

The Human Sentence

Content Focus

Oral Language

Materials

Student notebooks

Pencils

A few objects/items

Objective

Students will practice constructing and listening to elaborated sentences.

Procedures

1. Ask the students to choose a topic or object they would like to talk about. They can use background knowledge or a prior learning experience from the curriculum. This will be the subject of their sentence.
2. Give the selected object to one student and say:
You can be the first part of our sentence. You will be [name the object/subject].
3. Ask for a related detail about the subject and solicit a volunteer to represent that part of the sentence. For example, if the subject is a monkey, you could ask:
What does a monkey do?
4. Prompt for another related detail about the subject or the first detail, and solicit another volunteer to represent the third part of the sentence. For example, if the first detail was eats *bananas*, you could ask:
When do monkeys eat bananas?
5. Finally, ask for one last related detail and assign another student to represent the final part of the sentence. For example, if the last detail was *in the morning*, you could ask:
Why do monkeys eat bananas in the morning?
6. Say: **Before we start the “Human Sentence,” let’s all say it together.** Have the students say each part of the sentence, starting with the subject from step 2 and adding each detail chosen in steps 3–5 (e.g., *The monkey eats bananas in the morning because it’s hungry*).
7. Line the four students up so they are facing the rest of the group/class in sentence order, from left-to-right. Stand behind the first student and say:
We’re going to make a “Human Sentence.” When I touch your shoulders, you say your part of the sentence.
8. Move down the line behind the students touching the shoulders of each student to speak their part of the sentence. Repeat the process until the students are fluent in their responses. Then invite the entire group/class to join in the repeating of the sentence.
9. Ask the students to write the sentence in their notebooks.

Shared Interaction

Alter the students’ positions within the Human Sentence. This requires them to pay attention, listen carefully to one another, work flexibly, and take responsibility for different parts of the sentence. You can also transform the sentence by turning it into a negative, question, command, or exclamation. This requires reciting the sentence using a shift in intonation.

Independent Reading and Writing

Ask students to write all four transformations of the original Human Sentence in their notebooks.