

Sentence Frames

Sentence Frames is one of best ways to support and promote English language learners (ELLs) participation in discussions. This tool providing ELLs with sentence frames builds confidence and models language structure.

Writing requires something to say, the words to say it, and the structure with which to write it (forms and spelling) (McCracken & McCracken, 1986). Writing frames can help beginning writers learn to write quickly and acquire writing skills and strategies.

Beginning with a frame sentence, teachers can build on students' ideas.

What Makes This Strategy Good for ESL Students

- Provides students with a model for appropriate sentence structure
- Increases likelihood of ELL making an attempt at responses using familiar content vocabulary
- Enables student to conceptualize the words
- Builds confidence

Additional Resources:

[Sentence Frames](#)

Using Sentence Frames

Sentence Frame Powerpoint Example (CALSA)

Using Sentence Frames

A sentence frame is a structure to focus student learning on specific elements of content or language. Having students produce the language **orally** embeds and contextualizes new learning.

An easy way to get started using sentence frames is to post those objectives that make your administrator so darn happy.

A simple frame for an objective might be:

We will use _____ to _____.

Put a tool in the first blank and a purpose in the other and viola! Examples are:

- We will use interesting adjectives to write about characters
- We will use a question as a topic sentence to add interest.
- We will use a subordinate clause to begin a sentence.

- We will use vibrant verbs to show how our characters changed.

Other frames can be used to support the objective. For the first one above..

(character name), a (adjective, adjective) man, (verbed) (adverbly) (preposition)

You always have to give an example, so:

Bob, a lanky, bespectacled, man, drifted somnolently up to the bar.

Let's hear it!

Research on the brain tells us that hearing and producing language helps us store and retrieve new knowledge. (Keep saying that phone number until you find a pen!) So teachers say....

"Have your partner read today's objective to you and tell you what it means.
Now give your partner an example."

"Have your partner cover her eyes and listen while you read the objective changing one word.
Did she get it?"

Variations are endless, including...

Your "ticket" out the door is to tell me today's objective and give me an example.

Keep it fast paced, fun, and judiciously repetitious!

Bob Tourtillott 2008

Using Sentence Frames

Sentence frame examples by proficiency levels:

Beginning/Early Intermediate

_____ have _____ and _____.

Intermediate

_____ always have _____. The _____ are not always the same size.

Advanced/Advanced High

In conclusion, _____ have _____ and _____, however _____ are not always _____.

Example Provided by California Association of Latino Superintendents and Administrators (CALSA).

