



Juicy Sentence Play

Teacher Prep

SELECT a juicy sentence from text you are using. (See *Choosing “Juicy” Complex Excerpts and Sentences* guide.)

DECIDE which sentence carries weight and might be confounding if left unattended.

- **THINK** about the academic language function/purpose of that sentence in relation to the information or its content.
- **EXAMINE** the selected sentence carefully for author’s craft, intent, and purpose.

HIGHLIGHT the selected compound and/or complex sentence inside the excerpt so that it is clearly visible during the reading closely activity.

WRITE the sentence on a sentence strip, color coding main and dependent clauses and phrases, or write the sentence on an interactive board, again color coding to distinguish main from dependent clauses and phrases.

Teacher and Student Instructional Play: Deconstructing, Reconstructing, and Mapping Meaning

After a close read of the text excerpt, return to a “juicy” sentence inside the text to understand what it is conveying.

Map Meaning

Ask questions for each part of the sentence, always mapping meaning back to the words, phrases, punctuation, etc. Use these suggested questions to guide students in deconstructing and reconstructing the juicy sentence and in mapping meaning to each of its parts:

- **Who** or **what** is this all about? (subject/topic)
- What does it say about the **who** or **what**? (verb/predicate)
- What does this part say? What questions does it answer?

Follow-up questions: Identify the part or parts that tell us:

- **where** this takes place?
- **when** this takes place?
- **why** this happened?
- **how** this happened?

Deconstruction

As students uncover each part of the sentence, have them tear it from the long sentence strip until the sentence strip is broken into all its parts. You can display simple sentence frames on a chart and have students post the parts onto the sentence frames:

This is about (Subject/Topic) .

 (Subject/Topic) (Verb/Predicate) .

This can also be done on an interactive board where students deconstruct and then reconstruct the sentence, dragging the deconstructed parts to fill in the sentence frames.



Text Dependent Questions

Use text dependent questions to help guide students to reveal **how** and **why** the parts of the sentence work. List the additional facts embedded in each part. Conceal the dependent clauses, words, or phrases and ask students questions like:

- What if the author would have omitted this word or used another? What would change in each case?
- What information would be missing if we didn't have this part?
- How does this part work? What does this part do to the main clause?
- Why did the author start with this phrase or clause? Why did the author add this clause, phrase, or punctuation? What if the author left this part out?
- What can you assume if the author included this?



Reconstruction through Student Play:

Sentence Scrambling and Replacement Activities

If you are using a sentence strip, have students hold and read each part and guide students to play with the arrangement of the sentence parts.

- Have them leave out a part and ask, "What is missing?"
- Mix up the parts and see if students can rearrange them as the original sentence was formed. As students rearrange the parts, ask them to see if it makes sense.

Using interactive boards allows students to easily move phrases and clauses to reconstruct the sentence back to its original construction. Similarly, students can scramble the parts to make another sentence and note the difference in purpose, tone, etc.

Use key parts of the sentence as phrasal frames or linguistic templates for continued practice with academic speaking and writing. Students can use the structure to create their own sentences, replacing original words and phrases with others that may also work.

- Chart or keep a running list of the phrasal frames and linguistic templates organized by academic language functions. These charts will help support student output through academic talk and writing.

