

# HIGH SCHOOL PREP LANGUAGE ARTS CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

- Literary Genres:
  - o Fiction: novel excerpt, short story, fable, myth
  - o Non-fiction: autobiography, biography, persuasive letter, newspaper article, speech excerpt
  - o Poetry: rhymed, free verse, ballad, sonnet, elegy, haiku, tanka
  - o Drama
- Literary Elements
  - o Literary analysis
  - o Figurative language/literary techniques: simile, metaphor, personification, alliteration, assonance, consonance, rhyme, onomatopoeia
  - o Elements of fiction: setting, conflict, character, plot (exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution)
  - o Symbolism
  - o Theme
  - o Point of view
  - o Foreshadowing
  - o Allusion
  - o Satire, irony, parody, pun
  - o Hyperbole
  - o Use of dialect
- Writing
  - o Writing process: pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, publishing
  - o Paragraph structure and essay development
  - o Expository/compare and contrast paragraph
  - o Descriptive paragraph
  - o Personal narrative
  - o Persuasive essay
  - o Autobiographical sketch
  - o Biographical sketch
  - o Creative writing: short story, fable, myth, poetry, cartooning
  - o Focused free writing
  - o Dialogue in fiction
  - o Newspaper article
  - o Voice: first person, second person, third person
  - o Sentence combining and expansion
  - o Transition words
  - o Editing symbols
  - o Outlining
  - o Graphic organizers
- Grammar and Usage
  - o Types of sentences
  - o Sentence fragments and run on sentences
  - o Complete subject and predicate
  - o Parts of speech
  - o Noun usage and case
  - o Transitive, intransitive, linking verbs
  - o Regular, irregular verbs
  - o Verb tense
  - o Active and passive voice
  - o Subject-verb agreement
  - o Verbals: gerund, participle, infinitive

## Curriculum (continued)

- o Phrases: prepositional, appositive, verbal
- o Clauses: independent, dependent, restrictive, non-restrictive
- o Subordinate clauses: noun, adjective, adverb
- o Comparative adjectives and adverbs
- o Pronoun usage and case
- o Sentence diagramming
- o Direct and indirect objects
- o Conjunctions: coordinating, correlative
- Punctuation and Capitalization
  - o Apostrophes: contractions, possessives
  - o Periods
  - o Commas
  - o Colons
  - o Semi-colons
  - o Quotations
  - o Hyphens
  - o Dashes
  - o Ellipses
  - o Slashes
  - o Titles
- Active Reading Strategies: visualize, predict, connect, question, identify, clarify, evaluate
- Reading/Comprehension Skills
  - o Identifying main idea
  - o Recalling facts and details
  - o Understanding events
  - o Comparing and contrasting
  - o Recognizing cause and effect
  - o Understanding words in context
  - o Distinguishing between fact and opinion
  - o Drawing conclusions and making inferences
  - o Identifying author's purpose
  - o Interpreting figurative language
  - o Summarizing
- Vocabulary & Spelling Development
  - o Using a thesaurus
  - o Spelling rules
  - o Forming plurals
  - o Word etymology
  - o Denotation and connotation
  - o Greek and Latin roots
  - o Prefixes, suffixes
  - o Synonyms, antonyms
  - o Analogies
  - o Confusing words: homonyms, homographs, homophones
- Research Skills
  - o Note taking, summarizing, and organizing
  - o Bibliographic citation: MLA format
  - o Using a thesaurus
  - o Using the Internet
  - o Avoiding plagiarism

## Instructions to Parents/Students

- For optimal outcome complete one lesson three times a week for ten weeks.
- An answer key is located at the back of the book.
- The following icons indicate that a particular aspect of language arts is being presented.



Reading



Writing



Grammar



Punctuation



General Language Tools

- A “Research Addendum” is included on blue paper at the back of the book for instruction on how to write a research paper, and is meant to be kept as a reference.
- A glossary of terms has been included on yellow paper at the back of the book.
- A suggested reading list has been included on green paper at the back of the book.
- **Parents, please read the information on the back of this page.**



## Lesson #5

### Persuasive Writing

A **persuasive paragraph** or **essay** is a work of non-fiction that presents the writer's strong opinion about a topic and attempts to persuade the reader to accept the writer's point of view.

Below is a persuasive letter. It is, in fact, a persuasive essay hiding in business letter structure. The audience for this particular letter requires formal language. No contractions are used. This format is often required on standardized tests.

It is helpful to know the proper names of the parts of a business letter and these terms are highlighted throughout the letter.

**Note:** This letter is in **block format** with each line aligned to the left. The **heading** and **closing** may also be aligned to the right.

**Carefully read this persuasive letter, written by two ninth grade students, using *active reading strategies*.**

1562 Silo Road  
Crandall, NY 13072  
February 17, 2009

Principal Edwin Hardy  
1562 Silo Road  
Crandall, NY 13072

(The **inside address** is the address of the recipient of the letter.)

Dear Principal Hardy:

(The greeting is called the **salutation**.)

(The paragraphs form the **body** of the letter.)

Kennedy Middle School needs to go green! We are writing as representatives of Mr. Schwartz's 3rd hour science class, which has recently finished a unit on the environment. Our class members are concerned, because Kennedy Middle School is not doing all that it could to protect our fragile environment. We would like you to consider our proposal to make our cafeteria greener during lunch period by using reusable plastic trays to serve lunch, providing the cafeteria with recycling bins, and forming a recycling club to oversee this project.

According to our class survey, 80% of Kennedy's 500 students use cafeteria services to provide their lunch. The cafeteria staff has informed us that there are 450 plastic compartmentalized trays in storage. The staff has opted to use paper products because it is easier. However, if we stop using paper plates and cardboard trays to serve lunch, it will save trees and help our environment by cutting down the amount of trash our school generates. Second, we believe there should be recycling bins in the cafeteria to collect soda cans, plastic water and juice bottles, and recyclable paper products (such as lunch bags). Finally, we propose that a recycling club be formed. A number of our classmates are interested in being charter members. This club would provide monitors during lunch period to ensure that students use the recycling bins. Our school maintenance staff has told us that a storage room near the cafeteria could be used for collecting recycled material.

### Lesson #5 (continued)

plastic water bottles in the hallways. Once a week members would empty the classroom and hallway refuse into larger containers in the storage room. Mr. Schwartz has agreed to oversee transporting all refuse to the Crandall Recycling Center.

We hope that you will consider our proposal to help save our fragile earth by making Kennedy Middle School a greener school. By engaging in these recycling efforts, our students will become better stewards of our school and more environmentally sensitive citizens of our community. We are eager to discuss our proposal with you further.

Very truly yours,

(This is the **complimentary closing**. Only the *first word* is capitalized. The **closing** is always aligned with the heading, which sometimes is on the right.)

*Bethany R. Levine*  
Bethany R. Levine

*Michael A. Sanchez*  
Michael A. Sanchez (Use your full name for the **signature**.)

1. Locate and write this letter’s thesis (the position the writers will argue in the letter).

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2. List three arguments that the writers use to support their thesis.

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_

3. Write a short persuasive paragraph to your principal concerning something about which you feel strongly.

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## Fiction

## Lesson #10

Below is an excerpt from the short story, "A Retrieved Reformation," by O. Henry (1862-1910). At the beginning of the story, the reader is introduced to Jimmy Valentine, who has served nearly ten months of a four-year jail sentence for a crime involving safe cracking. Jimmy, who has "many friends on the outside," has been pardoned by the Governor and immediately returns to his life of crime. One afternoon, however, in the little town of Elmore, Arkansas, a young lady passes him on the street, and his life changes course: "Jimmy Valentine looked into her eyes, and forgot what he was, and became another man." Here Jimmy establishes a new identity as Ralph D. Spencer, opens a shoe store, and begins a new life with Annabel Adams. The story becomes more dramatic, however, when one of Annabel's two nieces locks the other in the new, highly secure bank vault of the Elmore bank owned by Annabel's father. Ben Price, the detective who had discovered Spencer's true identity and had come to arrest him, was looking on.

Suddenly there was a scream or two from the women, and a commotion. Unperceived by the elders, May, the nine-year-old girl, in a spirit of play, had shut Agatha in the vault. She had then shot the bolts and turned the knob of the combination as she had seen Mr. Adams do.

The old banker sprang to the handle and tugged at it for a moment. "The door can't be opened," he groaned. "The clock hasn't been wound nor the combination set."

Agatha's mother screamed again, hysterically.

"Hush!" said Mr. Adams, raising his trembling hand. "All be quiet for a moment, Agatha!" he called as loudly as he could: "Listen to me."

During the following silence they could just hear the faint sound of the child wildly shrieking in the dark vault in a panic of terror.

"My precious darling!" wailed the mother. "She will die of fright! Open the door! Oh, break it open! Can't you men do something?"

"There isn't a man nearer than Little Rock who can open that door," said Mr. Adams, in a shaky voice. "My God! Spencer, what shall we do? That child – she can't stand it long in there. There isn't enough air, and, besides, she'll go into convulsions from fright."

Agatha's mother, frantic now, beat the door of the vault with her hands. Somebody wildly suggested dynamite. Annabel turned to Jimmy, her large eyes full of anguish, but not yet despairing. To a woman nothing seems quite impossible to the powers of the man she worships.

"Can't you do something, Ralph – *try*, won't you?"

He looked at her with a queer, soft smile on his lips and in his keen eyes.

"Annabel," he said, "give me that rose you are wearing, will you?"

Hardly believing that she heard him aright, she unpinned the bud from the bosom of her dress, and placed it in his hand. Jimmy stuffed it into his vest-pocket, threw off his coat and pulled up his shirt-sleeves. With that act Ralph D. Spencer passed away and Jimmy Valentine took his place.

"Get away from the door, all of you," he commanded, shortly.

He set his suitcase on the table, and opened it out flat. From that time on he seemed to be unconscious of the presence of any one else. He laid out the shining, queer implements swiftly and orderly, whistling softly to himself as he always did when at work. In a deep silence and immovable, the others watched him as if under a spell.

In a minute Jimmy's pet drill was biting smoothly into the steel door. In ten minutes – breaking his own burglarious record – he threw back the bolts and opened the door.

Agatha, almost collapsed, but safe, was gathered into her mother's arms.

Jimmy Valentine put on his coat, and walked outside the railings towards the front door. As he went he thought he heard a far-away voice that he once knew call "Ralph!" But he never hesitated.

## Lesson #10 (continued)

At the door a big man stood somewhat in his way.

"Hello, Ben!" said Jimmy, still with his strange smile. "Got around at last, have you? Well, let's go. I don't know that it makes much difference, now."

And then Ben Price acted rather strangely.

"Guess you're mistaken, Mr. Spencer," he said. "Don't believe I recognize you. Your buggy's waiting for you, ain't it?"

And Ben Price turned and strolled down the street.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Answer the following questions about the selection:

1. In one part of the story, O. Henry describes Valentine's transformation from safe cracker to shoe salesman as, "the phoenix that arose from Jimmy Valentine's ashes." Research information about the phoenix, a bird in ancient Egyptian mythology, and explain how this might be an appropriate metaphor for the character of Ralph Spencer.

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2. Throughout the story, O. Henry uses carefully-selected adjectives to provide clarity and a visual picture for the reader. Underline at least 5 examples of his use of vivid adjectives in the excerpt.

3. Define these two words from the title.

retrieved \_\_\_\_\_

reformation \_\_\_\_\_

4. Explain why O. Henry's use of dialogue might help to build suspense more effectively than simply relating the story as a narrative.

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5. O. Henry is known for his stories with surprise endings. This story also reflects the use of **situational irony** (when events turn out the opposite of what we would expect). Explain how this story reflects the use of situational irony.

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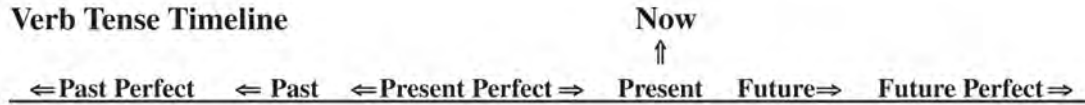


# Lesson #12

## Verbs Tenses

This lesson will focus on how to use **verb tenses**. In order to write or talk about action and time, there are several tenses a writer or speaker needs to know. We will focus on six of them. **Look at the following timeline of tenses:**

### Verb Tense Timeline



**Present Tense:** Action that is taking place in the present.

**Example:** Chris **scores** several baskets each game.

**Present Perfect:** Past action that has been continuous. (Uses helping verbs *has* or *have*)

**Example:** Chris **has scored** 198 baskets so far this season.

**Past Tense:** Action that happened in the past.

**Example:** Last year Chris **scored** twenty baskets in one game.

**Past Perfect:** Action in the past that has been completed. (Uses the helping verb *had*)

**Example:** Two years ago the most baskets Chris **had scored** in a game were six.

**Future:** Action taking place in the future.

**Example:** With luck, Chris **will score** over 250 baskets this season.

**Future Perfect:** Action that will be completed at some point in the future.

**Example:** If she hits 250 baskets, Chris **will have scored** 500 points this year.

The verb *to score* is a **regular verb** and has three parts used to form its **tenses**. Below are its three parts:

<b>Present</b>	<b>Past</b>	<b>Past Participle</b>
score	scored	(have, has, had) scored

Notice that the **past** and **past participle** of a **regular verb** use the same spelling. The past participle, however, will always have a **helping (or auxiliary) verb** before it.

**In the space below, write the missing parts of each *regular verb*. Check for proper spelling.**

Present	Past	Past Participle
_____	<i>laughed</i>	(has) _____
<i>skip</i>	_____	(have) _____
_____	_____	(have) <i>skied</i>
<i>dance</i>	_____	(have) _____
_____	<i>tapped</i>	(had) _____



## Lesson #12 (continued)

Some verbs are called **irregular** because their **past** and **past participle** forms do not follow the pattern of **regular verb** formation. Notice the differences in the chart below:

Present	Past	Past Participle
sing	sang	(have) sung
write	wrote	(have) written
buy	bought	(have) bought
come	came	(have) come
*read	read	(have) read
*hit	hit	(have) hit
begin	began	(have) begun
go	went	(have) gone

\*Notice that some irregular verbs do not change at all.

Fill in the correct *irregular verbs* in the chart below. Consult a dictionary if you are uncertain.

Present	Past	Past Participle
_____	<u>drank</u>	(has) _____
_____	_____	(have) <u>frozen</u>
<u>choose</u>	_____	(had) _____
_____	<u>rang</u>	(has) _____
<u>sit</u>	_____	(have) _____
_____	<u>had</u>	(had) _____

Often people are confused by irregular verbs and therefore make grammatical errors. Correct verb errors in the sentences below.

1. I have boughten some chips and dip.

\_\_\_\_\_

2. We have went to Disneyland three times.

\_\_\_\_\_

3. The choir should have sang a different song.

\_\_\_\_\_



# Lesson #28

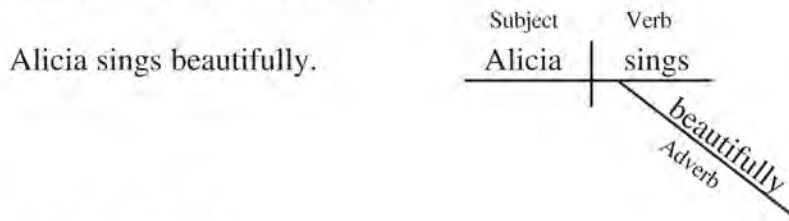
## Beginning Sentence Diagramming

There is a logic to English sentence structure, and you will see it clearly in the diagrammed sentences below. These are simple sentences. Diagramming more complex sentences requires greater skill, but this practice will introduce you to a *picture* or *map* of an English sentence.

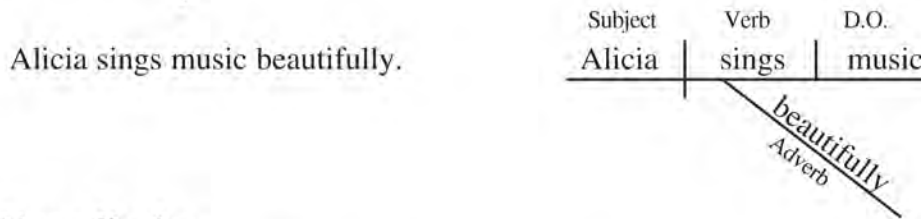
Here is what a short, simple sentence **diagram** looks like.



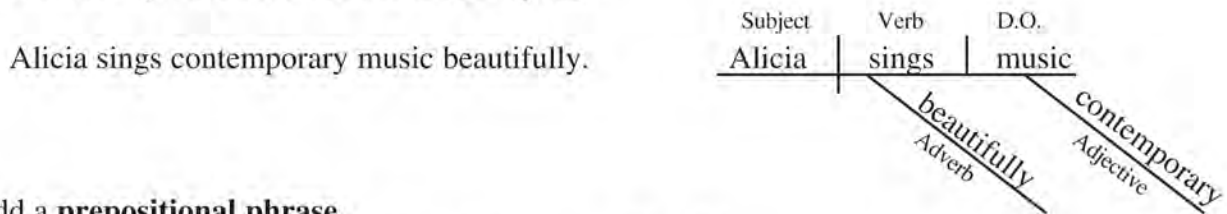
Now add an **adverb** to the sentence.  
(Notice where the *adverb* is placed.)



Now add a **direct object**.

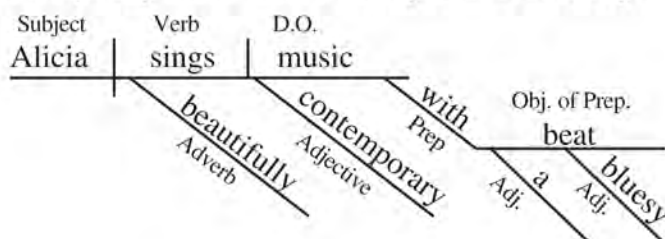


Now add an **adjective**.  
(Notice that the *adjective* modifies the direct object.)



Now add a **prepositional phrase**.  
(Notice where the parts of the *prepositional phrase* are placed.)

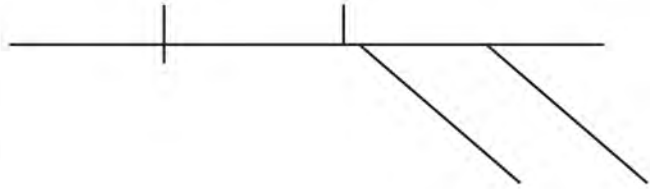
Alicia sings contemporary music with a bluesy beat beautifully.



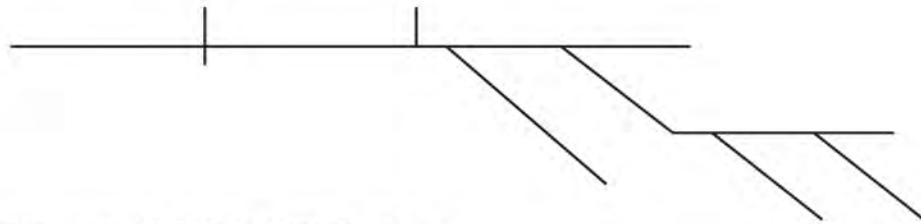
# Lesson #28 (continued)

Here are some sentences for you to try. Have fun with it!

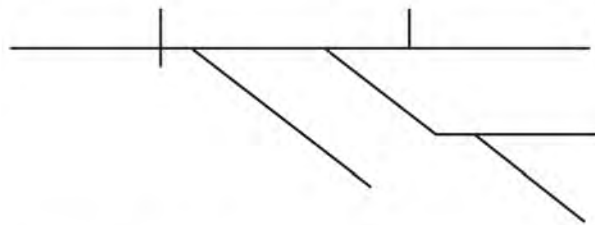
1. Rowling wrote several compelling books.



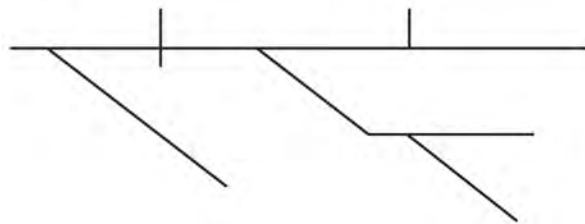
2. Serena uses golf balls in her favorite color.



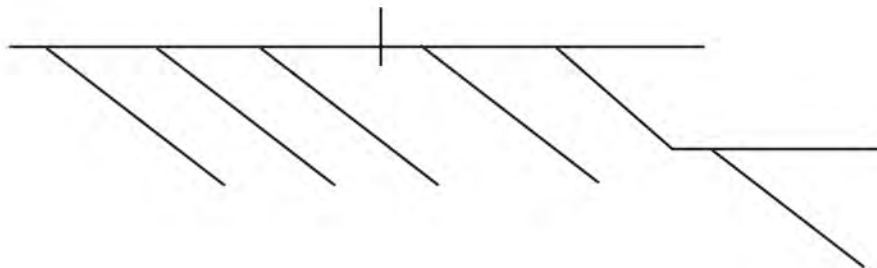
3. Venus played tennis watchfully before the storm



4. Goofy Brianna ate soup with a fork.



5. The shy new student wandered quietly through the halls.



**LESSON 1**

**The Emperor's New Clothes:** Answers will vary.

**Match the elements:**

- |      |      |      |
|------|------|------|
| 1. B | 4. A | 7. D |
| 2. C | 5. D | 8. B |
| 3. E | 6. B | 9. B |

**Identifying sentence types** (possible answers):

Declarative: *Everybody in the whole town talked about the precious cloth.*

Imperative: *Listen to the voice of an innocent child...*

Interrogative: *Does not my suit fit me marvelously?*

Exclamatory: *How well they look!*

**LESSON 2****Parts of Speech**

1. adverb 2. preposition 3. noun  
4. adjective 5. pronoun 6. verb  
7. correlative conjunction 8. Interjection

**LESSON 3**

**Little Women** - Answers will vary.

**Noun Descriptions:**

1. baseball- B, D 2. Atlanta-B, C  
3. democracy-E 4. audience-A, B 5. dish-B

**Noun Functions:** 1. possessive noun  
2. subject 3. object of preposition  
4. predicate noun 5. indirect object  
6. direct object

**Thoreau Nouns** (possible answers):

**Common Nouns:** woods, facts, life, resignation, marrow, ants, fable, men, pygmies, cranes, error, clout, virtue, occasion, wretchedness, detail, man, need, fingers, cases, toes, rest, simplicity, affairs, thumbnail

**Concrete Nouns:** woods, marrow, ants, fable, men, pygmies, cranes, man, fingers, toes, thumbnail

**Abstract Nouns:** facts, life, resignation, error, clout, virtue, occasion, wretchedness, detail, need, cases, rest, simplicity, affairs

**Compound Noun:** thumbnail

**LESSON 3 (continued)****Possible Short Answers:**

Why Thoreau Went into the Woods

1. Thoreau wanted to live close to nature, to simplify his life, and to escape the tedium of daily living.
2. Thoreau wanted to experience what he felt was most meaningful about living, and he felt that he could do this by living close to nature.
3. It could mean that we waste too much time on inconsequential things instead of focusing on what is really important.
4. We should keep our life simple and our needs few.

**Vocabulary:**

**resignation:** passive acceptance without protest;

**meanly:** poorly, squalidly, basely;

**superfluous:** non-essential, in excess of what is needed

**Possible Short Answers:**

Why Thoreau Left the Woods

1. He had other things that he wanted to do—other life experiences to pursue.
2. Thoreau doesn't want to be shut in a cabin—or an office—but prefers to be out on deck experiencing nature firsthand.
3. Thoreau is speaking out for individuality rather than conformity.