

Embedded Grammar Instruction

Teaching grammar and writing skills through worksheets and Daily Oral Language (DOL) activities may expose a student to a concept or skill, but does not necessarily lead to the transfer of the skill or concept into the students writing, reading, or speaking. The following suggestions for embedding grammar instruction may facilitate the application of the skill or concept.

1. Consult Pacing Guide for writing and/or grammar SOL to be taught during the quarter if your division/school has this document.
2. Review SOL in Curriculum Framework, especially the Essential Knowledge, Skills, and Processes, for specific skills and information.
3. Use the index in the grammar text to find instructional strategies and practice for the specific SOL.
4. Check the index in the reading series for “grammar and usage” and/or writing to find instructional strategies and practice for the specific SOL.
5. Plan a mini-lesson for the grammar or writing skill. When grade level teachers identify the skill or concept they will all teach, strategies and activities may be shared.
6. Overhead transparencies of worksheets or worksheets projected from a computer onto a whiteboard or chalkboard allow the teacher to provide direct instruction while students may record their answers on paper or in a journal. This also eliminates the need to copy so many worksheets.
7. Once students have received initial instruction and practice, assignments need to be relevant to the students. Some examples for prepositional phrases are:
 - Make a Word Wall of prepositions for students to use in their writing. Memorizing a list of prepositions does not provide authentic learning.
 - Ask students to write three different sentences adding a prepositional phrase to a given basic sentence, i.e. The cat ran away. 1. The cat ran away from the dog. 2. In January, the cat ran away. 3. The cat at my cousin’s house ran away. How does this change what you know about the cat that ran away?
 - After students read a paragraph from a reading, science, social studies, or math book, ask them to find prepositional phrases from their reading.
 - Let students work with a partner to see how many prepositional phrases they can incorporate into one sentence without the sentence losing meaning (although the sentence may be very awkward).
 - Ask students to look at a comic strip to see if there are any prepositional phrases. If so, identify them. If not, have students add some to increase detail.
8. During the next week or two, continually focus attention on prepositional phrases in students’ reading and writing, in language arts, across the curriculum, and away from school.