

Plot Twists

(Grammar Rules and Parts of Speech)

Purpose

Use this routine to help students practice proper grammatical forms when writing sentences. This can be used to reinforce a particular grammar point, or it can be used to discover areas of strengths and weaknesses in student writing. The goal is to help students use creativity to practice rules of grammar.

Time

Five to fifteen minutes

Supported Standards

CCRS Language Anchor 1 - Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

ELP Standard 10 - Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English to communicate in level-appropriate speech and writing.

Materials

- Sentence chart with multiple rows

Procedure

This routine can be used to practice a particular grammar point or a wide range of grammar conventions. The activity would work best for a small group but can easily be used in a one-on-one session. This routine works best in person but can be done online as well, using a blank sentence chart in Google Docs. (All participants must have editing status for the shared document.)

1. The teacher writes a sentence on the top row of the page. (The first time this is done, the teacher may want to demonstrate by completing Step 2 as well, so students can see the correct procedure.)
2. A student reads the sentence, then underlines a word or phrase to change. The student writes the new sentence on the line below. In the box to the right of the sentence, the student writes what they changed in the sentence from the previous row (e.g., prepositional phrase, noun, verb, verb tense, time marker). Alternatively, if practicing a specific grammar point, the teacher can write prompts in the right-hand column ahead of time (e.g., change the verb to simple past; change to an irregular past tense verb; change the time marker) or simply establish what will be changed in each sentence.

3. The student folds the paper back, leaving only their new sentence visible*, and hands the paper to the next student (or back to the teacher in a one-on-one). The next person repeats Step 2 with the new sentence.
4. Continue until all the rows are full. At the end, compare the first and last sentence to see how the sentence has changed.
5. The teacher reviews the changes made in each sentence, checking for errors, and goes over the parts of speech the students used.

*If conducting the routine online through Google Docs, all sentences will remain visible during the activity.

Plot Twists - Example (Grammar Rules and Parts of Speech)

Read each example sentence. Underline the words you will change. Write the information in the right-hand column.

Example Sentence:	Changes:
On Mondays, <u>Mrs. Carlson eats</u> lunch in the park.	None. Original sentence.
<u>On Mondays</u> , Mrs. Carlson and her daughter <u>eat</u> lunch in the park.	I changed the subject and I changed the verb form for subject-verb agreement.
Two weeks ago, Mrs. Carlson and her daughter ate lunch <u>in the park</u> .	I changed the activity to the past (time marker, verb tense).
Two weeks ago, Mrs. Carlson and her daughter ate lunch at the beach.	I changed the location (prepositional phrase).
Two weeks ago, Mrs. Carlson and her daughter <u>ate lunch</u> at the beach at two o'clock.	I added a time (prepositional phrase).
<u>Two weeks ago</u> , Mrs. Carlson and her daughter <u>went</u> fishing at the beach at two o'clock.	I changed the verb and activity.
Every summer, Mrs. Carlson and her daughter go fishing at the beach <u>at two o'clock</u> .	I changed the time marker and the verb tense.
Every summer, Mrs. Carlson and her daughter go fishing at the beach on the weekend.	I changed the prepositional phrase for time.