

## Sentences in Motion

**Pillar: Active Living**

**Division I**

**Grade Level: 1-3**

**Core Curriculum Connections: Language Arts**

**I. Rationale:** One of the most common grammatical concerns that plagues teachers across the grades is that their students do not write in complete sentences on a consistent basis. Knowing the difference between a complete sentence and an incomplete sentence is one of the most basic and necessary language skills that all students must master to communicate effectively. If students do not develop a solid understanding of what constitutes a complete sentence in the early grades, this problem will persist in later grades and become more difficult to rectify. Reinforcing punctuation placement in a variety of ways will assist students in solidifying the components of a complete sentence and serve as an introductory activity to the different sentences types and structures. This lesson is geared towards achieving the curriculum outcomes in division one of identifying and using correct punctuation in reading and writing sentences, identifying sentences types, and distinguishing between complete and incomplete sentences. Because sentence fragments and comma splices are recurrent errors that often linger in later grades, this activity could be adapted and applied as deemed appropriate. By physically moving to create sentences, this lesson offers students an fluid and active alternative to static and passive grammar seat work.

### II. Activity Outcomes:

*The students will:*

- apply locomotor movements and skills to practice punctuation placement and reinforce complete sentence structure.
- recognize the connection between the physical activity and learning and understand how the body can be used to help the mind learn, practice, and apply new skills.
- acknowledge the importance of being active on a daily basis.

### III. Curriculum Outcomes: Language Arts

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
<b>General Outcome 4</b> Students will listen, speak, read, write, view and represent to enhance the clarity and artistry of communication	<b>General Outcome 4</b> Students will listen, speak, read, write, view and represent to enhance the clarity and artistry of communication	<b>General Outcome 4</b> Students will listen, speak, read, write, view and represent to enhance the clarity and artistry of communication
<b>4.2 Attend to Conventions</b>	<b>4.2 Attend to Conventions</b>	<b>4.2 Attend to Conventions</b>

<p><b>Specific Outcomes:</b>  <b>Attend to capitalization and punctuation</b>  identify periods, exclamation marks and question marks when reading, and use them to assist comprehension</p>	<p><b>Specific Outcomes:</b>  <b>Attend to capitalization and punctuation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use periods and question marks, appropriately, as end punctuation in own writing</li> <li>• Students read their writing to each other to help them check for periods and question marks.</li> <li>• use commas to separate words in a series in own writing</li> <li>• identify commas and apostrophes when reading, and use them to assist comprehension</li> </ul>	<p><b>Specific Outcomes:</b>  <b>Attend to capitalization and punctuation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use exclamation marks, appropriately, as end punctuation in own writing</li> <li>• identify commas, end punctuation, apostrophes and quotation marks when reading, and use them to assist comprehension</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Attend to grammar and usage</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• write complete sentences, using capital letters and periods</li> </ul>	<p><b>Attend to grammar and usage</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify a variety of sentence types, and use in own writing to distinguish between complete and incomplete sentences</li> </ul>

#### IV. Materials:

- large activity area (gymnasium or playground)

#### V. Procedure:

1. Review the basic end punctuation marks with the students: periods, question marks, and exclamation points. The comma can be incorporated when doing this activity with grades two and three students.
2. Begin by stressing the locomotor skill that the students will use to move and review the actions that accompany punctuation mark (see below).
3. Have students find their own self space in the playing area. On your signal, the students begin to move around the playground or gym according to the assigned locomotor movement: running, jumping, hopping, marching, shuffling, skipping etc.
4. As the students are moving around, call out a sentence and have the students apply the correct punctuation to the end of the sentence by doing the related skill. For example, the teacher may call out, "What are you having for a snack after school today?" Because this is a question, student must recognize that a question mark needs to be at the end of this statement. Therefore, they would demonstrate this understanding by moving in the opposite direction or way they were moving, illustrating what our voice does (goes up instead of down) when we come to a question mark which is the opposite of what it usually does.

#### Punctuation Marks (and their meanings):

1. **Period = Stop**
2. **Exclamation Point = Jump Stop**
3. **Question Mark = Move in the opposite direction or way they were moving**
4. **Comma = Pause and then continue**

*Reinforce the objective of this activity by discussing how the movements and the sentences relate. Each movement demonstrates what you would do when reading a sentence. We go when we are reading, we pause when we come to a comma, we stop at a period, and our voices raise when we come to a question mark and really emphasize exclamation point.*

5. To reinforce the use of the comma to separate words in a series, inform students prior to saying the sentence that it requires comma, and that they will need to listen for where the comma or commas should be placed and pause at those particular points in the sentence.

## **VI. Extensions and Variations:**

1. Grade 3: Students need to know the difference between complete and incomplete sentences. This activity could be modified to practice this skill. For complete sentences, the students would apply the same correct end punctuation by doing the associated action. If the sentence was incomplete, students keep moving until someone volunteers to complete the sentence correctly. For example, the teacher may say: On my way to the store. The students should keep moving indicating that they realize the phrase is not a complete thought. If a student knows how to complete the sentence, they show this by sitting down until the teacher call upon them for their suggestion. Which could be, ' I saw a dog". The rest of the class would then stop to indicate that period needs to follow the end of this sentence branding it as a complete thought.

2. Grade 4: Students must differentiate between simple and compound sentences. This game could be modified so that the teacher reads out both types of sentences during the course of the activity and the students show that they can identify each by doing an associated skill. For simple sentences students could just stop and remain single. To recognize compound sentences, students could run to a friend and join hands. The actions that coordinate to each of the punctuation marks could remain the same and be used as well. Once they are joined after a compound sentence is read. The partners remain holding hands and do the next assigned locomotor movement until a simple sentence is read aloud again at which time they would break apart again.

## **VII. Source:**

- This lesson idea is adapted from [PE Central](#).