

Expanding a Kernel Sentence

A Strategy for Supporting Sentence Syntax and Comprehension
- Based on the work of Joan Sedita -

Process	Sample																		
<p>Introduce</p> <p>Start with a noun and a verb. (“naming” part and “doing” part)</p>	<p>Choose beginning sentences carefully. Often they can come from a read aloud if previewed with the lens of what might be troublesome for students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure to teach the two parts of a sentence. • Identify the “naming” and the “doing” • Who? • Did what? <p>Example: turtle dives</p> <p>As you move through each elaboration step, ask one question at a time to build the complex sentence. You can create a working space for students to practice.</p> <p>Expanding Sentences: W Questions</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Kernel Sentence</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>___?</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>___?</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Expanded sentence:</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">The turtle swims.</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>What?</td> <td>green</td> </tr> <tr> <td>How?</td> <td>fast</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Expanded sentence:</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">The green turtle swims fast.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Kernel Sentence		___?		___?		Expanded sentence:		The turtle swims.		What?	green	How?	fast	Expanded sentence:		The green turtle swims fast.	
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<p>Elaborate the subject.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask “W” questions to add adjectives and articles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What kind of? ○ Which kind of? <p>Example: The small, green turtle dives.</p>																		

Elaborate the predicate.

- Ask "W" questions to add adverbs

- Where?
- Why?
- When?
- How?

The turtle swims.	
When?	late at night
Where?	in the ocean
Your sentence:	
The turtle swims late at night in the ocean.	
In the ocean, the turtle swims late at night.	
Late at night, the turtle swims in the ocean.	

Example: The small, green turtle dives quickly.

Add phrases.

- Ask "W" questions to add additional adverbs and phrases

- Where?
- Why?
- When?
- How?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who? • The turtle • Did what? • The turtle swims. • Where did she swim? • The turtle swims in the ocean. • Which turtle? • The young turtle swims in the ocean. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What color was she? • The young, green turtle swims in the ocean. • Why did she swim in the ocean? • The young, green turtle swims in the ocean in search of food. • When? • Every day the young, green turtle swims in the ocean in search of food.
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Example: The small, green turtle dives quickly into the seaweed.

Compound the subject and/or predicate

Examples:

The small, green turtle and his brother dive quickly into the seaweed.

The small, green turtle and his brother dive and swim quickly into the seaweed.

Vocabulary is needed!

Consider having academic words up on a vocabulary word wall or in a vocabulary word bank so that students can use these words, build their vocabulary knowledge, and utilize them to expand sentences to demonstrate comprehension. Such words might include: sensory words, transition words, unusual and interesting words, content words.