

The Book of ELA Openers

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Introduction

English-language arts (ELA) teachers all face the same problems: too much to teach and too little time for students to learn. The traditional “Big Four” of literature, writing applications, listening, and speaking can easily consume an ELA teacher’s entire instructional time. And, to be honest, most teachers don’t even get to much of the latter two curricular components.

But what about everything else that good ELA teachers know that they need to teach to enable their students to become literate learners? Specifically, what about critical thinking, writing strategies, reading skills, spelling, systematic vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics?

The Book of ELA Openers addresses the “everything else” that ELA teachers need to teach. For time-constrained teachers, these quality openers will help students quickly and efficiently learn these essential skills and grade-level standards. Of course, practice in these skills will help students significantly improve their thinking, writing, and reading on the “Big Four.” Additionally, using these openers will improve student performance on standardized tests, common assessments, and exit exams.

Instead of wasted instructional time at the beginning of class while teachers take attendance, handle paperwork, or deal with individual student issues. Instead of open-ended independent reading or free-choice journaling. Instead of silly “bell-ringer” openers or “rainy day” activities.

Most of these ELA openers follow the same procedures: Display the ELA Opener on an LCD, Smartboard®, or overhead projector. Students independently read the task directions, complete the written work, and the teacher (now that the transition issues have been handled) reviews and discusses student responses with the class. The openers all take from 5 to 15 minutes start to finish. Several openers can be combined to provide a rich, extended sequence of instruction.

The ELA openers do not require any advanced teacher preparation. Students are able to learn, and teachers are able to teach “on the fly.” Grading is simple—students self-evaluate their work by comparing to models or answers (all provided) that the teacher reads out loud. Interactive class participation is the key.

Improve the quality of your ELA instruction by ensuring that you teach everything your students need to learn with the resources in *The Book of ELA Openers*.

Literary Quotation

“All would live long, but none would be old.”

Benjamin Franklin (1706 - 1790)

Definition/Explanation/Reflection: Growing old presents both opportunities and challenges.

Observation: What do you see? What do you feel? What seem to be the key words?

Interpretation: How would you put this into your own words? What does this mean? What doesn't this mean? What does this suggest? Why does the author say this?

Application: How can this be used? How could this thought affect something else? What conclusions can be drawn from this? Do you agree with this? How does this apply to you?

Revision: How else could this have been written? Revise this to reflect your point of view or ideas. Create something new to say about this subject.

Student Model

TES Sentence Revisions #2

Revision—Start a sentence with a **prepositional phrase**.

Definition—A **prepositional phrase** describes location, tells time, or shows a relationship. It begins with a preposition and ends with a connecting object (a noun or pronoun).

Examples:

- *Describes location*

Behind the cabinet, he found the missing piece.

- *Tells time*

During the game, the umpire made mistakes.

- *Shows a relationship*

Except for Steven, they all left the party early.

Revise the following sentence with a prepositional phrase sentence opener:

The rabbit escaped the farmer by going under the fence then through the cornfield.

Teaching Hints:

Place a comma after a prepositional phrase sentence opener when a noun or pronoun follows.

Possible Answer:

Under the fence then through the cornfield, the rabbit escaped the farmer.

TES Rhetorical Stance Quick Writes #1

Voice: Idealistic and inspirational

Audience: A class of third-graders

Purpose: Describe the kind of world in which you hope these students will live as adults.

Form: A short speech

Student Model

I have a dream
that one day you will all live in a world in which wars are found
only in the history books
that you will see a world in which there are no more children who
go to bed hungry
that you will enjoy a world in which there is more laughter than
tears.

I have a dream.

Someday soon. You will know what it's like to have children of
your own.

Someday soon. You will understand what it's like to worry about
their futures.

Someday soon. You will hope for a better world for your children,
just as I hope for you.

I have a dream. Dreams can become real.

Open and Closed Syllables, Silent Final e, and Vowel Digraphs

bame-ba-bam-baim-bamme

gleb-gleeb-gle-glebe-glebbe

bi-bife-bif-biffe-boif

clobbe-clobe-clob-cloab-clo

bu-bukke-buk-buke-bauk

craid-crad-cradde-cra-crade

de-deem-dem-demme-deme

TRS Schwa Syllable Blending

about preparatory mountain

kitten cemetery mischievous

easily engineer vehicle

galloping welcome porpoises

applicable representative natural

mathematic diagram persecute

discovery imaginary invisible

wonderful sophomore melody

deliberately symphony traveling

Teaching Hint: Unaccented vowel sounds frequently have the *schwa* sound, especially when there is only one letter in the syllable. All vowels can have the *schwa* sound.



Schwa Syllable Blending Worksheet

Name _____

Directions: Print the Syllable Blending words in the spaces provided. Carefully divide the words into syllables with / marks. Then, write the accent mark (') above the primary vowel accent.

Teaching Hint: Unaccented vowel sounds frequently have the *schwa* sound, especially when there is only one letter in the syllable. All vowels can have the *schwa* sound.

- | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 10. _____ | 19. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 11. _____ | 20. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 12. _____ | 21. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 13. _____ | 22. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 14. _____ | 23. _____ |
| 6. _____ | 15. _____ | 24. _____ |
| 7. _____ | 16. _____ | 25. _____ |
| 8. _____ | 17. _____ | 26. _____ |
| 9. _____ | 18. _____ | 27. _____ |

TRS "The Ape" Comprehension Worksheet #1

The ape is a very interesting animal. One type of ape is the orangutan. Male orangutans can weigh as much as two normal size humans. Females weigh about half as much. Orangutans have long, strong arms and their hands and feet are shaped like hooks. They are shaggy and have red hair.

Orangutans used to live all over Southeast Asia. Now they only live in a few rain forests on the islands of Sumatra and Borneo. Orangutans swing from tall trees to move around. It is warm where these animals live, but not too warm. There is a lot of rain there, so trees and plants grow very tall and big.

Orangutans are *omnivores*, since they eat some birds and small mammals. However, they mostly eat plants, like fruit and leaves, instead of meat. Their diet consists of mostly fruit. The fruits they tend to prefer have a lot of sugar in them. One fruit that they like in particular are figs. Figs come from trees and they are easy for orangutans to pick and eat. Orangutans also eat lots of young leaves from many trees in their habitat.

Unlike many other animals, orangutans are single adults, so they have no family structure. Mother orangutans raise their children one at a time. The baby rides on its mother's back for three years at the start of its life. There, it learns how to pick food and protect itself from danger. Female orangutans usually have one baby every six years. Older male orangutans may fight each other for the attention of the available female orangutans.

The territory of an adult orangutan is not clearly established, as is the case with many animals. Often, orangutan territories will overlap. However, this does not mean that orangutans are social animals. They limit their social **interaction** to feeding, mating, and calling each other. Only rarely will orangutans get in fights with each other over food or territory. In these fights, the apes will **demonstrate** their strength by destroying branches, charging at each other, and biting each other until one gives up.

Due to deforestation of the rain forest (cutting down trees for grazing or farmland), orangutans are becoming more and more endangered with each day. Palm oil farmers have cut down much of the forest on Sumatra and Borneo. Some people even capture orangutans to use them as pets in their homes. Orangutans are already on international endangered species lists, and their habitat has been increasingly threatened by humans, mainly through the deforestation of the rain forest.

Predict



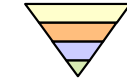
(1) Why has the habitat of orangutans decreased?

Re-think



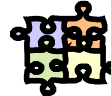
(2) How do orangutans depend on their habitat?

Summarize



(3) Summarize their family relationships.

Connect



(4) What other animals prefer independence and being alone to close relationships?

Interpret



(5) How could orangutans be saved?

Rule #4: Consonant Doubling Doodle (to the tune of Yankee Doodle)

Double the last consonant

Yankee Doodle went to town

When adding on an ending

'A riding on a pony

If these three do all agree

Stuck a feather in his cap

On this you'll be depending.

And called it macaroni.

Is the accent at the end?

Yankee Doodle keep it up!

With a vowel, then consonant?

Yankee Doodle da-an-dy

Does the ending you must add

Mind the music and the step

Begin with a vowel?

And with the girls be handy.

TSV Greek and Latin Word Part Openers #3

Prefixes

sub

(under) submarine

em

(in) employ

Roots

path

(feeling) sympathy

sist

(stand) consist

mut

(change) mute

Suffixes

ant

(one who) assistant

y

(when, how, like)

happy

TGM Sentence Lifting #7

Mechanics

Use commas before conjunctions to join two independent clauses. A coordinating conjunction connects words, phrases, or clauses with related meanings.

Practice

I liked her. She liked me.

Spelling

Ken kisses Coco in a custom car. (The starting /k/ sound is spelled k before e and i, but c before o, u, and a.)

Practice

Kurrently, kennels have individual cages, so puppies may eat their kibble without kompetition from older dogs.

Grammar

Two independent clauses combined improperly form a sentence run-on. Fix run-ons by joining them with a comma-conjunction or semicolon or add a dependent clause to form a compound-complex sentence.

Practice

She enjoys his cooking she always has.

Literary Sentence Model

“Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power.”

Abraham Lincoln (1809 - 1865)

The quote begins with an independent clause, follows with a dependent clause, and ends with another independent clause—an interesting compound-complex sentence.

Student Sentence Model

Mechanics Dictation

He told her the news, yet she did not believe it.

Spelling Dictation

The cantankerous and cunning soccer player kept consistently kicking well.

Grammar Dictation

Rearrange these words into one compound-complex sentence with the dependent clause at the beginning: He did dishes when she left and then he slept.

When she left, he did dishes, and then he slept.

TGM Teaching Tips and Answers #7

Mechanics

“Today, we are studying how to use commas to join independent clauses. Remember, an independent clause has a subject and predicate that expresses a complete thought. Please write down this rule: ‘Use commas before conjunctions to join two independent clauses. A **coordinating conjunction**, such as FANBOYS (For-And-Nor-But-Or-Yet-So), connects words, phrases, or clauses with related meanings.’ Now, what is right and what is wrong in the practice sentence, according to the rule?”

Advanced: **Correlative conjunctions** can also be used to join independent clauses. These paired conjunctions are used in the same sentence to indicate a certain relationship. Common correlative conjunctions include the following: both...and, not only...but also, either...or, whether...or, neither...nor

Answer: I liked her, and (so) she liked me.

Spelling

“Now, we will learn a useful spelling rule for the starting /k/ sound. Please, write down this rule: ‘Ken kisses Coco in a custom car. (The starting /k/ sound is spelled *k* before *e* and *i*, but *c* before *o*, *u*, and *a*.)’ Now, what is right and what is wrong in the practice sentence, according to the rule?”

Advanced: The Greek spelling for the starting /k/ sound is “ch.” Examples: *chorus* and *chaos*.

Answer: Currently, kennels have individual cages, so puppies may eat their kibble without competition from older dogs.

Grammar

“Next, we will discuss how to fix incomplete sentences. Please write this down: ‘Two independent clauses combined improperly form a **sentence run-on**. Fix run-ons by joining them with a comma-conjunction or semicolon or add a dependent clause to form a **compound-complex sentence**.’ Now, revise the run-on in the Practice section to form a compound-complex sentence.”

Advanced: Two independent clauses combined with a comma form a **comma splice**. To correct a comma splice, use a comma-conjunction, a semicolon, or form a compound subject to act upon one verb, or change one clause to a phrase starting with an ing word.

Answer Options: She enjoys his cooking, and (but, yet) she always has. Even though she does cook, she enjoys his cooking, and she always has.