



EXPEDITIONARY
LEARNING

Grade 6: Module 3A: Unit 3: Lesson 11

Revising the Newspaper Article: Sentence Structure and Transitions



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Long-Term Targets Addressed (Based on NYSP12 ELA CCLS)

I can use a variety of sentence structures to make my writing and speaking more interesting. (L.6.3a)

I can maintain consistency in style and tone when writing and speaking. (L.6.3b)

Supporting Learning Targets

- I can use a variety of sentence structures to make my article more interesting.
- I can use appropriate transitions to make the newspaper article flow smoothly.

Ongoing Assessment

- Revised End of Unit 3 Assessment: Draft newspaper article
- Self-assessment of the article on Row 3 of the Newspaper Article Rubric

Agenda

1. Opening
 - A. Unpacking Learning Targets (2 minutes)
2. Work Time
 - A. Mini Lesson: Sentence Structure (18 minutes)
 - B. Mini Lesson: Transitions (17 minutes)
3. Closing and Assessment
 - A. Self-Assessment against the Newspaper Article Rubric (8 minutes)
4. Homework
 - A. Continue to read your independent reading book.

Teaching Notes

- To address language standards L6.3a and L.6.3b, students have mini lessons on sentence structure and appropriate transitions to improve the flow of their article. Students then revise their newspaper articles inline with the content of the mini lessons.
- Students need their draft newspaper articles returned in this lesson for revision.
- In the next lesson, students will be writing their final copy of their newspaper articles for the performance task. If you require more time to provide feedback on the end of unit assessment, consider adding lessons in which students read independently and/or complete the independent reading assessment. See the Independent Reading document, Launching Independent Reading in Grades 6–8: Sample Plan, on EngageNY.org
- In advance: Determine your system for getting images copied for students to use in their articles. Students will need the images in the next lesson when they complete the final draft for the performance task.
- Post: Learning targets; Newspaper Article Criteria anchor chart.



Lesson Vocabulary	Materials
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sentence Structure handout (one per student and one for display)• Newspaper Article Rubric (from Unit 2, Lesson 12)• Model newspaper article: “Sandy wreaks havoc across Northeast; at least 11 dead” (from Unit 2, Lesson 12)• Transitional Words handout (one per student and one for display)• Row 3 of the Newspaper Article Rubric Self-Assessment (one per student)• Launching Independent Reading in Grades 6–8: Sample Plan (stand-alone document on EngageNY.org; for teacher reference)

Opening	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p>A. Unpacking Learning Targets (2 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Invite students to sit in triads and then read the learning targets with you:<ul style="list-style-type: none">* “I can use a variety of sentence structures to make my article more interesting.”* “I can use appropriate transitions to make the newspaper article flow smoothly.”• Invite students to Think-Pair-Share:<ul style="list-style-type: none">* “What are ‘appropriate transitions’? Why are they important?”• Select volunteers to share their ideas. Listen for students to explain that appropriate transitions are the words and phrases used to connect sentences and paragraphs, and they are important because they help writing flow well.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learning targets are a research-based strategy that helps all students, especially challenged learners.• Posting learning targets allows students to reference them throughout the lesson to check their understanding. The learning targets also provide a reminder to students and teachers about the intended learning behind a given lesson or activity.



Work Time	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>A. Mini Lesson: Sentence Structure (18 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Invite students to sit in triads. Display the Sentence Structure handout with only the top of the handout showing to students—the boxes with the A and B examples of sentences. Direct students to determine which one is more interesting: A or B, and why.• Read each box aloud.• Ask for a volunteer to share which one was more interesting and why. Listen for the student to explain something like: “B flowed more easily, was not as choppy, and had some variety to the sentence structure.”• Distribute the Sentence Flow handout to each student. Read the asterisked notes under the A and B boxes. Explain that the bolded words are important points to keep in mind when revising sentence structure.• Tell students to do number 2 on the handout. Ask them to read their sentence aloud to their triad and make any changes if it didn’t flow well when they read it aloud.• Circulate and support students as needed. You might have a student say a new sentence out loud first if he or she is stuck writing one down.• Refocus whole class. Cold call on one or two triads to whom you were not able to circulate, in order to extend your check for understanding. Write down their sentences on the displayed handout. Think aloud about how the students combined the sentences while keeping the language and style. An example of a new sentence might be: “After the earthquake crumbled the buildings, an inferno burned what remained.” Tell students a good strategy for determining if a sentence flows well is to read it aloud.• Direct students to take out the latest and greatest draft of their own article. Give directions:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Choose one paragraph to revise for more interesting sentence structure.– Review the sentences in that paragraph and combine them if needed, writing the new sentences in the margins of your draft.– Read your whole paragraph aloud and determine if the sentences flow together well. If not, revise the sentences that seemed choppy.• Circulate and support students with their sentence combining and revision. Remind students to keep in mind the bold-faced word on the handout.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider supporting some students by helping them make a next-steps list at the top of their draft article. This helps students chunk the task for revision into smaller steps.



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>B. Mini Lesson: Transitions (17 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Display the Newspaper Article Rubric and circle Row 3: “Exhibits clear newspaper article organization*, with the use of appropriate and varied transitions to create a unified whole and enhance meaning.” Read this aloud to students. Ask them to discuss in triads:<ul style="list-style-type: none">* “What does ‘transitions to create a unified whole’ mean?”• Cold call on a student and listen for him or her to explain that transition words help connect one paragraph to the next.• Explain that because newspaper articles are meant to be brief with short paragraphs, they use transitions a little differently than a literary analysis or the myth stories they wrote in Module 1.• Display the model newspaper article: “Sandy wreaks havoc across Northeast; at least 11 dead.” Tell students to reread the model. Ask students to discuss in triads:<ul style="list-style-type: none">* “What do you notice about how each paragraph transitions?”• Select volunteers to share their responses. Listen for them to notice that there are a few transitions like ‘In addition ...’ but mostly the paragraphs are connected by content with subheadings to divide different topics.• Distribute and display the Transitional Words handout. Read it aloud to students and review the different types of transition words.• Invite students to revise the transitions in their newspaper article drafts.	



Closing and Assessment	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>A. Self-Assessment against the Newspaper Article Rubric (8 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Distribute Row 3 of the Newspaper Article Rubric Self-Assessment. Invite students to read the Criteria column and Column “3” with you for Row 3.• Tell students they are going to score their article against the rubric. Ask them to underline on the rubric where their article fits best. They are then to justify how they have scored themselves using evidence from their article on the lines underneath.• Remind students to be honest when self-assessing because identifying where there are problems with their work will help them improve their work in the next draft. Remind students that writing is a set of skills that have to be learned over time. Encourage them to give their best assessment.• Circulate and encourage students to think carefully about their scoring choices. Consider prompting students with this question as needed:<ul style="list-style-type: none">* “You have underlined this part of your rubric. Why? Where is the evidence in your essay to support this?”• Students who finish quickly can begin to revise their draft essays based on their scoring against the rubric.• Congratulate students on their focus and effort at revision. Collect the revised articles and the self-assessments from students.	
Homework	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to read your independent reading book.	



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Supporting Materials



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Sentence Structure: Revising the Newspaper Article
Sentence Structure and Transitions

1. Which set of sentences is more interesting and why?

A

Hurricane Sandy brought a wall of sea water. It hit Manhattan and Long Island. It was 13 feet high. It flooded coastal areas. The flooding was more than 4 feet of water.

B

Sandy's wall of seawater hit Manhattan and Long Island. It arrived with a record-breaking 13-foot storm surge, flooding some coastal areas with more than 4 feet of water.

- All the sentences in A are simple sentences—sentences with just one subject and verb.
- To create more interesting sentences, spend some time combining some sentences.
- Having a variety of simple and complex (shorter and longer) sentences makes your writing more interesting to read.
- Read your sentences aloud to hear how they flow.
- When we combine sentences, we want to make sure we keep the descriptive words and formal style of language.

2. Practice combining these two sentences into one interesting sentence, keeping the best descriptive language:





Transitional Words

Below are a few guidelines to use when including transitions in newspaper articles. Remember: The purpose of transitions is to help the reader make connections between paragraphs, or to signal a shift in the article.

Newspapers articles do not typically use a transition for every paragraph because they are trying to be brief. Often they use transition words to signal a shift in time or place, or even a contrast in opinion.

The words below are some, but not all of the common transition words used.

Topic words	water, flooding, firefighters
Time words	during, before, after, following
Place words	here, there, nearby, beyond
Contrast words	however, yet, though, otherwise, nevertheless
Comparison words	likewise, similarly, in the same way
Cause words	because, since, on account
Effect words	hence, accordingly, therefore, on account of



Row 3 of the Newspaper Article
Rubric Self-Assessment

Name: _____

Date: _____

<p>COHERENCE, ORGANIZATION, AND STYLE: The extent to which the newspaper article logically organizes complex ideas, concepts, and information using the inverted pyramid structure* and formal and precise language</p> <p><i>*newspaper article uses the inverted pyramid structure—organizing details in order from major to minor</i></p>	<p>W.2 L.3 L.6</p>	<p>exhibits clear newspaper article organization,* with the skillful use of appropriate and varied transitions to create a unified whole and enhance meaning establishes and maintains a formal style, using grade-appropriate, stylistically sophisticated descriptive language and domain-specific vocabulary with a notable sense of voice uses a variety of sentence structures to make writing more compelling and interesting</p>	<p>exhibits clear newspaper article organization,* with the use of appropriate transitions to create a unified whole establishes and maintains a formal style using precise descriptive language and domain-specific vocabulary uses a variety of sentence structures to make writing more interesting</p>	<p>—exhibits some attempt at newspaper article organization,* with inconsistent use of transitions</p> <p>—establishes but fails to maintain a formal style, with inconsistent use of descriptive language and domain-specific vocabulary</p> <p>—inconsistent use of a variety of sentence structures to make writing more interesting</p>	<p>—exhibits little attempt at newspaper article organization,* or attempts to organize are irrelevant to the task</p> <p>—lacks a formal style, using language that is not descriptive or is inappropriate for the text(s) and task</p> <p>—rarely uses a variety of sentence structures to make writing more interesting</p>	<p>—exhibits no evidence of newspaper article organization*</p> <p>—uses language that is predominantly incoherent or copied directly from the text(s)</p> <p>—does not use a variety of sentence structures to make writing more interesting</p>
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