

Top 10 Tips for Creating Successful Writers

- 1. Schedule Writer's Workshop Daily.** Scheduling Writer's Workshop daily grants valuable, necessary time for students to practice and grow as writers.
- 2. Establish and Commit to Routines.** Life is good when everyone knows what to do and when to do it. Take the time to establish foundational routines that will impact your Writer's Workshop throughout the year. Revisit Managing Writer's Workshop lessons as the need arises.
- 3. Model, Model, Model!** Modeling gives direct instruction while scaffolding for writers. Use these steps to model specific skills and behaviors with students (*I* is the teacher and *you* is the student) (Pearson and Gallagher 1983):
 - I do, you watch
 - I do, you help
 - You do, I help
 - You do, I watch
- 4. Read, Read, Read!** Reading a variety of texts through the eyes of a writer exposes students to the craft of the author and encourages students to explore new avenues of writing.
- 5. Display and Celebrate!** Walking down the hallway in a school setting, you can usually get a good idea of the writing that is going on in each classroom. The more students write, the more comfortable they become, and they will want to show off their work. Celebrate student writing and recognize students as writers.
- 6. Confer Weekly.** This is your opportunity to learn about each student's writing development. Encourage, guide, and listen.
- 7. Share, Share, Share!** Students love to share everything. Sharing during Writer's Workshop enhances their sense of importance as writers.
- 8. Involve and Inform Parents.** Writing is an automatic means of connecting with parents. Wall displays of writing samples show parents how you value their child's writing effort. Hold an Author's Tea and invite parents so they can see first-hand the important writing of their child.
- 9. Be Flexible and Reflect.** A well-planned lesson may fall flat. So, go back to the drawing board and ask yourself, "Why?" "What happened?" How can you reteach to make the right connections for students? Take time to reflect on your teaching and student learning.
- 10. Set High Expectations.** Be specific with your expectations and articulate clearly what you would like the students to accomplish. Believe in your students' abilities and challenge them to succeed. Every student can be an author.

Sentence Fluency

Getting Started

Sentence fluency helps make writing interesting. It is a trait that allows writers to add interest to their writing. By changing the sentence length and where words are placed next to each other in the sentence, writers are able to help guide the reader through their work. Authors with good sentence fluency know the techniques needed to construct sentences that flow and have rhythm. The mini-lessons assist students in exploring parts of sentences, the ways sentences are built, and the ways to expand sentences to develop more interesting ideas. Lessons in this section include the following:

- Lesson 1: Playing with Sentence Patterns (page 103)
- Lesson 2: Double Trouble with Compound Elements (page 107)
- Lesson 3: The Long and Short of It (page 110)
- Lesson 4: Sentence Stretch and Scramble (page 113)
- Lesson 5: SOS! Semicolons Offer Style (page 116)
- Lesson 6: Adding Details (page 119)
- Lesson 7: Let's Make It Clear! (page 122)

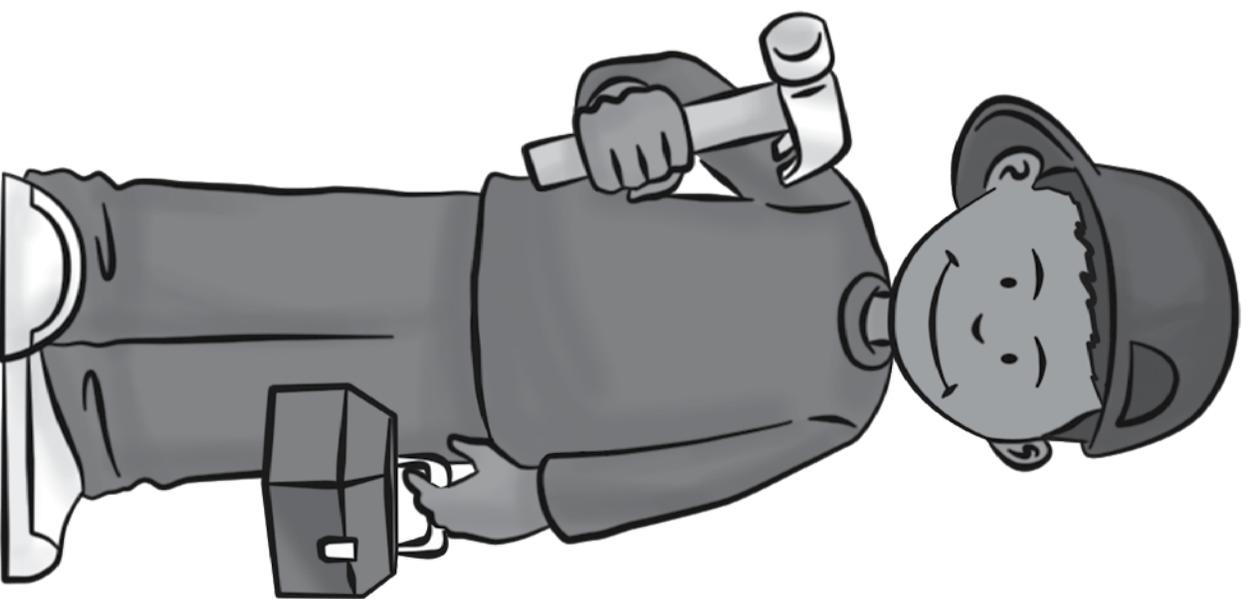
The *Simon, Sentence Builder* poster (page 102) can be displayed in the room to provide a visual reminder for students that sentence fluency is one of the traits of writing. You may wish to introduce this poster during the first lesson on sentence fluency. Then, refer to the poster when teaching other lessons on sentence fluency to refresh students' memories and provide them with questions to help guide them as they create sentences.

Simon

Sentence Builder

What kinds of sentences will I use?

- ✓ Did I use a variety of sentence patterns (simple, compound, complex)?
- ✓ Did I use a variety of sentence beginnings?
- ✓ Did I include a variety of sentence lengths?
- ✓ Are my sentences musical and rhythmic?



Sentence Stretch and Scramble

Standards

- Uses a variety of strategies to draft and revise written work
- Uses a variety of sentence structures to expand and embed ideas

Materials

- Chart paper
- Markers
- *Sentence Stretch and Scramble Notebook Entry* (page 115; [sentencestretch.pdf](#))
- Writer's Notebooks

Mentor Texts

- *Twilight Comes Twice* by Ralph Fletcher
- *Rosa* by Nikki Giovanni
- *The Twits* by Roald Dahl
- *The Bridge to Terabithia* by Katherine Paterson
- See *Mentor Text List* in Appendix C for other suggestions.

Procedures

Note: Playing games with parts of speech engages and encourages students in crafting sentences with variety and style.

Think About Writing

1. Tell students that they have been focusing on developing sentences with varied sentence structure and patterns to add style and tone to their writing. Explain to them that authors use a variety of tools to develop just the right sentence length, structure, and type in order to engage their readers. Recognizing parts of speech is another tool for developing strong sentences.
2. Review mentor texts, if desired, and discuss the parts of speech that enhance writing.

Teach

3. Tell students, "Today we will review using parts of speech to stretch interesting, meaningful sentences. This means that we will take our ideas and stretch them into a sentence with different parts of speech. Then, we will scramble those sentences to create variety in our writing."
4. Review the five main parts of speech: noun, verb, adverb, adjective, and prepositional phrase. Model how to include the different parts of speech to create sentences. Use a sheet of chart paper to write each part of speech, as well as an example. Then, put the five parts of speech together to stretch, or create, a complete sentence.
5. Next, demonstrate how to scramble parts of speech within a sentence to show sentence variations. Perhaps the prepositional phrase will come first or the adjective will modify the noun. Show students that scrambling a sentence can result in several different statements that mean the same thing.

Sentence Stretch and Scramble *(cont.)*

Engage

6. Display the *Sentence Stretch and Scramble Notebook Entry* (page 115). Tell students that they will work in quads to use parts of speech to stretch a sentence and then scramble the sentence to create variety using Steps 1–7 from the notebook entry. Explain that students must be ready to share their sentences.
7. Provide quads with words that are connected to current curriculum topics to use for the activity. Allow time for collaboration and have students return to the meeting area to share their sentences.

Apply

8. Provide students with the *Sentence Stretch and Scramble Notebook Entry* and have them practice stretching and scrambling words in a sentence independently. Encourage students to use parts of speech and sentence variety to make their writing more interesting.
9. Have students work on the *Your Turn* section and then turn to their own writing folders and select writing samples that need sentence improvement.

Write/Conference

10. Observe and support students needing additional help. Encourage more advanced students to develop more complex sentence structure. Note observations in your *Conferring Notebook*.

Spotlight Strategy

11. Select one or two students who clearly stretch and scramble sentences in their notebooks. Spotlight their efforts and encourage others to do the same.

Share

12. Have students work in pairs to share their best sentences. Have students rotate to new partners until you give a signal. Allow approximately three minutes for students to share.

Homework

Ask students to share how to stretch and scramble sentences with family members. Have students challenge family members to write the longest, funniest, silliest, or most descriptive sentences.

Sentence Stretch and Scramble Notebook Entry

Sentence Stretch and Scramble

Authors use a variety of tools to develop just the right sentence length, structure, and type in order to engage their readers. Recognizing and using **parts of speech** is another way to add to sentence variety.

Try these easy steps to stretch a sentence.

Step 1: Who or what is your sentence about? (noun) **the baby**

Step 2: What does it do? (verb) **cries**

Step 3: How or when? (adverb) **loudly**

Step 4: Describe it. (adjective) **The crabby baby**

Step 5: Tell where or when. (prepositional phrase) **when she is hungry**

Step 6: Create your complete sentence.

The crabby baby cries loudly when she is hungry.

Step 7: Scramble your sentence to show possible variations.

When she is hungry, the crabby baby cries loudly.

The crabby baby, when she is hungry, cries loudly.

Your Turn:

Use these nouns or your own topics to practice developing Stretch and Scramble sentences. Then, examine your current writing projects and revise for sentence length and structure.

- elephant
- friend
- pancakes
- bird
- teacher
- storm

