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INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH

People who love the English language often lament the loss of grammar knowledge and the disappearance of systematic grammar instruction. We wince at emails with errors, such as when the noun *advice* is used instead of the verb *advise*. We may set aside a résumé with the incorrect placement of an apostrophe. And some of us pore (not pour) over entertaining punctuation guides such as *Eats, Shoots and Leaves* by Lynne Truss (2003). We chuckle over collections of bloopers such as *Anguished English: An Anthology of Accidental Assaults upon Our Language* by Richard Lederer (1987).

Even though we worry about grammar, our students arrive at school with a complex set of grammar rules in place—albeit affected by the prevailing dialect (Hillocks and Smith 2003, 727). For example, while students may not be able to recite the rule for where to position an adjective, they know intuitively to say *the yellow flower* instead of *the flower yellow*. All this knowledge comes without formal instruction. Further, young people easily shift between articulating or writing traditional patterns of grammar and communicating complete sentences with startling efficiency: IDK (I don't know), and for the ultimate in brevity, K (okay).

So, if students speak fairly well and have already mastered a complex written shorthand, why study grammar? Researchers provide us with three sound reasons:

1. the insights it offers into the way the language works
2. its usefulness in mastering standard forms of English
3. its usefulness in improving composition skills (Hillocks and Smith 1991, 594)

INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH *(cont.)*

Studying grammar also provides users—teachers, students, and parents—with a common vocabulary to discuss both spoken and written language. The Assembly for the Teaching of English Grammar states, “Grammar is important because it is the language that makes it possible for us to talk about language. Grammar names the types of words and word groups that make up sentences not only in English but in any language. As human beings, we can put sentences together even as children—we all *do* grammar. But to be able to talk about how sentences are built, about the types of words and word groups that make up sentences—that is *knowing about* grammar.”

With the publication of the Common Core State Standards, key instructional skills are identified, such as identifying parts of speech, using prepositional phrases, capitalizing, and correctly using commas. Writing conventions such as punctuation serve an important function for the reader—setting off syntactic units and providing intonational cues and semantic information. Capitalization provides the reader with such cues as sentence beginnings and proper nouns (Hodges 1991, 779).

The Need for Practice

To be successful in today’s classroom, students must deeply understand both concepts and procedures so that they can discuss and demonstrate their understanding. Demonstrating understanding is a process that must be continually practiced in order for students to be successful. According to Marzano, “practice has always been, and always will be, a necessary ingredient to learning procedural knowledge at a level at which students execute it independently” (2010, 83). Practice is especially important to help students apply their concrete, conceptual understanding of a particular language skill.

Understanding Assessment

In addition to providing opportunities for frequent practice, teachers must be able to assess students’ comprehension and word-study skills. This is important so that teachers can adequately address students’ misconceptions, build on their current understanding, and challenge them appropriately. Assessment is a long-term process that often involves careful analysis of student responses, from a lesson discussion, project, practice sheet, or test. When analyzing the data, it is important for teachers to reflect on how their teaching practices may have influenced students’ responses and to identify those areas where additional instruction may be required. In short, the data gathered from assessments should be used to inform instruction: slow down, speed up, or reteach. This type of assessment is called *formative assessment*.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

With *180 Days of Language*, students receive practice with punctuation, identifying parts of speech, capitalization, and spelling. The daily practice will develop students' writing efforts and oral reading skills.

Easy to Use and Standards-Based

These activities reinforce grade-level skills across a variety of language concepts. The questions are provided as a full practice page, making them easy to prepare and implement as part of a classroom morning routine, at the beginning of each language arts lesson, or as homework.

Every practice page provides questions that are tied to a language standard. Students are given opportunities for regular practice in language skills, allowing them to build confidence through these quick standards-based activities.

Question	Language Skill	Common Core State Standard
1–3	punctuation and capitalization	Language Standard 6.2 —Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
4–7	parts of speech	Language Standard 6.1 —Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
8	spelling	Language Standard 6.2 —Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

Note: Because articles and possessive pronouns are also adjectives, they are included in the answer key as such. Depending on students' knowledge of this, grade activity sheets accordingly.



HOW TO USE THIS BOOK *(cont.)*

Using the Practice Pages

Practice pages provide instruction and assessment opportunities for each day of the school year. Teachers may wish to prepare packets of weekly practice pages for the classroom or for homework. As outlined on page 5, every question is aligned to a language skill.

Practice pages provide instruction and assessment opportunities for each day of the school year.

Each question ties student practice to a specific language skill.

DAY 1

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

DIRECTIONS Read and answer each question.

1. Write the missing punctuation in the sentence.
If you own a cat, youve noticed that your cat has a lot of whiskers.

2. Write the missing punctuation in the sentence.
Its whiskers are attached to nerves which tell the cat when the whiskers touch something.

3. Circle the word that should be capitalized in the sentence.
You'd think those whiskers would have helped kilo, a fourteen-pound (6-kilogram) cat, know to stay out of a small pipe.

4. Underline the adverb in sentence A below.

5. Circle the verb in sentence A below.
A But the cat was firmly stuck in a five-inch (13-centimeter) pipe.

6. Underline the verb in sentence B below.

7. Circle the plural noun in sentence B below.
B Rescuers pulled it out by its tail!

8. Circle the word below that is spelled correctly.
accident
accident
accident

SCORE

1. (Y) (N)

2. (Y) (N)

3. (Y) (N)

4. (Y) (N)

5. (Y) (N)

6. (Y) (N)

7. (Y) (N)

8. (Y) (N)

___ / 8
Total

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Using the Scoring Guide

Use the scoring guide along the side of each practice page to check answers and see at a glance which skills may need more reinforcement.

Fill in the appropriate circle for each problem to indicate correct (Y) or incorrect (N) responses. You might wish to indicate only incorrect responses to focus on those skills. (For example, if students consistently miss items 2 and 4, they may need additional help with those concepts as outlined in the table on page 5.) Use the answer key at the back of the book to score the problems, or you may call out answers to have students self-score or peer-score their work.

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

DIRECTIONS

Read and answer each question.

SCORE

1. Write the missing punctuation in the sentence.

.....
Do you know what it means when someone says, "jump the shark"
.....

1. (Y) (N)

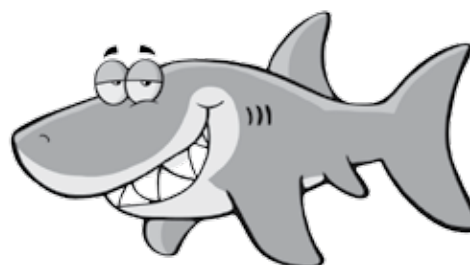
2. Write the missing punctuation in the sentence.

.....
Its a reference to a television series called *Happy Days*.
.....

2. (Y) (N)

3. Circle the word that should be capitalized in the sentence.

.....
In one episode, fonzie jumps over a shark while waterskiing.
.....



4. (Y) (N)

4. Underline the verb in sentence A below.

.....

5. (Y) (N)

5. Circle the adverb in sentence A below.

.....
A After that scene, the show went steadily downhill.
.....

6. (Y) (N)

6. Underline the plural noun in sentence B below.

.....

7. (Y) (N)

7. Circle the adjectives in sentence B below.

.....
B Therefore, all shows that start to decline have "jumped the shark."
.....

8. (Y) (N)

8. Circle the word below that is spelled correctly.

.....
judgmeant jugement judgment
.....

___ / 8

Total

NAME: _____ **DATE:** _____

DIRECTIONS

Read and answer each question.

1. Write the missing punctuation in the sentence.

On April 19, 1775 the American Revolution began.

2. Write the missing punctuation in the sentence.

Samuel Whittemore was 78 years old and crippled but that didn't stop him from fighting.

3. Circle the word that should be capitalized in the sentence.

As the british approached, he began shooting from behind a stone wall.

4. Underline the prepositional phrase in sentence A below.

5. Circle the verb in sentence A below.

A Whittemore killed three soldiers with his rifle and pistol.

6. Underline the proper noun in sentence B below.

7. Circle the article in sentence B below.

B The enraged British wounded him 14 times, but he lived to be 96!

8. Circle the word below that is spelled correctly.

superior

superior

superier

SCORE

1. (Y) (N)

2. (Y) (N)

3. (Y) (N)

4. (Y) (N)

5. (Y) (N)

6. (Y) (N)

7. (Y) (N)

8. (Y) (N)

___ / 8

Total

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

DIRECTIONS

Read and answer each question.

SCORE

1. Write the missing punctuation in the sentence.

Have you ever thought about having a parrot for a pet

1. (Y) (N)

2. Write the missing punctuation in the sentence.

Parrots can be smart playful, and entertaining.

2. (Y) (N)

3. Circle the word that should be capitalized in the sentence.

The african gray parrot can develop an extensive vocabulary.

3. (Y) (N)

4. Underline the conjunction in sentence A below.

A They mimic what they hear and quickly learn new words.

4. (Y) (N)

5. Circle the adverb in sentence A below.

B Because parrots live so long, owners often put them in their wills.

5. (Y) (N)

6. Underline the preposition in sentence B below.

7. Circle the prepositional phrase in sentence B below.

B Because parrots live so long, owners often put them in their wills.

7. (Y) (N)

8. Circle the word below that is spelled correctly.

inheirit

inherrit

inherit

___ / 8

Total



CONTENTS OF THE DIGITAL RESOURCE CD

Teacher Resources

Resource	Filename
Diagnostic Assessment Directions	directions.pdf
Practice Page Item Analysis	pageitem.pdf pageitem.doc pageitem.xls
Student Item Analysis	studentitem.pdf studentitem.doc studentitem.xls
Standards Chart	standards.pdf

Student Resources

All of the 180 practice pages are contained in a single PDF. In order to print specific days, open the PDF and select the pages to print.

Resource	Filename
Practice Pages Day 1–Day 180	practicepages.pdf