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One True Sentence
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Tools of Style #1

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For the Teacher

Learning to write well requires tools that are best acquired through the process of discovery. One True Sentence is an opportunity for students to discover the wonder of writing and to simultaneously gain tools as they construct ideas into sentences. All instructions are embedded in the weekly lessons. Over the course of twenty weeks, students will be introduced to and review literary devices, elements of style, mechanics, and grammar. Along the way, they will learn to appreciate and delight in the art of crafting sentences.

Each week, topics are introduced with an explanation and example. Students will learn from sentences that demonstrate the topic at hand crafted by authors of Caldecott Award winning books. As they explore the grammar and style of each model sentence, they will begin to recognize the elements that great writers use to construct savvy sentences. Ultimately, learning to construct a great sentence will enable students to move quickly toward effortless communication.

Sentence Construction Basics to Remember

Part 1: Four Types of sentences

We've all learned there are four types of sentences:

1. Declarative
2. Imperative
3. Exclamatory
4. Interrogative

Of course **declarative** sentences are the most common of the four. These are the sentences that state something—fact or opinion or imagination.

Imperative sentences, like the name suggests, implore, command. These are the sentences that demand, sometimes so much so that you need an exclamation point, but not always.

Exclamatory sentences express strong emotion—joy, anger, sorrow, shock, disbelief. These sentences are most often used to help readers get to know a character, or to express something via social media, or in a personal letter.

Last but not least, **interrogative** sentences always ask. And questions always end in a special mark, right? Within these four forms, writers craft their ideas. All sentences range from simple to complex in nature.

The cat purrs.

Sassy, the calico cat that we rescued, often falls asleep in the sun purring.

Part 2: Words

All sentences are constructed with words. Each word has a specific meaning and a specific role to play. For example, the word “blare” in its verb form means to make or admit a very loud, raucous noise:

The alarm clock blared a horrible screeching sound.

Its noun form, “blaring” is the noise itself:

The blaring of the horns during rush hour is exhausting.

We recommend using a dictionary often when constructing sentences.

Week 1: Imagery

Explanation:

Vivid and descriptive (or figurative) language that helps readers see pictures in their mind while reading is called *imagery*.

EXAMPLE:

A host, of golden daffodils; / Beside the lake, beneath the trees, / Fluttering and dancing in the breeze

(Wordsworth, *Daffodils*)

1. Read and copy sentence 1.

SENTENCE 1

Small flowers, white and blue, and violets with golden eyes and little waxy white-pink chuckleberry blossoms and one tickly smelling pear tree bloomed on the Island.

(Margaret Wise Brown, *The Little Island*)

2. Read Sentence 1 silently, then read it again, slowly, in a whispered tone.

3. Read Sentence 2 and answer the following question.

SENTENCE 2

The clouds were painted in pastel hues by the departing sun.

» Which words or phrases create imagery?

4. Answer the following questions about Sentence 1.

» Based on this week's lesson, how is Sentence 1 similar to Sentence 2?

» Where is this week's literary device used in Sentence 1?

» Copy your favorite word or phrase from Sentence 1 that helps you imagine vividly.

» How does this word or phrase make Sentence 1 more interesting?

» Describe your surroundings with a sentence that uses strong imagery.

Week 1 practice: **Now you try!**

Craft five descriptive sentences using rich imagery.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

