

Learning together

Does My Sentence Make Sense?

ACTIVITY #8

SEQUENCE: SPELLING AND SENTENCE STRUCTURE
1ST 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.



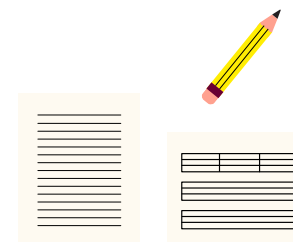
Relevance of the activity

Learning to formulate well-constructed sentences can be a challenging task, especially at first. One strategy is to ask yourself whether or not the sentence is right by 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
- A chart (appendix) if needed



LET'S GO!

What?



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

Why?



When you write, it is important to make sure your message is clear and easy to understand. Sometimes a word is missing or the order of the words is not quite right, and this can make the sentence hard to understand. This strategy will help you spot these mistakes and improve your sentences!

When?



Since we write in order to be read by someone else, we must make sure that our message is clear to the reader. That's why 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.

How?



Let's take this example: "My neighbour his dog barks all night he wakes everyone up."

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 make a clear picture of the sentence in my head?

When I read this sentence, I don't know if I have to imagine my neighbour in addition to his dog because it seems like we're only talking about the dog. Therefore, I will ask myself some questions to clarify the sentence.

2 Are the words placed in the correct order?

In this sentence, we're talking about my neighbour¹ his dog² and him³ (which refers to the dog). It says that the dog barks all night.⁴ It also says that the dog wakes everyone up.⁵ But nothing is said about the neighbour.⁶ The subject of the sentence is the dog,⁷ because I understand that we are talking about my neighbour's dog, not just any dog in the neighbourhood. Then the phrase my neighbour⁸ completes the subject of the sentence. I must therefore place this group of words as follows: My neighbour's dog barks all night he wakes everyone up.

Who or what are we talking about?	What are we saying about it?	And this is happening (where, why, how)?
My neighbour? ^{1 and 8}	— ⁶	x
his dog ^{2 and 7}	bark all night ⁴	
he ³	wakes everyone up. ⁵	

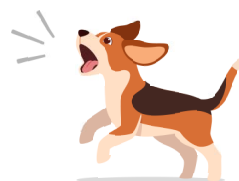
3 Are any words missing or are there too many?

Now that 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.

Simple sentences	Who or what are we talking about?	What are we saying about it?	And this is happening (where, why, how)?
P1	My neighbour's dog	barks all night ¹	x
P2	he	wakes everyone up ² .	

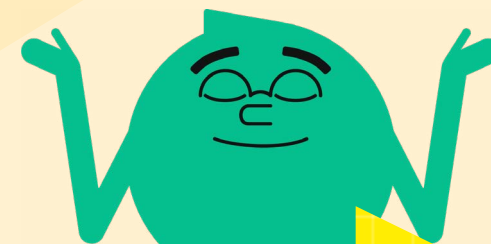
I see that I could make two well-constructed simple sentences:

- 1 My neighbour's dog barks all night¹.
- 2 He wakes everyone up².



However, in our initial example, these two ideas are grouped together in the same sentence. There is, therefore, a word missing to link these two ideas. I could add the word *and* in order to put these two sentences together to form one. It would look like this: "My neighbour's dog barks all night **and** he wakes everyone up." Now, my sentence makes sense!

You can now practise this strategy with sentences adapted to your child's writing level.



Don't forget!

When you read your sentence, imagine a little movie in your head. If the image is not clear or seems strange, your sentence needs to be corrected!



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, why, how)?