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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* is required. 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, capitalization, 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

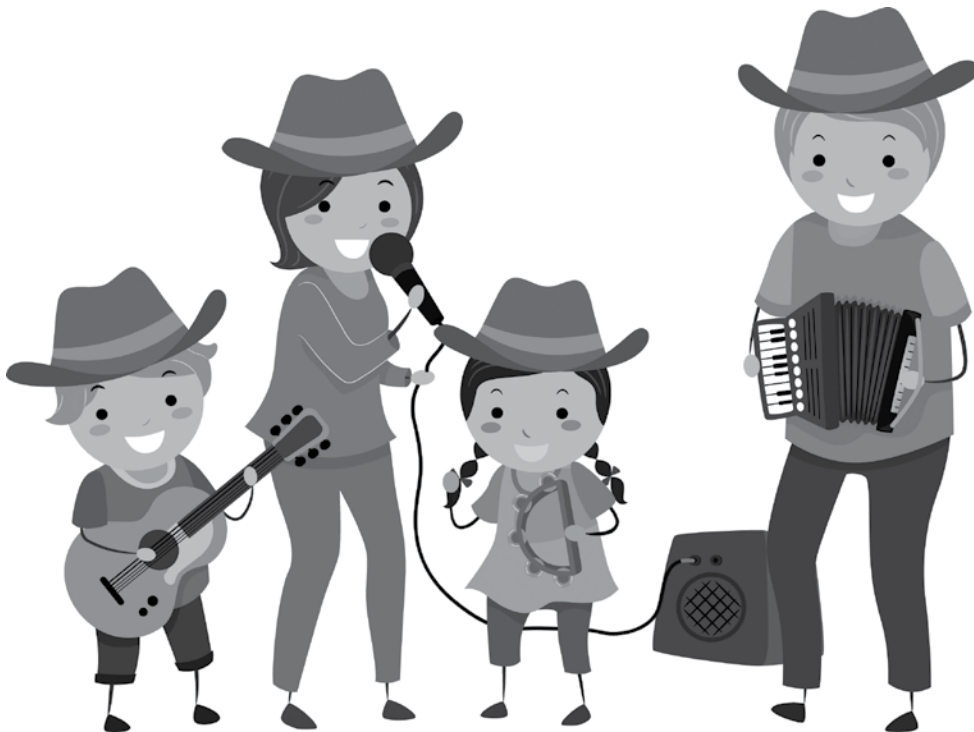
With *180 Days of Language*, students receive practice with punctuation, identifying parts of speech, capitalization, and spelling. The daily practice will develop students' writing efforts and oral reading skills.

## 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	capitalization	<b>Language.K.2.a</b> —Capitalize the first word in a sentence and the pronoun <i>I</i> .
2	punctuation	<b>Language.K.2.a</b> —Recognize and name end punctuation.
3	parts of speech	<b>Language.K.1.b</b> —Use frequently occurring nouns and verbs. <b>Language.K.1.c</b> —Form regular plural nouns orally by adding /s/ or /es/ (e.g., dog, dogs; wish, wishes).
4	spelling	<b>Language.K.2.d</b> —Spell simple words phonetically, drawing on knowledge of sound-letter relationships.



# 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: \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTIONS** Read and answer each question.

1. Write the word with a capital letter.  
\_\_\_\_\_ dog is fast.  
(The or the)

2. Add punctuation.  
The bed is red

3. Circle the verb.  
The pig runs.

4. Fill in the missing letter.  
d \_ \_ \_ g

SCORE

1. (Y) (N)

2. (Y) (N)

3. (Y) (N)

4. (Y) (N)

\_\_\_ / 4  
Total

12 #51172—180 Days of Language © Shell Education

## 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: \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTIONS** Read and answer each question.

1. Write the word with a capital letter.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ pan is hot.

(a or A)

2. Add punctuation.

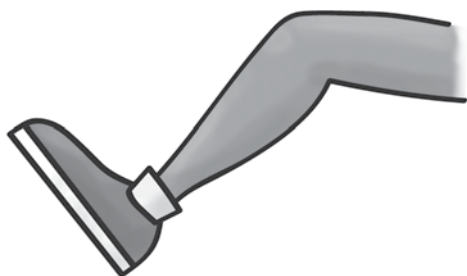
A boy is in the car

3. Circle the plural noun.

cat

cats

4. Fill in the missing letter.



l \_\_\_\_\_ g

**SCORE**

1. (Y) (N)

2. (Y) (N)

3. (Y) (N)

4. (Y) (N)

\_\_\_ / 4

**Total**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTIONS** Read and answer each question.**SCORE**

1. (Y) (N)

1. Write the word with a capital letter.

\_\_\_\_\_

2. (Y) (N)

\_\_\_\_\_ dad is tall.

(my)

3. (Y) (N)

2. Add punctuation.

4. (Y) (N)

That is way too loud

\_\_\_ / 4

Total

3. Circle the verb.

Eve likes movies.

4. Fill in the missing letter.



ro \_\_\_\_\_ e

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTIONS** Read and answer each question.**SCORE**

1. (Y) (N)

1. Write the word with a capital letter.

\_\_\_\_\_

2. (Y) (N)

\_\_\_\_\_ the dog black or brown?  
(is)

3. (Y) (N)

2. Add punctuation.

4. (Y) (N)

Is it raining

\_\_\_ / 4

Total

3. Write the plural noun.

\_\_\_\_\_

The \_\_\_\_\_ are tall.  
(poles or pole)

4. Fill in the missing letter.



\_\_\_\_\_

n \_\_\_\_\_ se

# 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
My Language Book	languagebook.pdf