

Learning together

Does My Sentence Make Sense?

ACTIVITY #8

SEQUENCE: SPELLING AND SENTENCE
STRUCTURE 3RD CYCLE — PRIMARY

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Purpose of the activity

The goal of this activity is to help your child ensure that the sentence they have written makes sense.



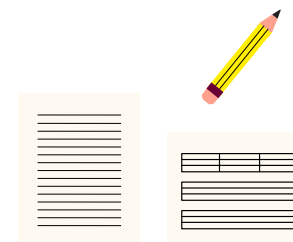
Relevance of the activity

Learning to formulate well-constructed sentences can be a demanding task, even if your child is at the end of his primary school journey. Your child is still learning and writing more complex sentences. One strategy for checking if what you have written makes sense is to ask yourself whether or not the sentence is right using your knowledge of grammar. You must also check if the words are placed in the correct order. Finally, you must ask yourself whether all the words are present to express your idea or, on the contrary, if there are too many.



Supplies

- a text or sentences to analyze
- a sheet of paper
- a pencil
- table (in appendix, if needed)



LET'S GO!

Explain the activity:



Today, we will learn how to check if the sentence you wrote makes sense.

Explain why:



When you write, it is important to make sure your message is clear and understandable. Sometimes, a word is missing, or the word order isn't quite right, which can make the sentence difficult to understand. If you read a sentence quickly, it may seem correct, but taking a moment to think about it can help you notice mistakes. This strategy will help you spot those errors and improve your sentences!

Explain when:



Since we write in order for it to be read by someone else, we must make sure that our message is clear to the person reading what we have written. As a result, you need to pay special attention to punctuation marks every time you write: whether it's for an assignment at school or to send a message to someone you know.

Try it together:



Let's take the following statement as an example:

«With my friends and I, we play hockey in the street with a plastic ball.»

Let's check if this sentence is worded correctly. To do so, we will ask ourselves three questions. To answer them, I will use the same table as in the "What is a Sentence?" activity.

1 Am I able to get a clear picture of the sentence in my mind?

When I read this sentence, I see friends who are playing hockey, with a plastic ball, in the street. Even if I can create a clear picture in my mind (this often happens when we write the text ourselves), I still have to check other elements.

2 Are the words or groups of words placed in the correct order?

In this sentence, we are talking about my friends and I¹ and we.² It also says that we play hockey³ with a plastic ball.⁴ We also learn that this is *happening in the street*.⁵

Who or what are we talking about?	What are we saying about it?	And this is happening? (where, when, why, how...)
with my friends and I ¹	we play hockey ³ with a plastic ball ⁴	in the street. ⁵
we ²		

You see, here, I just put together the ideas that relate to hockey: we play hockey with a plastic ball, and I finished with the information that gives us a clue to where it is: in the street. Now the word groups are correctly placed.

3 Are any words missing or are there too many?

Now the words are placed in the correct order in the sentence, I have to check if there are missing words or if there are too many. Let's go back to our table:

Who or what are we talking about?	What are we saying about it?	and this is happening? (where, when, why, how...)
with ² my friends and I	we play hockey with a plastic ball	in the street.
we ¹		

I notice that two groups of words are used to talk about the same people. I can therefore delete one of these two groups without changing the meaning of the sentence. I delete the pronoun *we*¹ so that we can understand who we are talking about in the sentence. Also, I notice that the word *with*² is not really useful: I can delete it without changing the meaning of the sentence. Let's see what it looks like now:

"My friends and I play hockey with a plastic ball in the street."

The following wording could also be proposed: "In the street, my friends and I play hockey with a plastic ball." That's it! Now the sentence is correctly formulated!

If you want to practice, try with this sentence now: "He sometimes goes his grandparents during vacation time."

If you read this sentence quickly, it might seem correct. However, if you take a moment to think about it, you'll realize that a word or words are missing to fully understand the statement.



Quick tips!

When your child rereads their sentence, ask them to explain it out loud. Sometimes, saying the sentence aloud helps them spot mistakes more easily!



Table that you can use at home

Who or what are we talking about?	What are we saying about it?	And this is happening? (where, when, why, how...)