

### Grade 12: Politics Language Task

All students must read, understand, and express their understanding of complex, grade-level texts. At the heart of being able to read and understand complex texts is the ability to automatically and fluently decode words and determine how they work together in sentences to produce meaning. Having “language sense” combined with other factors, such as having robust background knowledge and a wide vocabulary, are key determining factors in what makes a student able to read and understand complex texts.<sup>1</sup>

The language tasks have been developed to support teachers in developing students’ language sense through repeated exploration of how key sentences from the texts of the ELA Guidebooks 2.0 units are put together to produce meaning. This approach reinforces students’ knowledge of language structures and how those structures produce meaning.<sup>2</sup>

Each language task is made of at least 20 language links. Each language link is designed to take around 10-15 minutes to conduct. The links can be used with the ELA Guidebooks 2.0 units as a beginning activity with a whole class of students or during targeted, small-group instruction or individual instruction with students who need additional support. Each language link contains text to display or project as a stimulus for student work, teacher directions, and student look-fors. The student look-fors include examples of accurate student responses; however they are not inclusive or exclusive of all possible responses.

The language links focus students on the study of mentor sentences from the unit texts. Mentor sentences were selected for their meaning and their structure. The mentor sentences focus on the main ideas or concepts of the unit texts and present opportunities for students to practice with the complex structures of their grade level. Students study each mentor sentence using the same five lesson protocol. The same five language links are then repeated with a new mentor sentence.

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<sup>1</sup> Shanahan, T., Fisher, D., & Frey, N. (2012, March). The Challenge of Challenging Text. *Educational Leadership*, 69(6), 58-62. Retrieved from

<http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/mar12/vol69/num06/The-Challenge-of-Challenging-Text.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> Fillmore, L. W., & Fillmore, C. J. (n.d.). What Does Text Complexity Mean for English Learners and Language Minority Students? Retrieved November 12, 2016, from

[http://ell.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/pdf/academic-papers/06-LWF%20CJF%20Text%20Complexity%20FINAL\\_0.pdf](http://ell.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/pdf/academic-papers/06-LWF%20CJF%20Text%20Complexity%20FINAL_0.pdf)

These language links focus on the study of 4 mentor sentences from the unit texts. Each language link should take around 10-15 minutes to conduct.

Each mentor sentence is used across five language links that each have a different purpose. The same five language links are then repeated with a new mentor sentence.

1. What does this sentence mean?
  - a. Purpose: Students make an initial interpretation of the mentor sentence's meaning.
2. What do I notice about this sentence?
  - a. Purpose: Students examine the meaning and structure of the mentor sentence.
3. What do I know this sentence means?
  - a. Purpose: Students demonstrate their understanding of the sentence's meaning.
4. What is the structure of this sentence?
  - a. Purpose: Students create a sentence frame based on the mentor sentence.
5. Can I write a quality sentence?
  - a. Purpose: Students emulate the structure of the mentor sentence in their own sentence.

Throughout this section, notes are provided to identify places of additional skills support for students based on previous grade-level standards. Be sure to keep track during these language links of places where students need additional skills support, and use time during small-group or individual instruction to target those skills.

### *Pygmalion*

Mentor Sentence 1: What does this sentence mean?

1. Display or project:

He was, I believe, not in the least an ill-natured man: very much the opposite, I should say; but he would not suffer fools gladly.

*From Pygmalion*

This sentence means...

2. Prompt students to copy the sentence.
3. Say: "Write and complete the sentence stem underneath the quotation."

#### Student Look-Fors:

- Shaw believes that Henry Sweet was the opposite of a negative person, but he may have seemed negative because he did not condone the stupidity of others.

4. After several minutes, ask a few students to share how they paraphrased or interpreted the quotation. Prompt students to use the following stems to guide the conversation.
  - a. "Another way to say this sentence is..."
  - b. "I made meaning of this sentence by..."
  - c. "I looked at...."
  - d. "I noticed that..."

Note: If students have trouble forming their ideas, remind them that this is day 1 with the mentor sentence, and they will have other opportunities to develop understanding of the sentence over the next few language links.

5. Prompt students to revise or adjust their written responses based on what their peers shared.

### *Pygmalion*

Mentor Sentence 1: What do I notice about this sentence?

1. Display or project:

**He was, I believe, not in the least an ill-natured man: very much the opposite, I should say; but he would not suffer fools gladly.**

*From Pygmalion*

- What do you notice about this sentence?
- How does what you notice help you understand the sentence?

2. Direct students to write their answers to the two questions, recording what they notice about the sentence and how that contributes to their understanding.
3. Ask students to share their thoughts with a partner. Prompt them to use the following conversation stems to guide their initial conversations.
  - a. "I noticed...which means..."
  - b. "I knew...so I..."
4. Ask pairs to work together to describe how the sentence is put together. As needed, ask guiding questions to support students:
  - a. "What are the parts of this sentence?"
  - b. "What phrases or clauses do you notice? How do those help you understand this sentence?"
  - c. "Are there any conjunctions in this sentence? What do those conjunctions mean?"
  - d. "What punctuation do you notice? How does the punctuation help you understand the sentence?"
5. Call on 2-3 pairs to share with the class what they notice about the sentence and explain how those ideas contribute to their understanding of the sentence.
6. Prompt them to use the following conversation stems to guide their sharing with the class.
  - a. "We noticed...which means..."
  - b. "We knew...so we..."

As pairs share, mark the grammatical elements students notice on the sentence and record any additional comments or thoughts on the board or chart paper. These will be needed for the next language links.

After each pair shares, ask another student to rephrase what the pair shared. Prompt students to use the following conversation stems to guide their rephrasing.

- a. "They noticed...which meant..."
- b. "They knew...so they..."

## Student Look-Fors:

- Students may notice a wide variety of things about the sentence, including:
  - This sentence describes the playwright's opinion of the language expert, Henry Sweet.
  - There are two complete sentences joined by a conjunction (but) and an semicolon.
  - In the first independent clause, there is a colon. The colon shows that what comes before and after are related.
  - There is a hyphen in the first independent clause, in between *ill* and *natured*. The hyphen combines these two words to describe the man. This helps to clarify what type of man; he is not *ill* or *natured*. He is *ill-natured*, which means he is negative or has bad temper.

7. Ask students to reflect on their learning by completing one of the following sentence stems. Answers can be spoken or written.

- a. To understand this sentence, I had to \_\_\_\_\_.
- b. Noticing \_\_\_\_\_ helped me understand the sentence because \_\_\_\_\_.
- c. Knowing \_\_\_\_\_ comes in handy when determining the meaning of this sentence.

8. Note: If student responses do not resemble the student look-fors in this language link, conduct a brief mini-lesson to review or reinforce a grammar skill from an earlier grade found in this sentence, such as writing simple, compound, or complex sentences, or how and when to use punctuation with conjunctions. Focus on a specific skill your students need.<sup>3</sup> It is acceptable for students not to understand the full meaning of the sentence on this day.

<sup>3</sup> Access the [Grammar Guide](#) to determine the skills students should have coming into grade 12, the skills that need to be reinforced in grade 12, and the skills that need to be explicitly taught in grade 12.

## MENTOR SENTENCES

### *Pygmalion*

Mentor Sentence 1: What do I know this sentence means?

1. Display or project:

He was, I believe, not in the least an ill-natured man: very much the opposite, I should say; but he would not suffer fools gladly.

From *Pygmalion*

This sentence means...

2. Prompt students to read what they wrote in the previous language link about the meaning of the sentence.
3. Say: "We have been analyzing this mentor sentence. Now we are going to look again at its meaning."
4. Display or project:

- WHO/WHAT? .....
- (Did/will) DO WHAT? .....
- WHEN did who do what? .....
- WHY did who do what? .....

Summary Sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Ask the following questions one at a time and prompt students to record their written responses.

WHO/WHAT?

Henry Sweet, the phonetician

Did/will DO WHAT?

was not negative, but did not "suffer fools"

WHEN did who do what?

over the course of many years

WHERE did who do what?

N/A

WHY did who do what?

because he had strong beliefs and did not tolerate others' stupidity

HOW did who do what?

N/A

6. Say: "Write a summary of the sentence. Make sure to put the sentence into your own words."

**Student Look-Fors:**

- Henry Sweet, the phonetician was not negative in his nature, but he had strong beliefs and did not tolerate others' stupidity.

7. After several minutes, ask a few students to share their statements with the class.
8. Prompt students to revise or adjust their written responses based on what their classmates shared.

### *Pygmalion*

Mentor Sentence 1: What is the structure of this sentence?

1. Display or project:

He was, I believe, not in the least an ill-natured man: very much the opposite, I should say; but he would not suffer fools gladly.

*From Pygmalion*

2. Say: "We have been working with the same mentor sentence to understand what it means. Now we will work together to take it apart so we can write our own quality sentences with a similar structure."
3. Ask: "What have we learned so far about this mentor sentence?" Conduct a brief discussion to review what was learned in the previous language links. Use the following questions to guide the discussion:
  - a. "What does this sentence mean?"
  - b. "What have you noticed about this sentence?"
  - c. "How is it put together?"

#### Student Look-Fors:

- This sentence means Henry Sweet may have been perceived as a negative person, but it was just because he had strong beliefs and would not tolerate others' stupidity, according to Shaw.
- Students might say they noticed two independent clauses connected by a semicolon and a conjunction (but). They might also say they noticed a colon in the first independent clause, showing that the phrase before the colon is related to the phrase after the colon.
- Students should understand that "ill-natured" is a compound adjective describing "man".
- They should understand that a compound adjective is two adjectives connected by a hyphen. The hyphen is used to show that the two adjectives are connected together to describe the noun; if they were not connected, the meaning may be unclear.

4. Display or project:

George Cukor, the director of *My Fair Lady*, based the movie off the anti-Cockney play, *Pygmalion*.

5. Ask: "How is this sentence similar to the mentor sentence in the way that it is constructed?"



## Student Look-Fors:

- Students should identify that the structures are not similar, but they each contain a compound adjective that consists of two adjectives connected with a hyphen.
- They should also identify that the compound adjective in the second sentence is *anti-Cockney*. *Anti* and *Cockney* are connected with hyphen to describe the play.

6. Say: "Now let's build a quality sentence about Orwell and Shaw and their opinions on the state of the English language."
7. Write a quality sentence as a class, including a compound adjective. As needed, review the structure of the mentor sentence again and/or ask students to compare the class sentence to the mentor sentence.

## Student Look-Fors:

- It can be argued that Orwell's and Shaw's self-important tone distracts from their argument about the state of the English language.
8. Say: "Now let's construct sentence frames to illustrate the structure of a compound adjective. We will use these frames to write our own sentences and including a compound adjective.
  9. A a class, create sentence frames that illustrate the structure of a compound adjective. Reinforce any other grammatical elements or spelling students may need to produce a quality sentence.

## Student Look-Fors:

- He was, I believe, not in the least an ill-natured man: very much the opposite, I should say; but he would not suffer fools gladly.
  - George Cukor, the director of *My Fair Lady*, based the movie off the anti-Cockney play, *Pygmalion*.
  - It can be argued that Orwell's and Shaw's self-important tone distracts from their argument about the state of the English language.
  - noun + verb + compound adjective + noun + punctuation
    - Modifiers, as needed.
10. Direct students to reflect on their learning. Ask: "How does breaking down this sentence into its parts support your understanding of the sentence?" Answers can be spoken or written.

## *Pygmalion*

### Mentor Sentence 1: Can I write a quality sentence?

#### 1. Display or project:

**He was, I believe, not in the least an ill-natured man: very much the opposite, I should say; but he would not suffer fools gladly.**

*From Pygmalion*

- **noun + verb + compound adjective + noun + punctuation**

Use modifiers, as needed.

- \_\_\_\_\_.

**Who controls language?**

2. Say: “Now we are going to write our own quality sentences.” Remind students of the elements of a quality sentence discussed in previous language links as well as other model sentences.
3. Read aloud the question, “Who controls language?”
4. Ask students to work independently to write 1-2 quality sentences that answer the question and imitate the structure of the mentor sentence.
5. Remind students they should include a compound adjective in their sentence.
6. Encourage students to use the unit texts to ensure they have an accurate response.

#### Student Look-Fors:

- **An exemplar should follow the sentence frame. For example:**
  - **Anyone, including non-phoneticians, controls language.**
- **The compound adjective should consist of two adjectives connected by a hyphen. The compound adjective should describe a noun in the sentence and the meaning would be unclear if the two adjectives were not connected with the hyphen. Students should follow the order of the words in the sentence frame.**

**Note:** More complete sentence stems may be provided, as needed, as a method of additional support. For example, “Anyone, including \_\_\_\_\_, controls language.”

**“Politics and the English Language”**

**Mentor Sentence 2: What does this sentence mean?**

1. Display or project:

**Bad writers, and especially scientific, political, and sociological writers, are nearly always haunted by the notion that Latin or Greek words are grander than Saxon ones, and unnecessary words like expedite, ameliorate, predict, extraneous, deracinated, clandestine, subaqueous, and hundreds of others constantly gain ground from their Anglo-Saxon numbers.**

**From “Politics and the English Language”**

**This sentence means...**

2. Prompt students to copy the sentence.
3. Say: “Write and complete the sentence stem underneath the quotation.”

**Student Look-Fors:**

- **Bad writers think that using big, important words is better than using simpler, more concise language.**

4. After several minutes, ask a few students to share how they paraphrased or interpreted the quotation. Prompt students to use the following stems to guide the conversation.
  - a. “Another way to say this sentence is...”
  - b. “I made meaning of this sentence by...”
  - c. “I looked at....”
  - d. “I noticed that...”

**Note: If students have trouble forming their ideas, remind them that this is day 1 with the mentor sentence, and they will have other opportunities to develop understanding of the sentence over the next few language links.**

5. Prompt students to revise or adjust their written responses based on what their peers shared.

**“Politics and the English Language”**

**Mentor Sentence 2: What do I notice about this sentence?**

**1. Display or project:**

**Bad writers, and especially scientific, political, and sociological writers, are nearly always haunted by the notion that Latin or Greek words are grander than Saxon ones, and unnecessary words like expedite, ameliorate, predict, extraneous, deracinated, clandestine, subaqueous, and hundreds of others constantly gain ground from their Anglo-Saxon numbers.**

**From “Politics and the English Language”**

- **What do you notice about this sentence?**
- **How does what you notice help you understand the sentence?**

2. Direct students to write their answers to the two questions, recording what they notice about the sentence and how that contributes to their understanding.
3. Ask students to share their thoughts with a partner. Prompt them to use the following conversation stems to guide their initial conversations.
  - a. “I noticed...which means...”
  - b. “I knew...so I...”
4. Ask pairs to work together to describe how the sentence is put together. As needed, ask guiding questions to support students:
  - a. “What are the parts of this sentence?”
  - b. “What phrases or clauses do you notice? How do those help you understand this sentence?”
  - c. “Are there any conjunctions in this sentence? What do those conjunctions mean?”
  - d. “What punctuation do you notice? How does the punctuation help you understand the sentence?”
5. Call on 2-3 pairs to share with the class what they notice about the sentence and explain how those ideas contribute to their understanding of the sentence.
6. Prompt them to use the following conversation stems to guide their sharing with the class.
  - a. “We noticed...which means...”
  - b. “We knew...so we...”

As pairs share, mark the grammatical elements students notice on the sentence and record any additional comments or thoughts on the board or chart paper. These will be needed for the next language links.

After each pair shares, ask another student to rephrase what the pair shared. Prompt students to use the following conversation stems to guide their rephrasing.

- c. "They noticed...which meant..."
- d. "They knew...so they..."

### Student Look-Fors:

- Students may notice a wide variety of things about the sentence, including:
  - This sentence describes what bad writers do, according to Orwell.
  - There are two independent clauses, *Bad writers, and especially scientific, political, and sociological writers, are nearly always haunted by the notion that Latin or Greek words are grander than Saxon ones* and unnecessary words like expedite, ameliorate, predict, extraneous, deracinated, clandestine, subaqueous, and hundreds of others constantly gain ground from their Anglo-Saxon numbers.
  - The independent clauses are connected by a conjunction (*and*).
  - There is a list in the second independent clause. The items on the list are separated by commas. The last item in the list is indicated by the conjunction *and*.
  - There is a comma before the *and* in the list.

7. Ask students to reflect on their learning by completing one of the following sentence stems. Answers can be spoken or written.

- a. To understand this sentence, I had to \_\_\_\_\_.
- b. Noticing \_\_\_\_\_ helped me understand the sentence because \_\_\_\_\_.
- c. Knowing \_\_\_\_\_ comes in handy when determining the meaning of this sentence.

8. Note: If student responses do not resemble the student look-fors in this language link, conduct a brief mini-lesson to review or reinforce a grammar skill from an earlier grade found in this sentence, such as writing simple, compound, or complex sentences, or how and when to use punctuation with conjunctions. Focus on a specific skill your students need.<sup>4</sup> It is acceptable for students not to understand the full meaning of the sentence on this day.

<sup>4</sup> Access the [Grammar Guide](#) to determine the skills students should have coming into grade 12, the skills that need to be reinforced in grade 12, and the skills that need to be explicitly taught in grade 12.

## MENTOR SENTENCES

**“Politics and the English Language”**

**Mentor Sentence 2: What do I know this sentence means?**

**1. Display or project:**

**Bad writers, and especially scientific, political, and sociological writers, are nearly always haunted by the notion that Latin or Greek words are grander than Saxon ones, and unnecessary words like expedite, ameliorate, predict, extraneous, deracinated, clandestine, subaqueous, and hundreds of others constantly gain ground from their Anglo-Saxon numbers.**

**From “Politics and the English Language**

**This sentence means...**

- 2. Prompt students to read what they wrote in the previous language link about the meaning of the sentence.**
- 3. Say: “We have been analyzing this mentor sentence. Now we are going to look again at its meaning.”**
- 4. Display or project:**

- WHO/WHAT? .....**
- (Did/will) DO WHAT? .....**
- WHEN did who do what? .....**
- WHY did who do what? .....**

**Summary Sentence: \_\_\_\_\_**

- 5. Ask the following questions one at a time and prompt students to record their written responses.**

**WHO/WHAT?**

**Did/will DO WHAT?**

**WHEN did who do what?**

**WHY did who do what?**

**Bad writers**

**use complicated and unnecessary language with Latin or Greek roots**

**they could use simpler language with Anglo-Saxon root**

**because they are haunted by the idea that the complicated language is better than the simpler language**

6. Say: "Write a summary of the sentence. Make sure to put the sentence into your own words."

**Student Look-Fors:**

- **Bad writers use complicated and unnecessary language with Latin or Greek roots, when they could use simpler language with Anglo-Saxon roots, because they are influenced by the idea that the complicated language is better than the simpler language.**

7. After several minutes, ask a few students to share their statements with the class.
8. Prompt students to revise or adjust their written responses based on what their classmates shared.

### "Politics and the English Language"

#### Mentor Sentence 2: What is the structure of this sentence?

1. Display or project:

Bad writers, and especially scientific, political, and sociological writers, are nearly always haunted by the notion that Latin or Greek words are grander than Saxon ones, and unnecessary words like expedite, ameliorate, predict, extraneous, deracinated, clandestine, subaqueous, and hundreds of others constantly gain ground from their Anglo-Saxon numbers.

From "Politics and the English Language"

2. Say: "We have been working with the same mentor sentence to understand what it means. Now we will work together to take it apart so we can write our own quality sentences with a similar structure."
3. Ask: "What have we learned so far about this mentor sentence?" Conduct a brief discussion to review what was learned in the previous language links. Use the following questions to guide the discussion:
- "What does this sentence mean?"
  - "What have you noticed about this sentence?"
  - "How is it put together?"

#### Student Look-Fors:

- This sentence means that some writers think they have to use complicated language, which often has Latin or Greek roots, instead of more simpler language with Anglo-Saxon roots.
- Students might say they two independent clauses joined by the conjunction *and*. They may also say they see a list in the second independent clause. The last item in the list is noted by the conjunction *and* and all of the items are separated by a comma. There is also a comma before the *and* that notes the final item.
- Students should understand that this list construction, with a comma before the *and*, is called a serial (or Oxford) comma.



4. Display or project:

Orwell builds his argument by sharing five non-examples, four guiding questions and six rules to guide better writing.

5. Ask: “How is this sentence similar to the mentor sentence in the way that it is constructed?”

**Student Look-Fors:**

- Students should identify that the structures are similar--this example, like the mentor sentence, has a list of at least three items and the final item is noted by the conjunction *and*.
- They should also identify that the items in the list are separated by commas, except for the final item. In the first mentor sentence, there is a comma, called a serial or Oxford comma, before the *and*, but in this sentence there is not.
- Students should note that this is an example of contested usage. There are some language experts who say the serial comma is the correct usage while others say no serial comma is needed. You should make the decision to use or not use the serial comma based on which option brings the most clarity to the sentence.

6. Say: “Now let’s build a quality sentence about how Orwell develops his claim.”

7. Write a quality sentence as a class imitating the structure of the mentor sentence. As needed, review the structure of the mentor sentence again and/or ask students to compare the class sentence to the mentor sentence.

**Student Look-Fors:**

- Orwell develops his claim through diction, figures of speech, and parallelism.
- Orwell develops his claim through diction, figures of speech and parallelism.
- Note that either construction is grammatically correct.
- Prompt students to defend which option they chose and why. Justification should include how the comma does or does not impact clarity in the sentence.

8. Say: “Now let’s construct sentences to illustrate the structure of a list with or without a serial comma.

9. As a class, create sentence frames that illustrate the structure of a list with or without a serial comma. Reinforce any other grammatical elements or spelling students may need to produce a quality sentence.

## MENTOR SENTENCES

**Student Look-Fors:**

- Independent clause + dependent clause including items in a series + conjunction + final item of series + punctuation
- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.
- \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

10. Direct students to reflect on their learning. Ask: “How does breaking down this sentence into its parts support your understanding of the sentence?” Answers can be spoken or written.

## "Politics and the English Language"

### Mentor Sentence 2: Can I write a quality sentence?

#### 1. Display or project:

Bad writers, and especially scientific, political, and sociological writers, are nearly always haunted by the notion that Latin or Greek words are grander than Saxon ones, and unnecessary words like expedite, ameliorate, predict, extraneous, deracinated, clandestine, subaqueous, and hundreds of others constantly gain ground from their Anglo-Saxon numbers.

From "Politics and the English Language"

- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.
- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

Does Orwell follow his rules in his own writing?

2. Say: "Now we are going to write our own quality sentences." Remind students of the elements of a quality sentence discussed in previous language links as well as other model sentences.
3. Read aloud the question, "Does Orwell follow his rules in his own writing?"
4. Ask students to work independently to write 1-2 quality sentences that answer the question and imitate the structure of the mentor sentence.
5. Remind students they should include a list in their sentence and choose whether or not to use a serial comma.
6. Encourage students to use the unit texts to ensure they have an accurate response.

#### Student Look-Fors:

- An exemplar should follow the sentence frame. For example:
  - Orwell mostly follows his rules, but does sometimes exhibit use of jargon, a lack of conciseness, and use of dead metaphors.
  - Orwell mostly follows his rules, but does sometimes exhibit use of jargon, a lack of conciseness

## MENTOR SENTENCES

and use of dead metaphors.

- The list should contain at least three items. The last item should be preceded by “and”. If the student chooses to use a serial comma, the comma should come before “and”.

**Note:** More complete sentence stems may be provided, as needed, as a method of additional support. For example, “Orwell mostly follows his rules, but does sometimes exhibit \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.”

“Politics and the English Language”

Mentor Sentence 3: What does this sentence mean?

1. Display or project:

The state of the English language is constantly evolving and some experts have noted its decline. As Orwell writes, “Most people who bother with the matter at all would admit that the English language is in a bad way, but it is generally assumed that we cannot by conscious action do anything about it” (1).

From “Politics and the English Language”

This sentence means...

2. Prompt students to copy the sentence.
3. Say: “Write and complete the sentence stem underneath the quotation.”

**Student Look-Fors:**

- These sentences are a claim and evidence to support the claim. The claim is that the English language is changing and some argue that it is declining. The claim is supported by evidence from the Orwell argument. This evidence explains that people who care about language agree that it is in decline and many believe we can’t do anything about it.
4. After several minutes, ask a few students to share how they paraphrased or interpreted the quotation. Prompt students to use the following stems to guide the conversation.
    - a. “Another way to say this sentence is...”
    - b. “I made meaning of this sentence by...”
    - c. “I looked at....”
    - d. “I noticed that...”

Note: If students have trouble forming their ideas, remind them that this is day 1 with the mentor sentence, and they will have other opportunities to develop understanding of the sentence over the next few language links.

5. Prompt students to revise or adjust their written responses based on what their peers shared.

**"Politics and the English Language"**

**Mentor Sentence 3: What do I notice about this sentence?**

**1. Display or project:**

**The state of the English language is constantly evolving and some experts have noted its decline. As Orwell writes, "Most people who bother with the matter at all would admit that the English language is in a bad way, but it is generally assumed that we cannot by conscious action do anything about it" (1).**

**From "Politics and the English Language"**

- **What do you notice about this sentence?**
- **How does what you notice help you understand the sentence?**

2. Direct students to write their answers to the two questions, recording what they notice about the sentence and how that contributes to their understanding.
3. Ask students to share their thoughts with a partner. Prompt them to use the following conversation stems to guide their initial conversations.
  - a. "I noticed...which means..."
  - b. "I knew...so I..."
4. Ask pairs to work together to describe how the sentence is put together. As needed, ask guiding questions to support students:
  - a. "What are the parts of this sentence?"
  - b. "What phrases or clauses do you notice? How do those help you understand this sentence?"
  - c. "What punctuation do you notice? How does the punctuation help you understand the sentence?"
5. Call on 2-3 pairs to share with the class what they notice about the sentence and explain how those ideas contribute to their understanding of the sentence.
6. Prompt them to use the following conversation stems to guide their sharing with the class.
  - a. "We noticed...which means..."
  - b. "We knew...so we..."

As pairs share, mark the grammatical elements students notice on the sentence and record any additional comments or thoughts on the board or chart paper. These will be needed for the next language links.

After each pair shares, ask another student to rephrase what the pair shared. Prompt students to use the following conversation stems to guide their rephrasing.

- a. "They noticed...which meant..."
- b. "They knew...so they..."

### Student Look-Fors:

- Students may notice a wide variety of things about the sentence, including:
  - These sentences are a claim and evidence to support the claim. The claim is that the English language is changing and some argue that it is declining. The claim is supported by evidence from the Orwell argument. This evidence explains that people who care about language agree that it is in decline and many believe we can't do anything about it.
  - The claim states an argument that can be supported with text evidence.
  - The evidence supports the claim because it shows how some believe the English language is in decline.
  - The sentence with the text evidence includes an introductory phrase "As Orwell writes" that is set off from the direct text evidence with a comma.
  - The direct text evidence is taken word-for-word from the text and it begins and ends with quotations marks. The page where the text evidence is found in the text is indicated in parentheses.

7. Ask students to reflect on their learning by completing one of the following sentence stems. Answers can be spoken or written.

- a. To understand this sentence, I had to \_\_\_\_\_.
- b. Noticing \_\_\_\_\_ helped me understand the sentence because \_\_\_\_\_.
- c. Knowing \_\_\_\_\_ comes in handy when determining the meaning of this sentence.

8. Note: If student responses do not resemble the student look-fors in this language link, conduct a brief mini-lesson to review or reinforce a grammar skill from an earlier grade found in this sentence, such as writing simple, compound, or complex sentences, or how and when to use punctuation with conjunctions. Focus on a specific skill your students need.<sup>5</sup> It is acceptable for students not to understand the full meaning of the sentence on this day.

<sup>5</sup> Access the [Grammar Guide](#) to determine the skills students should have coming into grade 12, the skills that need to be reinforced in grade 12, and the skills that need to be explicitly taught in grade 12.

## MENTOR SENTENCES

"Politics and the English Language"

Mentor Sentence 3: What do I know this sentence means?

1. Display or project:

The state of the English language is constantly evolving and some experts have noted its decline. As Orwell writes, "Most people who bother with the matter at all would admit that the English language is in a bad way, but it is generally assumed that we cannot by conscious action do anything about it" (1).

From "Politics and the English Language"

This sentence means...

2. Prompt students to read what they wrote in the previous language link about the meaning of the sentence.
3. Say: "We have been analyzing this mentor sentence. Now we are going to look again at its meaning."
4. Display or project:

- WHO/WHAT? .....
- (Did/will) DO WHAT? .....
- WHEN did who do what? .....
- WHERE did who do what? .....
- WHY did who do what? .....
- HOW did who do what? .....

Summary Sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Ask the following questions one at a time and prompt students to record their written responses.

WHO/WHAT?

Did/will DO WHAT?

HOW did who do what?

The state of the English language

Is constantly evolving

Many experts believe the evolution has actually been a decline that we cannot recover from



6. Say: "Write a summary of the sentence. Make sure to put the sentence into your own words."

**Student Look-Fors:**

- The state of the English language is constantly evolving and many experts believe that this evolution has actually been a decline that we cannot recover from.

7. After several minutes, ask a few students to share their statements with the class.
8. Prompt students to revise or adjust their written responses based on what their classmates shared.

### "Politics and the English Language"

#### Mentor Sentence 3: What is the structure of this sentence?

1. Display or project:

The state of the English language is constantly evolving and some experts have noted its decline. As Orwell writes, "Most people who bother with the matter at all would admit that the English language is in a bad way, but it is generally assumed that we cannot by conscious action do anything about it" (1).

From "Politics and the English Language"

2. Say: "We have been working with the same mentor sentence to understand what it means. Now we will work together to take it apart so we can write our own quality sentences with a similar structure."
3. Ask: "What have we learned so far about this mentor sentence?" Conduct a brief discussion to review what was learned in the previous language links. Use the following questions to guide the discussion:
- "What does this sentence mean?"
  - "What have you noticed about this sentence?"
  - "How is it put together?"

#### Student Look-Fors:

- These sentences are a claim and evidence to support the claim. The claim is that the English language is changing and some argue that it is declining. The claim is supported by evidence from the Orwell argument. This evidence explains that people who care about language agree that it is in decline and many believe we can't do anything about it.
- Students might say they noticed the claim states an argument that can be supported with text evidence. The evidence supports the claim because it shows how some believe the English language is in decline.
- The sentence with the text evidence includes an introductory phrase "As Orwell writes" that is set off from the direct text evidence with a comma. The direct text evidence is taken word-for-word from the text and it begins and ends with quotations marks.

4. Display or project:

To further punctuate this problem with language, Orwell uses punchy parallel construction and fresh metaphors. For example, he states that "the fight against bad English is not frivolous and is not the exclusive concern of professional writers" (1).

5. Ask: "How is this sentence similar to the mentor sentence in the way that it is constructed?"

**Student Look-Fors:**

- Students should identify that the structures are similar--this example, like the mentor sentences, has a claim and evidence. The evidence has an introductory phrase set off by a comma. The direct text evidence is in quotations, and it ends with a note about where to find it in the text, in parentheses.

6. Say: "Now let's build two quality sentences using a topic sentence and evidence from your draft, making sure to use an introductory phrase when introducing the text evidence."
7. Write two quality sentences as a class imitating the structure of the mentor sentence. As needed, review the structure of the mentor sentence again and/or ask students to compare the class sentence to the mentor sentence.

**Student Look-Fors:**

- Orwell uses punchy parallel construction and fresh metaphors to explain the extent of this problem. For example, in the article he writes, "so that the fight against bad English is not frivolous and is not the exclusive concern of professional writers" (1).

8. Say: "Now let's construct sentences to illustrate the structure of the mentor sentence. We will use these frames to write our own sentences using an introductory phrase to introduce text evidence."
9. Prompt students to identify other introductory phrases that signal text evidence. Record those phrases. Then, as a class, create sentence frames that illustrate the structure of the mentor sentence. Reinforce any other grammatical elements or spelling students may need to produce a quality sentence.

**Student Look-Fors:**

- introductory phrase + comma + independent clause + punctuation + the direct text evidence in quotations + text location in parentheses + punctuation
- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_. For instance, "\_\_\_\_\_"  
( ).
- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_. An example of this is when the author states,  
\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_" ( ).
- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_. This is supported by the author when he/she  
states, "\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_" ( ).

10. Direct students to reflect on their learning. Ask: "How does breaking down this sentence into its parts support your understanding of the sentence?" Answers can be spoken or written.

## "Politics and the English Language"

### Mentor Sentence 3: Can I write a quality sentence?

#### 1. Display or project:

The state of the English language is constantly evolving and some experts have noted its decline. As Orwell writes, "Most people who bother with the matter at all would admit that the English language is in a bad way, but it is generally assumed that we cannot by conscious action do anything about it" (1).

From "Politics and the English Language"

- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_. For instance, " \_\_\_\_\_" ( ).
- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_. For example, " \_\_\_\_\_" ( ).
- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_. This is supported by the author when he/she states, " \_\_\_\_\_" ( ).

What is the best method Orwell uses for conveying his message?

2. Say: "Now we are going to write our own quality sentences." Remind students of the elements of a quality sentence discussed in previous language links as well as other model sentences.
3. Read aloud the question, "What is the best method Orwell uses for conveying his message?"
4. Ask students to work independently to write 1-2 quality sentences that answer the question and imitate the structure of the mentor sentence.
5. Remind students they should include a claim and evidence. The evidence sentence should start with an introductory phrase.
6. Encourage students to use the unit texts to ensure they have an accurate response.

#### Student Look-Fors:

- An exemplar should follow the sentence frame. For example:
  - Orwell uses a number of strong, opinionated words within a sentence to outline the problems he sees with the language. For instance, "It becomes ugly and inaccurate because our thoughts are foolish, but the slovenliness of our language makes it easier for us to have foolish thoughts" (1).

## MENTOR SENTENCES

- Orwell uses a number of strong, opinionated words within a sentence to outline the problems he sees with the language. An example of this is when the author states, “It becomes ugly and inaccurate because our thoughts are foolish, but the slovenliness of our language makes it easier for us to have foolish thoughts” (1).
- The introductory phrase should be followed by a comma. The direct text evidence should be in quotations marks and the page number where the evidence can be found should be noted in parentheses.

**Note:** More complete sentence stems may be provided, as needed, as a method of additional support. For example, “Orwell uses a number of strong, opinionated words within a sentence to outline the problems he sees with the language. An example of this is when the author states, “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” ( \_\_\_\_\_ ).

“Politics and the English Language”

Mentor Sentence 4: What does this sentence mean?

1. Display or project:

**“To begin with it has nothing to do with archaism, with the salvaging of obsolete words and turns of speech, or with the setting up of a ‘standard English’ which must never be departed from.”**

From “Politics and the English Language”

**This sentence shows...**

2. Prompt students to copy the sentence.
3. Say: “Write and complete the sentence stem underneath the quotation.”

**Student Look-Fors:**

- The sentence shows what saving the English language does not mean. It does not mean saving old, out-of-date words or having a standard, rigid, language.
4. After several minutes, ask a few students to share how they paraphrased or interpreted the quotation. Prompt students to use the following stems to guide the conversation.
    - a. “Another way to say this sentence is...”
    - b. “I made meaning of this sentence by...”
    - c. “I looked at....”
    - d. “I noticed that...”

**Note:** If students have trouble forming their ideas, remind them that this is day 1 with the mentor sentence, and they will have other opportunities to develop understanding of the sentence over the next few language links.

5. Prompt students to revise or adjust their written responses based on what their peers shared.

**“Politics and the English Language”**

**Mentor Sentence 4: What do I notice about this sentence?**

**1. Display or project:**

**“To begin with it has nothing to do with archaism, with the salvaging of obsolete words and turns of speech, or with the setting up of a ‘standard English’ which must never be departed from.”**

**From “Politics and the English Language”**

- **What do you notice about this sentence?**
- **How does what you notice help you understand the sentence?**

- 2. Direct students to write their answers to the two questions, recording what they notice about the sentence and how that contributes to their understanding.**
- 3. Ask students to share their thoughts with a partner. Prompt them to use the following conversation stems to guide their initial conversations.**
  - a. “I noticed...which means...”**
  - b. “I knew...so I...”**
- 4. Ask pairs to work together to describe how the sentence is put together. As needed, ask guiding questions to support students:**
  - a. “What are the parts of the sentence?”**
  - b. “What phrases or clauses do you notice? How do those help you understand this sentence?”**
  - c. “Are there any conjunctions in this sentence? What do those conjunctions mean?”**
  - d. “What punctuation do you notice? How does the punctuation help you understand the sentence?”**
- 5. Call on 2-3 pairs to share with the class what they notice about the sentence and explain how those ideas contribute to their understanding of the sentence.**
- 6. Prompt them to use the following conversation stems to guide their sharing with the class.**
  - a. “We noticed...which means...”**
  - b. “We knew...so we...”**

**As pairs share, mark the grammatical elements students notice on the sentence and record any additional comments or thoughts on the board or chart paper. These will be needed for the next language links.**

After each pair shares, ask another student to rephrase what the pair shared. Prompt students to use the following conversation stems to guide their rephrasing.

- a. "They noticed...which meant..."
- b. "They knew...so they..."

## Student Look-Fors:

- Students may notice a wide variety of things about the sentence, including:
  - This sentence shows that saving the English language does not mean saving old, out-of-date words or having a standard, rigid, language.
  - The sentence contains a list of three items: archaism, salvaging obsolete words and turns of speech, and setting a standard English language. These items are separated by commas and Orwell uses a serial comma.
  - There is a conjunction (or) connecting the last item in the list to the previous items.
  - Each phrase contains the words *with* or *with the*: *with archaism, with the salvaging, with the setting*.
  - This repetition gives the sentence rhythm and also indicates that all of the items in the list are equally important.

7. Ask students to reflect on their learning by completing one of the following sentence stems. Answers can be spoken or written.

- a. To understand this sentence, I had to \_\_\_\_\_.
- b. Noticing \_\_\_\_\_ helped me understand the sentence because \_\_\_\_\_.
- c. Knowing \_\_\_\_\_ comes in handy when determining the meaning of this sentence.

8. Note: If student responses do not resemble the student look-fors in this language link, conduct a brief mini-lesson to review or reinforce a grammar skill from an earlier grade found in this sentence, such as writing simple, compound, or complex sentences, or how and when to use punctuation with conjunctions. Focus on a specific skill your students need.<sup>6</sup> It is acceptable for students not to understand the full meaning of the sentence on this day.

<sup>6</sup> Access the [Grammar Guide](#) to determine the skills students should have coming into grade 12, the skills that need to be reinforced in grade 12, and the skills that need to be explicitly taught in grade 12.



"Politics and the English Language"

Mentor Sentence 4: What do I know this sentence means?

1. Display or project:

**"To begin with it has nothing to do with archaism, with the salvaging of obsolete words and turns of speech, or with the setting up of a 'standard English' which must never be departed from."**

From "Politics and the English Language"

**This sentence means...**

2. Prompt students to read what they wrote in the previous language link about the meaning of the sentence.
3. Say: "We have been analyzing this mentor sentence. Now we are going to look again at its meaning."
4. Display or project:

- **WHO/WHAT?** .....
- **(Did/will) DO WHAT?** .....
- **HOW did who do what?** .....

**Summary Sentence:** \_\_\_\_\_

5. Ask the following questions one at a time and prompt students to record their written responses.

**WHO/WHAT?**

**Did/will DO WHAT?**

**HOW did who do what?**

**Saving the English language**

**does not mean**

**maintaining older language, keeping out-of-date words and phrases, or  
having a standard English that everyone speaks**

6. Say: "Write a summary of the sentence. Make sure to put the sentence into your own words."

**Student Look-Fors:**

- Saving the English language does not mean maintaining older language, keeping out-of date words and phrases, or having a standard English that everyone speaks.

7. After several minutes, ask a few students to share their statements with the class.
8. Prompt students to revise or adjust their written responses based on what their classmates shared.

**“Politics and the English Language”**

**Mentor Sentence 4: What is the structure of this sentence?**

**1. Display or project:**

**“To begin with it has nothing to do with archaism, with the salvaging of obsolete words and turns of speech, or with the setting up of a ‘standard English’ which must never be departed from.”**

**From “Politics and the English Language”**

- 2. Say: “We have been working with the same mentor sentence to understand what it means. Now we will work together to take it apart so we can write our own quality sentences with a similar structure.”**
- 3. Ask: “What have we learned so far about this mentor sentence?” Conduct a brief discussion to review what was learned in the previous language links. Use the following questions to guide the discussion:**
  - a. “What does this sentence mean?”**
  - b. “What have you noticed about this sentence?”**
  - c. “How is it put together?”**

**Student Look-Fors:**

- **This sentence means that saving the English language does not mean maintaining older language, keeping out-of date words and phrases, or having a standard English that everyone speaks.**
- **Students might say they noticed the sentence contains a list of three items, separated by a comma and that a serial comma is used. Students might also notice that the conjunction “or” is used before the third item.**
- **Students should understand that “with” or “with the” is repeated before each item. This repetition is called parallel structure. Parallel structure is when you use a pattern of words to show that certain words or ideas are equal.**
- **They should understand using the pattern of “with” or “with the” helps the reader understand that all three items in the list (archaism, salvaging obsolete words and phrases, and having a standard language) are equal in importance.**

4. Display or project:

**"We latter-day Americans know a great deal more about the everyday affairs of England than the early Americans did, for we read more English books, and find more about the English in our newspapers, and meet more Englishmen, and go to England much oftener."**

*From The American Language*

5. Ask: "How is this sentence similar to the mentor sentence in the way that it is constructed?"

**Student Look-Fors:**

- Students should identify that the structures are similar--this example, like the mentor sentence, contains a list. The list in this sentence contains four items, while the mentor sentence contained three. The structure is similar though because each item is separated by a comma, a serial comma is used, and the each item is preceded by a conjunction. In this sentence the conjunction is "and", while in the mentor sentence it was "or".
- They should also identify that the structures are also similar because this sentence also has a pattern of words before each item in the list. Each item begins with a verb in the present tense and three out of the four items also include the conjunction "and": "read", "and find", "and meet", "and go".
- This helps the reader to understand that each item in the list is equally important.

6. Say: "Now let's build a quality sentence about the excerpt from H.L. Mencken's book *The American Language*."

7. Write a quality sentence as a class imitating the structure of the mentor sentence. As needed, review the structure of the mentor sentence again and/or ask students to compare the class sentence to the mentor sentence.

**Student Look-Fors:**

- H.L. Mencken wrote about influence of England's English on American English, about the breaking about of American English from its "mother tongue", and about the failure of schools to teach our students to write clearly.

8. Say: "Now let's construct sentences to illustrate the structure of the mentor sentence. We will use these frames to write our own sentences and include parallel structure"

9. As a class, create sentence frames that illustrate the structure of the mentor sentence. Reinforce any other grammatical elements or spelling students may need to produce a quality sentence.

**Student Look-Fors:**

- independent clause + list item + comma + list item + comma + conjunction + list item + punctuation

## MENTOR SENTENCES

- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

Direct students to reflect on their learning. Ask: “How does breaking down this sentence into its parts support your understanding of the sentence?” Answers can be spoken or written.

“Politics and the English Language”

Mentor Sentence 4: Can I write a quality sentence?

1. Display or project:

“To begin with it has nothing to do with archaism, with the salvaging of obsolete words and turns of speech, or with the setting up of a ‘standard English’ which must never be departed from.”

From “Politics and the English Language”

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

Should the English language be fixed or fluid?

2. Say: “Now we are going to write our own quality sentences.” Remind students of the elements of a quality sentence discussed in previous language links as well as other model sentences.
3. Read aloud the question, “Should the English language be fixed or fluid?”
4. Ask students to work independently to write 1-2 quality sentences that answer the question and imitate the structure of the mentor sentence.
5. Remind students they should include parallel structure in their sentence.
6. Encourage students to use the unit texts to ensure they have an accurate response.

**Student Look-Fors:**

- An exemplar should follow the sentence frame. For example:
  - The English language should be fluid because, according to H.L. Mencken, we need to evolve with the changing world, we need to accommodate people’s growth, and we need to value all people’s beliefs and backgrounds.
  - The English language should be fixed because, according to Simon Winchester, we must have a common understanding, we must have a common reference point, and we must acknowledge the opinions of great writers of our time who argued for fixing the language.
- The sentences should include a list of at least three items. Each item should be preceded by a pattern of words.

## MENTOR SENTENCES

**Note:** More complete sentence stems may be provided, as needed, as a method of additional support. For example, “The English language should be fluid because, according to H.L. Mencken, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.”