



Supporting Sentence Building and Oracy in the Classroom

Helping children build sentences from scratch is a foundational skill in developing strong writers. This resource supports teachers in guiding pupils through increasingly sophisticated sentence construction, focusing on grammar, punctuation, and oracy. It aligns with the national writing framework and provides practical strategies and activities.

The Importance of Sentence Building

Understanding how to construct a sentence is essential for writing development. Children must learn to identify the subject, verb, and object, and how to expand sentences with adjectives, adverbs, and clauses. Sentence building supports comprehension, expression, and creativity.

The Role of Oracy and Oral Rehearsal

Oral rehearsal is a critical step in writing. Encouraging children to say their sentences aloud before writing helps them internalise structure, vocabulary, and punctuation. Listening for sense and identifying natural pauses supports the development of punctuation awareness, such as where a full stop should go.

Developing Grammar and Listening for Sense

As children progress, they should be introduced to more complex grammatical structures, including conjunctions, subordinate clauses, and varied sentence openers. Listening for sense helps children self-correct and refine their writing. Teachers can model this by reading sentences aloud and discussing punctuation and meaning.

Links to the Writing Framework

The national writing framework emphasises composition, grammar, punctuation, and spoken language. Sentence building activities support these objectives by developing fluency, accuracy, and confidence in writing. Oracy links directly to the spoken language requirements, enhancing communication skills.

Classroom Activities

1. Sentence Stretching – Start with a simple sentence and gradually add detail using who, what, where, when, and why.



2. Full Stop Detective – Read aloud a paragraph and ask pupils to identify where the full stops should go.
3. Sentence Surgery – Provide incorrect or jumbled sentences for pupils to fix and explain their reasoning.
4. Oracy Circles – In small groups, pupils build and say sentences aloud using visual prompts before writing them.
5. Grammar Growth – Introduce new grammatical elements weekly and practice incorporating them into sentences.

Mighty Writer Activities

Sentence Building Relay

Children work in teams to build a sentence using Mighty Writer tiles. They say the sentence aloud, write it down, and then read it back to one another. This reinforces sentence structure, oracy, and punctuation awareness.

Story Sequencing with Mighty Writer

Using image tiles, children create a short story sequence. They build and say each sentence before writing the full story. This supports narrative structure and grammar development.

Sentence Surgery

Present a jumbled or incorrect sentence using the tiles. Children correct it using Mighty Writer, explaining their reasoning. This activity enhances grammar understanding and listening for sense.

Who-What-Where Game

Children randomly select a character, action, and setting tile. They build and say a sentence using all three before writing it. This encourages creativity and reinforces sentence components.