

Handout: Vocabulary Activities

Below are several activities you can use with students to develop their vocabulary knowledge.

Teaching New Words

This is one model for using direct instruction to teach students new words. You can use this process to pre-teach words before students read.

Steps

1. Write the word and read the word.
2. Ask students to divide the word into syllables, or you can do it if the students have trouble. Ask students to read each syllable and write it down as they read it. Look for correct spelling.
3. Ask students if they know what the word means.
4. Give a definition of the word. Give examples (if appropriate). Use the word in a sentence.
5. Ask students to put the definition in their own words. Ask them to provide their own examples.
6. Ask students to use the word in a sentence that draws from their experience. Ask students to write the word and the sentence.

Word Charts

Word charts are an expansion of traditional flash cards. They are good for introducing students to new words.

Steps

1. Give students blank 4"x 6" index cards, one index card for each new word they will learn.
2. Ask students to write the new word on the front of the card.
3. Ask students to turn the card over and draw a line from the top to the bottom of the card, about 2/3 of the way over. Ask students to then draw a line dividing the larger portion in half horizontally.
4. In the first space, have students write a definition of the word in their own words. They can also include examples and synonyms.
5. In the second space, ask students to think of antonyms or opposites of the new word. Not all words have natural antonyms, so students will have to think creatively about the meaning of the word.
6. In the remaining space, ask students to think of the word in relation to their own experience. Maybe a student has heard the word used in another setting or maybe a student has a life experience that is an example of the word. Whatever the association, ask students to write a sentence (or two) about that experience using the new word.

Using New Words in Writing

One of the best ways to reinforce new vocabulary words is to have students use them to discuss what they just read. Here are some ideas of how to do that.

Steps

1. After reading a story and checking for comprehension, review the vocabulary words you pre-taught. Say a word and ask the student to tell you what it means. Go back in the story and reread one or more sentences with the word. Ask the student to explain how the new word helps them understand that sentence. For example, a sentence from a story might be “Listen up,” the fire chief said tersely to his firefighters. “We don’t know what is burning in the house or where.” Ask the student, “What does it mean when it says ‘the fire chief said tersely’? Why do you think the fire chief was being terse?”
2. Have students each write a paragraph related to the story they just read (a summary, what happens next, or what a main character is thinking). Have them use 3–4 of the new vocabulary words in their paragraphs.

Vocabulary Game

The vocabulary game is an engaging way to review vocabulary words from multiple lessons. It’s a team game and players can get help from their teammates, so students at different levels can play and have fun.

Steps

1. Create a list of vocabulary words from selections students have read in class.
2. Divide students into two teams.
3. A student from the first team comes up to the board. He or she draws a piece of paper from envelope one. Envelope one contains four different tasks: pronounce the word, spell the word, define the word, and create a sentence with the word.
4. The student then draws a vocabulary word from envelope two. (Note that a student who draws “spell the word” from envelope one must hand the vocabulary word to you without looking at it. Otherwise, they keep the vocabulary word).
5. If the student can do the task without help from his or her team, the team gets 2 points. If the team helps, they get one point.
6. If the team does not know the answer, the other team can try to steal by answering correctly and getting 1 point. If a team tries to steal and misses the question, they lose a point.

Word Builder

This activity helps students develop skill at identifying word meanings based on what they know about the meanings of word roots, prefixes, and suffixes. This activity assumes you have gone over the meanings of common prefixes and suffixes with students. If not, do that before using this activity.

Steps

1. Write common prefixes and suffixes that the student knows on index cards with a marker. Write one prefix or suffix per card. Use one color for prefixes and a different color for suffixes. Write the meaning of each prefix or suffix on the back of the card.
2. Have the student make up a word and give it a meaning. For example, the student might make up the word *bloop* and say that it means “to ball up on the floor and roll around.”
3. Write the word on an index card and write the meaning of the word on the back of the card.
4. Put the card on the table in front of the student. Using your prefix and suffix index cards, add one prefix or suffix to the word. Have the student read the new word.
5. Ask the student what they think the new word would mean, based on the meaning of the prefix or suffix. (if the student can't remember what the prefix or suffix means, turn the card over and let them read it). For example, a blooper would be someone who balls up on the floor and rolls around. A biblooper might be someone who rolls around on the floor twice and then stops. Bloopible might refer to something that can be balled up and rolled on a surface.
6. Continue to add prefixes, suffixes or both to the made up word.

Variations

- For a classroom, you can divide students into teams. Have each team create a word root and meaning, and then a list of made up words using prefixes and suffixes. Have each team write down what the new words mean. Have the first team read their words to the second team and have the second team guess the meanings. Then switch roles. You can keep score if you want.
- Once you have a collection of made up word roots, you can make made-up compound words. Again, have students guess the meanings of the compound words.

Word Matrix

The word matrix is a way to help students think about the differences between words that have similar meanings. A word matrix use two axes:

- The horizontal axis measures connotation—how positive or negative a word is—with positive connotations to the right and negative connotations to the left. (Depending on the collection of words, this axis might also be labeled strong or weak).
- The vertical axis measures formality, with more formal words at the top and less formal words at the bottom.

Steps

1. Brainstorm a group of words that have similar meanings. For example, you might brainstorm the words cheap, inexpensive, discounted, economical, low-cost, bargain, reduced, on sale, modest, affordable, budget, and low-end.
2. Write each word on an index card.
3. On four index cards, write the words negative, positive, formal, informal.
4. Create a horizontal axis on the desk using the two index cards positive and negative.
5. Working individually, in pairs, or in small groups, have students place the words along the axis according to their connotation. For example, students might place low-end to the left of the axis, close to the negative index card, and economical to the right of the axis, close to the positive card.
6. Once students have finished, ask them to explain their reasoning.
7. You can follow the same process using the formal/informal cards and creating a vertical axis. If you want students to evaluate words on both connotation and formality, it is best to have them focus on one axis first, and then add the other axis.

Handout: Prefixes and Suffixes

Prefixes

a- without; on, in; in a state of	in-, im- in	post- after, later; behind
ad-, ac-, af-, al-, ap-, as-, at- toward, to, near, in	in-, im-, il-, ir- not	pre- before
anti- against, opposing	inter- between, among	pro- forth, forward
auto-, aut- self	intra- inside, within	re- back, again, anew
bi- two	intro- in, inward	sub-, sup-, suc-, suf- under; lesser
con-, col-, com-, cor- with, together	mis- wrongly, badly	super-, sur- superior, above; additional
contra- against	mono-, mon- one, alone	trans- across
de- reverse, remove, reduce	multi- much, many	tri- three
di- separation, twoness	ob-, oc-, of-, op- toward, against	un- not, opposite of; reverse an action
dis-, dif- absence; opposite; reverse, remove	per- through, thoroughly	uni- one
ex-, ef-, e- out, of, from	poly- much, many	

Suffixes

-able

able to, capable of, liable to

-age

action or result of an action;
collection; state

-al

relating to, characterized by

-ance, -ancy

state or quality of; action

-ant

inclined to; being in a state
of; someone who

-ate

cause, make; state,
condition; someone who

-en

made of; cause to be or
have; become

-ence, -ency

state or quality of; action

-ent

inclined to; being in a state
of; someone who

-er

more

-er, -or

someone who; something
that

-ery, -ary, -ory, -ry

place where; collection,
condition, or practice of

-est

most

-ful

full of

-hood

state, quality, or condition of

-ial

relating to, characterized by

-ian

person who; of, relating to,
belonging to

-ible

able to, capable of, liable of

-ic

relating to, characterized by

-ice

state or quality of

-ine

of, pertaining to; chemical
substance

-ion

act, result, state of

-ious

full of, characterized by

-ism

act, condition, doctrine, or
practice of

-ist

someone who

-ite

quality of; follower or resident
of; mineral product

-ive

performing or tending toward
an action

-ize

cause to be or become

-less

without, lacking

-ly

in the manner of

-ment

state, act, or process of

-ness

state, quality, or condition of

-ous

full of, characterized by

-ship

state, quality, or condition of;
skill

-ty, -ity

state or quality of

-ure

act, process; function or body
performing a function

-ward

direction

-y

characterized by

Handout: Comprehension Activities

Think-Aloud Technique

The Think-Aloud technique is a great way to help adult students improve their reading comprehension skills. In the Think-Aloud technique, you read a passage aloud to the students. As you read, you periodically think out loud as you apply different reading comprehension strategies. This helps students see the “invisible” strategies good readers use when they read. Below are the steps for the Think-Aloud technique.

Steps

1. **Review the reading and select the reading strategies you will use.** While there may be many strategies you would actually use, you should try to limit the number you focus on to two or three. Explain the strategies and why they are useful so that students can more easily identify them when they hear or see them used.
2. **Set the purpose for reading and be clear about it with students.** This is the first thing a good reader does, but many students don't do this, especially if they've been assigned a reading. Setting the purpose will also help students connect specific strategies with specific purposes for reading.
3. **Read the article and model the strategies you identified.** Model the strategies by stopping during the reading and thinking aloud. It's important to rehearse when you'll use the strategies and what you'll say, rather than demonstrating this “on the fly.” This will help you focus on the specific strategies and present them clearly. It is OK, even preferred, to demonstrate the thinking process as not perfect. For example, you may make predictions that are wrong. Just explain why you've made the error, how you recognized the error, and your correction. While you're doing the Think-Aloud technique, have students follow along in the text and mark where you use different comprehension strategies.
4. **Identify the strategies and discuss how they were used.** Have students identify where you used each strategy and why that particular strategy was useful. Ask students if they can think of other things they've read where that strategy would be useful. Ask them to think of other strategies that you might have used.
5. **Have students use the Think-Aloud technique to apply the same strategies.** You can do this many ways. You can have each student read a portion of a passage and think aloud to the entire class. You can have students work in pairs and think aloud to each other, while you go around the room and listen.

Mind Map

A mind map is a graphic organizer that can be used to help students comprehend what they read. It is sometimes called clustering, a brainstorming web, an idea map, or a concept map.

Steps

1. Have students read a story or an article. Briefly discuss with them what they just read to get them thinking about it.
2. Have a student draw a circle in the middle of a piece of paper. Have the student write a word or a couple of words to represent the main idea of the story.
3. Ask students what else occurred in the story. Use questions about the people involved, location, cause and effect, and so forth. For each detail, have a student write key words in a circle and connect that circle to the diagram where it logically belongs.
4. Have students look back over the map and the story to see if they missed any details. If so, add them to the map.
5. Ask a student to use the mind map to tell you what the story was about. Students should be able to summarize the story or tell you the main idea and details of an article without referring back to the story or article.
6. It's a good idea to model the process of creating a mind map with students before asking them to create a mind map on their own.
7. Beginning literacy or ESL students may have difficulty with the writing. Discuss the story with them and use what they say to create a mind map on the chalkboard. Then ask the students to copy what you have written and use that mind map to retell the story.

Creating Independent Readers

This activity encourages students to use a before-during-after questioning strategy outside of class to improve their comprehension while reading independently.

Steps

1. Give students three index cards. Label one card "Before I Read," another card "While I Read," and the third card "After I Read."
2. Write the following questions on the Before I Read card:
 - What is this going to be about?
 - What do I already know about the topic?
 - What's my purpose for reading this?
3. Write the following questions on the While I Read card:
 - What do I think the next part is going to be about?
 - Was I right or wrong?
 - What else do I want to know about this topic?

5. Write the following questions on the After I Read card:
 - What did the article tell me?
 - What did I have to figure out?
 - What else do I want to know about this topic?
6. Practice using the cards with students in class with you or with each other. When students become comfortable with asking themselves these questions, encourage students to use the cards outside of class when reading.

Handout: KWL Chart

KWL Chart

What do I K now already?	What do I W ant to learn?	What did I L earn?

KWL Chart

What do I K now already?	What do I W ant to learn?	What did I L earn?

KWLH Chart

What do I K now already?	What do I W ant to learn?	What did I L earn?	H ow can I find out more?

KWHL Chart

What do I K now already?	What do I W ant to learn?	How can I find out?	What did I L earn?

Handout: Writing

The Writing Process

Having a consistent process to use when writing helps students become more confident writers. It provides them with a structure they can follow when they are unsure of where to start. It relieves the pressure of being perfect because it allows time to go back and fix mistakes. It provides the structure needed for them to write independently. And ultimately, it results in a final product they can be proud of. Follow the process below when writing with students.

Prewriting

This is the first step in the writing process. Here, students decide what to write about and brainstorm their ideas. This is probably the most important step in the writing process, but it is also often the step that teachers and students pay the least attention to. The more time spent in the prewriting step, the easier the remaining steps will be. Ideas may come from conversation between you and the student, a practical need, or thoughts generated from reading. If a student wants to do practical writing—such as writing a resume and cover letter or birthday invitations—you might start by analyzing examples of that type of writing. Mind mapping is a good way to capture and organize the ideas generated in this step.

First Draft

The first draft is a student's first attempt to give structure to his or her ideas. For the first draft, the focus is on the message rather than on punctuation, spelling, grammar, or handwriting. It is not even necessary for the first draft to contain complete sentences. A student who has difficulty with a word or phrase can guess, draw a symbol, or ask for help.

Revise

This is where the student works to clarify and expand the content. When revising, the student should focus on the overall organization of information, adding and removing information, description and detail, and word choice. You can help by asking the student to read his or her first draft and then asking questions about it. Read the piece aloud yourself, and ask the student to listen critically.

Edit

This is where the student makes improvements in the mechanics—spelling, punctuation, and grammar. The amount of editing will depend on the student's level and the purpose of the piece. For beginning writers, focus on editing to correct one or two reoccurring problems rather than trying to make the piece perfect. For example, you might have a student edit a piece specifically for noun/verb agreement, proper use of apostrophes, and the spelling of words that have double letters because you know these mechanics give that student the most trouble. Create a customized editing checklist for the student to follow that includes what he or she is looking for as well as common mistakes and ways to fix them.

Final Draft

This is where the student publishes what they have written. Publishing means creating a clean copy of a piece and then using it or sharing it with others. Publishing might mean sending off a resume and cover letter to a potential employer, or putting envelopes with birthday party invitations in a daughter's backpack to deliver to her friends at school. Publishing is very important because it represents the end of the writing process. Students may go through the revise and edit cycle several times. Without publishing, revising and editing can become an endless loop. If a student has written something he or she is especially proud of, consider ways of publishing the writing to enhance that pride. This might involve submitting the writing to be published in the literacy program's newsletter or on their website, or taking a collection of the student's writings to a printer and having them bound and published. This can go a long way toward changing a student's attitude about writing from negative to positive.

Instructional Strategies for Writing

The following strategies have a positive impact on the overall quality of students' writing.

Process Writing

Having a consistent process that students can use when writing results in a consistently higher quality product. The process provides students with a way to start when they are unsure of what they want to say. It also allows them to focus their efforts on smaller components of writing, improving each component.

Strategy Instruction

When you teach students strategies for writing, revising, and editing their work, they can draw upon these strategies when writing on their own. When students can effectively use strategies, it changes their self-image from a poor writer to a competent and capable writer. Examples of strategy instruction would include teaching a student to brainstorm ideas about one small part of the writing subject at a time to improve description and detail, or to edit their writing beginning with the last sentence and working back to the beginning so they accurately read what's on the page.

Summarization

Teaching students to summarize in writing what they have read improves writing as well as reading comprehension. Summarization specifically helps students to organize their writing and provide explanation and detail.

Collaborative Writing

Providing opportunities for students to work together when writing improves the overall quality of their writing. In addition to benefiting from other people's feedback in the revising and editing stage, collaborative writing removes much of the pressure students feel about thinking of something to say.

Setting Specific Product Goals

Understanding the purpose for writing improves a student's ability to write effectively. It is important for students to have clear, specific goals and to understand how the writing will ultimately be used.

Word Processing

Teaching students to write using computers with word processing programs and other tools is helpful. These tools often make it easier for students to revise and edit their drafts and to proof for correct spelling and sentence structure.

Sentence Combining

Teaching students to combine simple sentences into compound or complex sentences can have a significant impact on the quality of their writing and can also improve their reading skills.

Prewriting

As we've mentioned earlier, this is a very important step in the writing process. Students often think good writers just sit down and start writing. Teaching them that brainstorming and planning are important and providing them with useful tools and strategies improves their overall writing. It is especially important to emphasize how vital prewriting is with students who will be taking timed tests like the GED. When time constraints are introduced into the writing process, the prewriting step often suffers. When this happens, the quality of the student's final product will likely also suffer.

Inquiry Activities

In inquiry activities, students are presented with data. They analyze that data, draw conclusions, and then write about those conclusions. For example, you might put several objects in boxes where students could feel the objects but not see them. Students would write about their touch observations. Then they would be given a chance to discuss their observations, touch the objects again, and refine their descriptions. The cycle of continuous inquiry, discussion, and writing results in a narrower focus and increased specificity of detail in the writing.

Models

Studying models is a good way to introduce students to different writing genres. Discuss the different elements, patterns, and forms of the writing model or models, and then analyze how effectively they were executed. Examples of models might include poems for a creative writing project, biographies to help students write their own stories, resumes and cover letters for job related writing, absentee notes for real world writing, or five-paragraph essays for students preparing to take high school equivalency exams.

Grammar

Understanding grammar rules is important for producing high quality writing. However, writing instruction that emphasizes grammar or treats it as something independent from composition has a negative effect on the overall quality of student writing. Effective grammar instruction involves the practical application of grammar rules to what the student is writing. It is part of the editing process and the effort to improve the final product.

Correcting Grammar Mistakes

One of the reasons people do not like to write is that they are afraid they do not know or remember all of the grammar rules for writing, so whatever they write will be incorrect. Students want their writing to be correct, but instruction focused purely on grammar is ineffective. When providing grammar instruction to correct mistakes, follow these strategies:

- **Base grammar instruction on the student’s gaps in knowledge.** This means that you should teach the grammar rules a student doesn’t know or has trouble with, not the things he or she already knows. How do you know what a student knows and doesn’t know about grammar? Get the student to write, and observe which errors show up. This means you shouldn’t start teaching grammar until a student has produced a body of writing—about three to five writing activities.
- **Grammar instruction requires the direct instruction model:**
 - Explain the grammar rule and how to apply it.
 - Provide examples of application of the grammar rule. Also provide examples of common errors and how to fix them.
 - Provide guided practice with worksheets and examples from the student’s own work.
 - Have the student edit future writing for the specific grammar rule.
- **Simplify grammar rules.** Remember, one of the reasons that people do not like to write is the perception that there are a lot of grammar rules they need to remember. You are trying to help students improve their writing by eliminating frequent errors. Simplifying grammar rules will facilitate this.
- **Model common errors and how to fix them.** Students need to easily recognize the errors they make and have specific strategies for fixing them. Sometimes these strategies involve applying grammar rules. A strategy might be to rewrite the sentence.
- **Apply the grammar rule during the editing process.** Once a student understands the grammar rule, it is important for him or her to edit work by specifically applying that grammar rule. Once students have learned to recognize and correct an error in their work, it is unlikely that they will continue to make that error.

Grammar Resources

You can use these websites as references when you need to explain aspects of grammar.

- **Butte College Tip Sheets: The Eight Parts of Speech** (http://www.butte.edu/departments/cas/tipsheets/grammar/parts_of_speech.html)
This site contains a good overview which you can use when preparing to explain the parts of speech to students.
- **Guide to Grammar & Writing** (<http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/>)
This is a good resource for tutors but is probably too complicated for students to use. In addition to very detailed grammar information at the word, sentence, and paragraph level, it has lots of examples and quizzes you can use to help students practice applying grammar rules.
- **English Grammar 101** (<https://www.englishgrammar101.com/>)
This is a good learning and practice site for students. It may be difficult for them to navigate initially, but the lessons are short and easy to understand. Each lesson covers one topic and is followed by an exercise section to test the student's understanding.
- **Road to Grammar** (<http://www.roadtogrammar.com/>)
This website has lots of quizzes that students can take online or that you can download as PDFs to use in class.

Handout: Writing Activities

The Unnamed Food

This activity is good for helping students improve their use of description and detail in writing. Use a mind map or other graphic organizer to help students brainstorm during the prewriting step.

Steps

1. Ask students to think of a food. Explain that they shouldn't tell anyone what their food is. Ask them to write the name of the food in the center of a piece of paper and draw a circle around it.
2. Ask students to write the word "ingredients" off to one side, draw a circle around it, and connect it back to the circle with the name of their food. Now ask students to think of the ingredients in their food and write them around the circle.
3. Follow Step 2 with the following topics:
 - a. How the food is prepared
 - b. How the food looks, smells, feels, sounds, and tastes
 - c. Why the student enjoys this food.
4. Now ask each student to take a fresh sheet of paper and write a paragraph describing his or her food without naming it. When students have finished, have them give their paragraphs to their partners. The partners try to guess the foods correctly. The goal is to describe the food well enough that a partner can identify it.

Variations

This activity can be done with holidays, modes of transportation, clothing, sports, places to eat or visit, or any other common student experience.

Mind Mapping

Mind mapping is a great tool to use during the prewriting step of the writing process. Mind mapping allows writers to quickly capture thoughts and connect those ideas in ways that make sense to them. Students can then use their mind maps as starting points for creating first drafts.

Steps

1. Write a word or topic in the center of the page and circle it.
2. Ask the student what comes to mind when thinking about the topic.
3. Write what the student says. Group related ideas using circles or lines to show connections.
4. Talk about the finished map and make additions or revisions.
5. Ask the student to choose which parts of the map to include in the writing.
6. For beginning students, do all the mind map writing, and read the results back to the student. More advanced students may be able to create their own maps.
7. To help a student get comfortable with maps, you might want to make a map of a reading selection.
8. As an intermediate step, you can ask a student to brainstorm thoughts about a topic and dictate them to you. You write them in a list. Go over the list with the student and ask which ideas belong together. Write these ideas in clusters, and use them to prepare a map.

Sal's Poem

Sal

Mexican, brave, hardworking, hopeful

Son of Ben and Bella

Brother of Carmen, Victor, and Martin

Who feels glad to be here

Who likes sunny days

Who needs family, friends, and work

Who lives in Dallas, Texas

Castro

Write A Poem About Yourself:

1. Think about Sal's Poem. Think about what you would say about yourself. Write a poem about yourself. Write a draft here.

Your first name: _____

Four words that tell about you: _____

Son or daughter of: _____

Brother, sister, or friend of: _____

Who feels: _____

Who likes: _____

Who needs: _____

Who lives in: _____

Your last name: _____

2. Read the draft of your poem. Does it say what you want? Change any words you want to change.
3. Ask another person to read your poem. Can he or she understand it? Make any needed changes.
4. Write the final draft of your poem here.

Who feels _____

Who likes _____

Who needs _____

Who lives in _____

Write A Poem About Yourself:

1. Think about Sal's Poem. Think about what you would say about yourself. Write a poem about yourself. Write a draft here

Your first name: _____

Four words that tell about you: _____

Son or daughter of: _____

Brother, sister, or friend of: _____

Who feels: _____

Who likes: _____

Who needs: _____

Who lives in: _____

Your last name: _____

2. Read the draft of your poem. Does it say what you want? Change any words you want to change.
3. Ask another person to read your poem. Can he or she understand it? Make any changes you need.
4. Write the final draft of your poem here.

Who feels _____

Who likes _____

Who needs _____

Who lives in _____

Teaching Handwriting

Here are some teaching strategies you can use when teaching handwriting.

1. **Keep a handwriting chart available** and visible to students when they are working on any writing activity and make sure each student has a copy for home. Preferably, the chart will show the direction of the pencil as the letters are formed. You can find many examples of these charts by searching for “handwriting charts” online.
2. **Progress from large motor to small motor skills.** Students who haven’t done a lot of writing may not have the fine motor skills needed to write legibly in a small space while holding a small pencil. Begin by having students use their arms and hands to write the letters in the air. Next, have them write the letters on the top of a desk using their fingers. Or put salt into a rimmed tray and have them draw the letters in the salt. From there, have students use pencils to write the letters on unlined paper. Finally, have them trace the outline of the letters on lined paper, and then write them independently.
3. **Start with printing.** Print is easier to learn and closely resembles the text students see in books and online.
4. **Start with the letters the student needs or wants to learn.** Written letters do not need to be taught in alphabetical order. Letter formation is better taught in the context of what the student needs to learn to write or by grouping letters that are formed with similar motions.
5. **Copy.** After a student can form letters, have the student copy words and sentences. The student can copy vocabulary words, sentences from the story, or a story that he or she dictated and you wrote down. Copying activities should be short and should be related to students’ needs or learning goals.

Spelling: A Multisensory Approach

Many students have difficulty with spelling. Here is a multisensory approach to spelling that encourages the student to use as many senses as possible to increase the likelihood of remembering how to spell a word.

Steps

1. Look at the word.
2. Say the word.
3. Note the parts that are written the way they sound.
4. Note the parts that are not written the way they sound.
5. Note any special points to remember.
6. Say the word again.
7. Say the letters in sequence as you look at the word.
8. Say the letters in sequence as you trace them.
9. Look at the word again. Say it.
10. Close your eyes and see the word in your mind.
11. Spell the word aloud as you see it in your mind.
12. Write the word without looking at the model.

13. Check to see if you are correct.

Combining Sentences

This activity can help students move from writing simple sentences to connecting ideas and writing more complex sentences.

Steps

1. With the student, choose a familiar topic.
2. Ask the student to write several short sentences about the topic. Model an example of a short sentence if necessary. If a student has trouble writing simple sentences, have the student tell you the sentences and you write them down. Have the student copy the sentences afterward.
3. Show the student examples of short sentences on a topic, and then show examples of those sentences combined into more complex sentences.
4. Discuss with the student which simple sentences were combined into more complex sentences. Ask the student to point out how the sentences were combined—by combining subjects or objects, or by using linking words to join two complete sentences.
5. Ask the student to choose two sentences to combine and to tell you how he or she would like to combine them.
6. Guide the student to a grammatically correct sentence.

Additions

- Teach the student the acronym FANBOYS to remember the linking words: *for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so*.

Sentence Building

This activity can help students develop very complex and descriptive sentences from basic sentences.

Steps

1. Ask the student to write a five-word sentence with a subject, verb, and object. The sentence should not include proper names, pronouns, or prepositional phrases. The sentence should use an action verb. Example: The boy threw the ball.
2. Ask the student to add an adjective for each noun.
3. Ask the student to add an adverb.
4. Ask the student to add a prepositional phrase.
5. Ask the student to add another adjective for each noun.
6. At this point, you can ask the student to change any words they would like to change. Perhaps they want to use a different subject, verb, or object; or to replace pronouns with nouns.
7. To continue the activity, ask the student to write a short paragraph based on the idea in the sentence.

Activity: Bag of Writing

Bag of Sentences

Cut out the story strips below. Put each story in a separate bag. Give each participant one bag to create a story.

I love reading very much.
Now my goal is to get my GED and become a veterinary assistant.
Most of all I want to tell people who can't read or write there is a rainbow.
Reading to me is like finding the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.
I always wanted to learn to read.
I tried when I was younger but nothing worked.
One day my daughter asked me to read her a book.
My wife heard her and said she would do it.
I knew then I needed to try learning to read again.
Christmas in Jamaica is a very important time for me.
It is a time when my family gets together and celebrates.
My grandmother likes to cook and bake.
She cooks curried goat, rice and ham, roast beef, and other kinds of food.
People come to the house for Christmas dinner and stay all day.
I'm like a lot of people.
I have dreams.
One of my dreams is to get my GED.
That dream is finally coming true.

Bag of Words

Cut out the words below and put them in a bag. Give one bag to each participant.

the	the	the	the	the	the	the	the	the	the
a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
an	an	an	an	an	an	an	an	an	an
of	to	in	for	on	by	about	over	after	but
I	me	we	us	you	she	her	he	him	it
they	them	dog	cat	bike	car	tree	woods	park	swing
did	ran	said	went	made	knew	took	saw	came	used
ball	game	desk	phone	cup	sun	moon	grass	city	heart
gave	told	said	tried	asked	felt	left	put	kept	let
red	orange	yellow	green	blue	purple	gray	black	white	pink
with	at	from	into	until	upon	including		during	
against		among		throughout		despite		towards	
brother		sister		mother		father		house	
mailman		grocery		hospital		mountain		people	
information		family		computer		music		reading	
pizza		problem		movie		location		school	
wanted		thought		found		worked		called	
needed		became		found		began		heard	
adorable		clean		fancy		old-fashioned		plain	
careful		easy		famous		important		expensive	
brave		calm		delightful		angry		grumpy	
worried		loud		ancient		modern		melted	
accidentally		deliberately		eagerly		frequently		gracefully	
lazily		happily		silently		poorly		honestly	