

July 2, 2014

Dear Danielle aka Grammar Cop,

We appreciated that you took us through an entire week of mini-lessons in your classroom, and you broke down grammar to be embedded into various content lessons. We know you were worried about doing a whole week on powerpoint for us, but we feel that you made the right decision. Thank you for being brave and confident; you inspire us! We clearly saw what it is like to be in your classroom, your routines, and how you break things into manageable chunks and carry it throughout your class. We feel that because of the way you presented this to us, you are going to be successful in presenting it to your colleagues.

AFFECT/MOTIVATION

- ★ As a student in your classroom, by breaking it into manageable chunks and putting it into a meaningful context, this was a successful way to teach grammar. It was much more meaningful and motivating to engage with grammar in the context of interesting content and in small chunks - not nearly as daunting.
- ★ We liked how you tied in the various forms of assessment throughout all four years in high school.
- ★ Being able to use technology and having each student be able to pick ads to use made these lessons very engaging.
- ★ Your group strategy of tablecheck made that activity highly motivating. We appreciate this strategy, as well as the bellwork chart strategy, as it can be transferred to many different levels and subjects. We also appreciated the use of collaboration that was embedded throughout the lesson. We felt comfortable knowing we would be able to learn with others in case we were not understanding the information.

PROMISING PRACTICES

- ★ Open-ended assessment questions were a much more meaningful assessment of students' ability to apply the grammar skills; in addition, it was a meaningful way to assess students' critical thinking about the English content and rhetoric that they had been studying.
- ★ The use of the mentor text was a great close reading activity for seeing the different forms of compound sentences.
- ★ We appreciated that you demonstrated what grammar in context is with use of mentor texts and student close reading of a text, as well as writing practice, and application with ideas and use of the grammar

concepts in writing.

★ Self-assessment is an important motivator and skill for students.

- **CCSS/POLICY/PR**

★ In the Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing, we saw the habits of mind of:

- curiosity-being able to look at various ads
- openness-looking into what is in the ads to influence you
- engagement-appropriate technology use
- creativity-using advertisements in teaching compound sentences
- persistence-carrying this throughout the whole unit
- responsibility-the use of the bellwork chart independently and in a group setting
- flexibility-in your adjustment to MAISA demands
- metacognition-the self assessment piece to your bellwork chart

- ★ There were a number of habits of mind from Writing Next present in your Lesson. We saw curiosity in the investigation of why authors use certain types of sentences and other grammatical structure. We saw engagement in how you used partnerwork, individual work, and small group work, in addition to your daily checks of student bellwork, instilling a sense of ownership. Creativity was engaged when students were able to develop their own sentences using the compound sentence structure and the non-fiction content and background experience with advertisement. Persistence was most evident in the short bursts of work throughout bellwork while also making it clear to students that concepts would build and relate throughout the week and that there was an end goal. Students were responsible to complete the tasks for themselves, but students were also held accountable to interact with a group later in the week. Metacognition was evident in self-assessment, as well as the activities that asked students to engage in thinking about how advertisements have influenced them.

- ★ The CCSS for grammar is clearly embedded in this lesson. We appreciated that you honored student lives of needing to know grammar for testing circumstances.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.1

Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.1.B

Use various types of phrases (noun, verb, adjectival, adverbial, participial, prepositional, absolute) and clauses (independent, dependent; noun, relative, adverbial) to convey specific meanings and add variety and interest to writing or presentations.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.2

Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.2.A

Use a semicolon (and perhaps a conjunctive adverb) to link two or more closely related independent clauses.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.2.B

Use a colon to introduce a list or quotation.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.4.A

Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or text; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

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EXTENSIONS/ADAPTATIONS

- ★ You could take the Bellwork Chart and have kids cut/glue it into their writer's notebooks. That way everything would continue to be in the same spot to refer back to as needed.
- ★ If you had a lower group, you could easily modify the bell work to include more construction of sentences with partners, more partner checks, or simply more conversations about the content (the ads) to help students generate ideas for their writing.
- ★ Application of work with compound sentences could be applied to student writing drafts through revision.

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QUESTIONS ARISEN

- ★ How do you monitor student learning throughout the class with grammar? What other grammar concepts do you study in your classes?
- ★ How do you select specific texts for mentor texts with grammar?
- ★ How do you explore grammar within the frame of SOAPstone? Do grammar practices vary based on modality? Do students do any exploration of this concept?

We want you to keep rocking it, grammar cop; the lessons inspired us! Please note the amazing use of compound sentences here, so our entire group can move to AP. We learned about grammar and ways to teach it; in fact, your work inspired us to discuss grammar instruction within our own departments for purposeful integration and practice.

Your grammar inmates,

Ashley, Kristin, Rachel, and Dawn

