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Sentence Composing For Middle School: A Worktext On Sentence Variety And Maturity



Synopsis

With the first edition of his book, Don Killgallon changed the way thousands of high school English teachers and their students look at language, literature, and writing by focusing on the sentence. In this revised edition, Killgallon presents the same proven methodology but offers all-new writing exercises designed specifically for the middle school student. Unlike traditional grammar books that emphasize the parsing of sentences, this worktext asks students to imitate the sentence styles of professional writers, making the sentence composition process an enjoyable and challenging one. Killgallon teaches subliminally, nontechnically--the ways real writers compose their sentences, the ways students subsequently intuit within their own writing. Designed to produce sentence maturity and variety, the worktext offers extensive practice in four sentence-manipulating techniques: sentence unscrambling, sentence imitating, sentence combining, and sentence expanding. All of the activities are based on model sentences written by widely respected authors. They are designed to teach students structures they should but seldom use. The rationale is that imitation and practice are as valuable in gaining competence and confidence in written language production as they are in oral language production. Since the practices have proven successful for the great majority of students who have used them in all kinds of schools, it's demonstrably true that Sentence Composing can work anywhere--in any school, with any student.

Book Information

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Age Range: 11 - 13 years

Grade Level: 6 - 8

Customer Reviews

I found this book after reading another homeschool mom's blog post and am thrilled with it. It goes well with the philosophy in education that children need to be taught how to use their language and how to write, not just given a topic and required to write something down. I'm so pleased with the book I'd like to pick up the college level book just for me since it looks like so much fun, playing with and manipulating language. One note- After looking at the Look Inside feature for some reason I thought it was consumable, possibly because of the use of the word "worktext" so I purchased two books. This is a non-consumable. That may have been more obvious to me if I had looked at one of the pages that says "copy the sentences" but I didn't notice until I had the book in hand. Hopefully that will help some other purchaser.

I first learned about this author at a CATE Conference in 2001. I hesitated at first, but after boring my students with other methods I tried the sentence composing approach Killgallon uses and the results were excellent. The kids not only enjoyed learning the grammar but they actually asked to do the sentence composing. The students saw the sentence composing as a puzzle to be solved instead of another boring lesson on the parts of speech and the usage of punctuation.

I have used the Elementary School levels of this volume in my 5th and 6th grade class to great success. I love the individual manipulations with sentence structure this methodology teaches! I am excited to proceed with this next level. The only struggle we have with this workbook series is that the kids need to learn some organization in order to keep track of the workbook, plus a notebook for their answers. This isn't necessarily a negative, since knowing how to be organized AND how to read directions carefully is a serious component to writing. At the end of the day, I feel this adds to my students' experience, but I have a very small classroom and can give good one-on-one guidance. In a larger setting it could be a bigger challenge.

Don Killgallon produces resources I can always use in class, regardless of my students' levels. I love his simple approach to writing, which is always something my students can use to mimic good writing until they find their own writing styles and abilities. I love these books.

My students are learning how to write in a way they never have before! This is a wonderful model of good writing that is easy to use in the classroom!

Lots of ideas for explaining difficult concepts to my freshmen - I will be using both this book as well

as Killgallon's high school level one.

This book is both fun and challenging. I am using it for a seventh grader and a senior--and for myself as well. We are all challenged by some of the exercises. Some of the sentences used as models are very complex and a variety of subjects and styles are presented. The model sentences also stimulate thought and conversation in other subjects, as well--history to modern ethics.

This book can be teamed with Killgallon's Sentence Composing for the High School School, but this is the place to start. I used it with students two years ago and they enjoyed the challenge . . . now if we could just get them to incorporate the sentence styles into their daily writing. I'll be using it with low-performing high school students to try to improve their understanding of what is required for them not merely to pass the state's standardized test, but to demonstrate improvement in their writing ability.

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