car raced around the track.                      |
| • The gardener admired the _____ flower.                     |
| • The _____ man photographed the _____ tree.                 |

13. Direct or quoted speech is used when an author wants to tell the reader exactly what the character said.

For example: Direct quoted speech: "Come inside now," said Mum.

Indirect reported speech: Mum told the children to go inside.

When writing direct (quoted) speech, the author must place speech (quotation) marks around the words the character actually said.

Write a sentence in which:

- |   |
|---|
| • A teacher gives a command for Tim to put down his pencil.       |
| • Lisa says she likes apples better than bananas.                 |
| • Peter asks Gavin if he would like to come to his place to play. |
| • Jasmine asks her sister if she can come to the movies too.      |
| • Nadia says what a beautiful day it is.                          |

14. Sometimes an author can change the word order in a sentence to increase its interest for the reader. This can be called an inverted sentence.

For example: Normal (S/V/O) word order - An eagle flew overhead.

Inverted word order - Overhead flew an eagle.

Normal (S/V/O) word order - The hikers rested beside the stream.

Inverted word order - Beside the stream the hikers rested.

Invert these sentences:

- |   |
|---|
| • The boy raced away.                                   |
| • The fire engines sped towards the burning building.   |
| • The tide crept higher and higher.                     |
| • Several brumbies were outlined against the sky.       |
| • The big ocean liner moved slowly away from the wharf. |
| • Great waves dashed against the ragged rocks.          |

15. Sometimes authors change the word order in a sentence to make it more interesting. Write sentences beginning with 'When...'

For example: We ran out to play when the bell rang.

Subject Verb Object(including time phrase)

When the bell rang we ran out to play.

Time phase Subject Verb Object

Write sentences beginning with:

- |             |             |
|-------------|-------------|
| • When...   | • After...  |
| • Before... | • Inside... |
| • At...     | • Near....  |
| • Under.... | • During... |

16. Write a sentence:

- |  |
|--|
| • Beginning with the adjective 'Dark' and containing two proper nouns. |
| • Beginning with the adjective 'Three' and using the verb 'leaped'.    |
| • Beginning with the adjective 'Happy' and using the adverb 'loudly'.  |

17. Authors often use adverbs (words to describe verbs, adjectives or other adverbs) in order to make their writing more interesting.

Write a sentence:

• Beginning with the adjective 'Hastily' and having 'the little boy with sticky fingers' as the subject.
• Using the adjective 'carefully' and having 'The team of scientists' as the subject.
• Using two proper nouns and the adverb 'loudly'.
• Beginning with the adverb 'Quickly' and having 'along the busy street' as the object.
• Using the adverb 'sadly' and having 'The lost little girl' as the subject.

18. Write a sentence:

• Beginning with 'As soon as' and using the word meaning the opposite of sweet.
• Beginning with a time or place phrase and having a word in it meaning not deep.
• Beginning with an adverb, having two adjectives and ending with a time or place phrase.
• With the subject 'The gum trees near the river'.

19. Extend these sentences by adding adverbs and adjectives.

• The sun sank behind the hills.	• The dog chewed the bone.
• The mother picked up the child.	• The river flowed through the valley.
• The children played basketball.	• An eagle has a beak.
• The bread is on the table.	• The pens are in the pencil case.
• The guinea pig ran across the floor.	• Ben was in his room.

20. There are three levels of sentences.

1. Simple sentences are those with only one verb or verb group.

For example: The children played happily.

2. Compound sentences are those where two messages (or simple sentences) have been joined together using conjunctions. Compound sentences have two or more verbs or verb groups.

For example: David came home from school and did his homework.

3. Complex sentences have at least one independent clause that stands alone (makes sense by itself) and one or more dependent clauses that do not stand alone (do not make sense on their own). Complex sentences must have at least two separate verbs or verb groups.

For example: The girls played cricket when the lessons were over.

Independent clause	Dependent clause
<u>When the bell rang</u>	<u>we went out to play.</u>
Dependent clause	Independent clause

Write these sentences and underline the independent clause.

• When the rain stopped we hurried home.
• As the movie was not very good we left early.
• While our friends were overseas their house was rented by my cousin.
• We have made many changes to our house since you were here.
• You cannot go to lunch until your work is finished.
• The boy was exhausted after he had swum in the long race.
• Although the man was badly hurt the skilful doctor saved his life.
• As he boarded the train, Jack dropped his ticket.
• After the storm ended, dad raked up the fallen leaves.

- While Dad washed up, I wiped the dishes.

21. Write a complex sentence of your own about:

- Mum weeding the garden while Dad mowed the lawn.
- Mum buying the bread after parking the car.
- James buying his ticket and then catching the train. Begin your sentence with, 'After..'
- The cockatoos screeching loudly as they were flying above the trees. Begin your sentence with, 'As they were walking...'
- The children sheltering in the shop doorway while the rain fell. Begin your sentence with 'While...'

Authors can make simple sentences more interesting by adding adjectives to describe nouns, adverbs to add meaning to verbs, adjectival phrases and adverbial phrases.

For example: The wind howled.

1. Add an adjective: The fierce wind howled.
2. Add an adverb: The fierce wind howled continuously.
3. Add an adjectival phrase: The fierce wind from the south howled continuously.
4. Add an adverbial phrase: The fierce wind from the south howled continuously during the night.

Notice that this enriched sentence is still a simple sentence as it only has one verb or verb group. (e.g. howled)

22. Write each of the simple sentences below and enrich them using the four steps above.

• The dog barked.	• Flowers grew.
• The girl sang.	• The rain fell.
• The moon shone.	• The fish swam.

An adverbial clause is a complete message or thought, containing a verb or a verb group, which provides information which describes the person or thing named. Adverbial clauses can be used to include more information in a sentence and to make it more interesting. An adverbial clause usually begins with a preposition (e.g. when, while, as, before, although, until, after, since, unless, whenever, where).

23. In the sentences below underline the adverbial clauses. First find the verbs so you can ask when, where or how about the verb.

- Animals are often vicious when they have young to protect.
- Amal does well at Maths because he has learnt his tables.
- A horse will not work unless it is properly fed.
- The baby did not cry until he saw his mother.
- While you have the opportunity make the most of it.
- Although the story is an old one it never fails to interest children.

24. Write a sentence using the adverbial clause below. Remember the independent clause you write must contain a verb and make sense on its own.

- ...until he had eaten his vegetables.
- When we received the gifts....
- ...because the hall was not available for us to use.
- Because John was seriously ill...
- ...unless you behave yourself.



25. Write a sentence using the independent clause below. Remember the adverbial clause you write must contain a verb.

• David left school early...	• ...we were very happy.
• The concert was postponed...	• ...no visitors were allowed.
• The food may be spoiled...	• ...we went out for recess.

Complex sentences contain a main thought (independent clause) and a supporting thought (dependent clause). Adverbial clauses are sometimes used as a supporting thought.

26. Join these sentences making one an adverbial clause. Use prepositions (when, while, as, before, although, until, before, after, since, unless, whenever, where) to join the independent clause and the dependent clause.

For example: I hurried home. I had work to do.

I hurried home as I had work to do.

As I had work to do I hurried home.

• Hundreds of people were late for work. A train ran off the lines.
• My friend has gone away. I have missed him very much.
• Tim stayed at school. He went home after finishing his work.
• It was very late. We did not feel tired.
• Melissa did her shopping. I had my hair cut.
• We did not hear he was sick. He was better.

An adjectival clause is a complete message or thought, containing a verb or a verb group, which provides information to describe the person or thing named. An adjectival clause usually begins with a relative pronoun (who, whom, whose, which, that).

Who and that refer to people. Which and that refer to things.

The relative pronoun is placed immediately after the noun to which it refers.

For example: The child who wore the red top came first in the race.

The car which was parked under the tree was damaged in the storm.

The books that I bought yesterday were on sale.

27. Write a sentence using the adjectival clause:

• who was crying	• which was planted by the mayor
• that was rolling on the grass	• who liked ice cream
• whose dog was lost	• to whom the gift was given

28. Write these sentences putting in an adjectival clause in the spaces. Remember that the clause should start with a personal pronoun (who for people what for things) and should contain a verb (was, were, is, are).

• The nurse.....was very kind.
• Have you seen my mobile phone.....
• Will you please sharpen the pencils.....
• The children.....sang beautifully.

Complex sentences contain a main thought (independent thought) and a supporting thought (dependent clause). Adjectival clauses are sometimes used as a supporting thought. Adjectival clauses describe and start with a relative pronoun (who, that, which). Remember that the relative pronoun comes straight after the noun it describes.

29. Join these sentences making one an adjectival clause.

For example: There is the boy. He won the race.

There is the boy who won the race.

• The old lady lives alone in the house. It is over one hundred years old.
• In the garden is a cherry tree. It has beautiful pink flowers.
• My Gameboy came with two free games. They were a bonus.
• Snow-White took a bite from the apple. It was poisoned.

30. In these sentences, you will need to place the dependent clause in the middle of the independent clause.

Remember the relative pronoun must follow immediately after the noun that it refers to.

For example: The laptop computers were in the storeroom. They needed to be in a safe place.

The laptop computers which needed to be in a safe place were in the storeroom.

• Five new pictures were hanging in the library. They had been donated by the parents.
• The boy scored the highest score in Tetras. He was only ten.
• The soldiers boarded the train. They were bound for a northern training camp.

Authors can make simple sentences more interesting by adding adjectival and adverbial clauses. This turns the simple sentence into a complex sentence.

For example: The boy ran away.

1. Add an adverbial clause. The boy ran away because he was afraid.

2. Add an adjectival clause. The boy who broke the window ran away.

3. Now look at the new complex sentence with both clauses.

The boy who broke the window ran away because he was afraid.

31. Write these simple sentences and enrich them using the steps shown above.

• Maria read a book.	• The storm broke.
• The horse jumped the fence.	• The lesson was interrupted.
• Our house was painted.	• The bushfire raged.
• We pitched our tent.	• Robby won the prize.

Authors sometimes describe something for a reader by comparing it to something else. This is called a simile.

When you use a simile you often use the words 'like' or 'as'.

For example: The water was clear. The water was as clear as crystal.

32. Use the similes below in a sentence:

• as light as a feather	• as swift as an arrow
• as strong as a lion	• like a speeding train
• like an angry beast	• like a beautiful delicate doll

33. Supplementary sentence starters:

- Sometimes I wonder.....
- Something I hope never happens is.....because.....
- Something I would like to be better at is.....
- My favourite possession is.....because.....
- I think it's wrong when people.....
- Something I will never forget is.....
- One thing I truly believe is.....

- I think the important things in life are.....
- I feel happiest when.....
- If I could I would like to design a.....
- The person I trust the most is.....
- When I'm older I would like to....
- If I could go on a trip I would like to go to.....because....
- If I had special powers I would like to be able to...because...
- The subject I like most at school is.....because....
- The subject I like least at school is.....because....
- I make a good friend because....
- If I could time travel, I would go.....because...
- I wish I had never.....because....
- I'd like to be famous for.....
- If I could be an animal, I would be a.....
- If I could talk to anyone in the world it would be....and I would ask them....
- The best movie I ever saw was....I thought it was good because....
- What I like doing best on my birthday is.....
- When I want to relax I like to.....
- The nicest flavour of all is.....
- One food I'll never eat is....because....
- The best sound in the world is.....
- I like to laugh because.....
- My favourite season of the year is.....because.....

### Sentence a Day Program Overview

The Sentence a Day program involves students in daily practice of writing individual sentences, focusing on correct sentence structure and sentences that make sense.			
Produces simple texts that show the emergence of the grammar and punctuation needed to achieve the purpose of the text.	Produces texts using the basic grammatical features and punctuation conventions of the text type.	Produces texts clearly, effectively and accurately, using the sentence structure, grammatical features and punctuation conventions of the text type.	Uses knowledge of sentence structure, grammar and punctuation to edit own writing.
Use flash cards of high frequency words and words requested by the students to make sentences	Use flash cards or desk top lists of high frequency words and words requested by the students to make sentences.		
1. I am... individual names	1. Subject-verb-object Simple sentences	1. Subject-verb-object Simple sentences.	1. Subject-verb-object Simple sentences
2. I am .....a boy ...a girl	2. Statements	2. Statements	2. Questions
3. I can .....	3. Add a verb & an object to subject	3. Add a verb & an object to subject	3. Commands
4. I can see a .....	4. Capital letters & full stops.	4. Capital letters & full stops.	4. Compound sentences
5. I like .....	5. Correct word order	5. Correct word order	5. Sentences
6. Mum can....	6. Questions	6. Questions	6. Questions
7. Dad can .....	7. Write a question.	7. Write a question.	7. Subject & predicates
8. Look at the .....	8. Statements	8. Statements	8. Time and place phrases.
9. Look at my .....	9. Questions	9. Questions	9. Compound sentences – who, which
10. Here is a .....	10. Holiday sentence	10. An enjoyable outing	10. Compound sentences & time and place phrases
11. Here is the .....	11. Sentence starters.	11. Sentence starters.	11. Compound sentences – two verb groups
12. I can go to .....	12. Question starters	12. Question starters	12. Adverbs
13. It is .....	13. Common nouns	13. Common nouns	13. Adjectives.
14. This is .....	14. Proper nouns.	14. Proper nouns.	14. Direct & quoted speech
15. It can .....	15. Questions – common nouns	15. Questions – common nouns	15. Inverted sentences.
16. A _____ can _____	16. Questions – proper nouns	16. Questions – proper nouns	16. Change word order.
17. He can .....	17. Common nouns	17. Common nouns	17. Adjectives
18. She can .....	18. Verbs	18. Question into statement	18. Adverbs
19. I went .....	19. Verb groups	19. Verbs	19. Descriptive sentences.
20. I'm .....	20. Adjectives	20. Verb group	20. Descriptive sentences.
21. My .....	21. Compound sentences	21. Noun – verb	21. Dependant &

		agreement	Independent clauses
22. I saw .....	22. Supplementary sentence starters	22. Adjectives	22. Complex sentences
23. I go to .....		23. Adverbs	23. Enriching sentences
24. A dog can .....		24. Adverbial phrases.	24. Adverbial clauses
25. There is .....		25. Adverbial phrases.	25. Complex sentences
26. Using adjectives		26. Adjectives.	26. Adjectival clauses.
27. Recounts.		27. Compound sentences - and	27. Complex sentences.
		28. Compound sentences - but	28. Complex sentences
		29. Compound sentences - and, but,	29. Similes
		30. Compound sentences - because	30. Supplementary sentence starters
		32. Compound sentences - while	
	33. Exclamations		
	34. Exclamations - commands		
	35. Supplementary sentence starters		

Evaluation:

