

### Grade 06: Out of the Dust 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.

### “On Drought Conditions”

#### Mentor Sentence 1: What does this sentence mean?

1. Display or project:

“Every Governor with whom I have talked is in full accord with this program of doing work for these farm families, just as every governor agrees that the individual states will take care of their unemployables but that the cost of employing those who are entirely able and willing to work must be borne by the Federal Government.”

From “On Drought Conditions”

This sentence means...

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

#### Student Look-Fors:

- This sentence means that individual states will care for the unemployed, while the Federal Government would pay for cost of employing those who are able to work.

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.

## "On Drought Conditions"

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

1. Display or project:

"Every Governor with whom I have talked is in full accord with this program of doing work for these farm families, just as every governor agrees that the individual states will take care of their unemployables but that the cost of employing those who are entirely able and willing to work must be borne by the Federal Government."

-From "On Drought Conditions"

- 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. "Can we divide this sentence into two or more sentences? What do we have to remove or change?"
  - c. "What phrases or clauses do you notice? How do those help you understand this sentence?"
  - 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:
  - There is a comma separating the first part of the sentence from the last part of the sentence.
  - Students might notice the pronouns *I* and *those*.
  - The possessive pronoun *their* is used in the sentence.
  - The sentence ends with a period which means that the sentence is a statement, or maybe a command.
  - *Governor* and *Federal Government* are proper nouns in this sentence.

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 6, the skills that need to be reinforced in grade 6, and the skills that need to be explicitly taught in grade 6.

# MENTOR SENTENCES

## “On Drought Conditions”

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

1. Display or project:

“Every Governor with whom I have talked is in full accord with this program of doing work for these farm families, just as every governor agrees that the individual states will take care of their unemployables but that the cost of employing those who are entirely able and willing to work must be borne by the Federal Government.”

From “On Drought Conditions”

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.  
 “Every Governor with whom I have talked is in full accord with this program of doing work for these farm families, just as every governor agrees that the individual states will take care of their unemployables but that the cost of employing those who are entirely able and willing to work must be borne by the Federal Government.”

<b>WHO/WHAT?</b>	every governor
Did/will <b>DO WHAT?</b>	is in accord
<b>WHEN</b> did who do what?	N/A
<b>WHERE</b> did who do what?	N/A

## MENTOR SENTENCES

**WHY** did who do what?

the dust made farming impossible

**HOW** did who do what?

the assistance provided support to those unable to work

6. Say: "Use what you know from the unit and the text to expand your thinking about this sentence."

**WHO/WHAT?**

every governor

Did/will **DO WHAT?**

is in accord

**WHEN** did who do what?

during the Dust Bowl

**WHERE** did who do what?

in the midwestern United States

**WHY** did who do what?

The dust made farming impossible

**HOW** did who do what?

the assistance provided support to those unable to work

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

Student Look-Fors:

- During the Dust Bowl, every governor agreed with the President that the Federal Government would take care of those who were willing and able to work because they were unable to farm in the midwestern United States.

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

### “On Drought Conditions”

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

1. Display or project:

“Every Governor with whom I have talked is in full accord with this program of doing work for these farm families, just as every governor agrees that the individual states will take care of their unemployables but that the cost of employing those who are entirely able and willing to work must be borne by the Federal Government.”

From “On Drought Conditions”

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 there would be responsibilities that the state governments would hold and responsibilities that the federal government would hold.
- Students might say they noticed pronouns, commas, or conjunctions.
- Students should understand that the parts of this sentence are independent clause + subordinate conjunction + subordinate clause (dependent clause)
- Students should understand that the first clause tells the reader that all governors who have been spoken with are on board for the plan.
- The second clause addresses who will receive help.

4. Display or project:

The farmers prayed for rain just as the crops begged for water but not a drop fell.



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 begins with an independent clause, then the subordinate conjunction *just as*. The conjunction is followed by a subordinate, or dependent, clause.

6. Say: “Now let’s build a quality sentence about the dust covering the homes using an independent and dependent clause connected by a subordinate conjunction.”
7. Write a quality sentence as a class imitating the structure of the mentor sentence. As needed, provide students with a list of subordinate conjunctions. Review the structure of the mentor sentence again and/or ask students to compare the class sentence to the mentor sentence.

**Student Look-Fors:**

- The dust clouds rolled over the land as soon as the last cloud passed and left a film covering the homes.

8. Say: “Now let’s construct a sentence frame to illustrate the structure of the mentor sentence. We will use these frames to write our own sentences and include a subordinating conjunction.”
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 + subordinate conjunction + subordinate (dependent) clause + punctuation
- \_\_\_\_\_ + \_\_\_\_\_ + \_\_\_\_\_.

10. Prompt students to identify other subordinating conjunctions which signal when an event occurred. Record those conjunctions.
11. 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.

## "On Drought Conditions"

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

1. Display or project:

"Every Governor with whom I have talked is in full accord with this program of doing work for these farm families, just as every governor agrees that the individual states will take care of their unemployables but that the cost of employing those who are entirely able and willing to work must be borne by the Federal Government."

From "On Drought Conditions"

Explain the conditions of the farmers during the Dust Bowl.

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. Ask, "What were the conditions of the farmers during the Dust Bowl?"
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 that their sentences should include a subordinating conjunction.
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 farmers couldn't grow crops since there was no rain.
  - The effects of no rain spiraled until there were dust storms, no school, and no work.

Note: More complete sentence stems may be provided, as needed, as a method of additional support. For example, "The farmers couldn't grow crops \_\_\_\_\_."

### "Farming in the 1930s"

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

1. Display or project:

Scientific evidence suggests that the drought of the 1930s may not have been the worst to ever occur on this continent, leaving farmers to wonder when they themselves might have to experience another drought.

This sentence means...

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

#### Student Look-Fors:

- The sentence means that there may be another drought just as bad as the one in the 1930s someday.

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.

## "Farming in the 1930s"

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

1. Display or project:

Scientific evidence suggests that the drought of the 1930s may not have been the worst to ever occur on this continent, leaving farmers to wonder when they themselves might have to experience another drought.

- 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 do you notice about the pronouns in this sentence?"
  - b. "Can we divide this sentence into two or more sentences? What do we have to remove or change?"
  - c. "What phrases or clauses do you notice? How do those help you understand this sentence?"
  - 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 has a comma before the word *leaving*.
  - There is a period at the end of the sentence.
  - There are two pronouns right next to each other - *they themselves*
  - The sentence answers the question "Is a drought like this likely to occur again?"
  - The sentence is made up of an independent and a dependent clause.
  - This sentence proposes that another drought could possibly happen again on this continent.

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 6, the skills that need to be reinforced in grade 6, and the skills that need to be explicitly taught in grade 6.

## "Farming in the 1930s"

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

1. Display or project:

Scientific evidence suggests that the drought of the 1930s may not have been the worst to ever occur on this continent, leaving farmers to wonder when they themselves might have to experience another drought.

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?**

**WHEN** did who do what?

**WHERE** did who do what?

**WHY** did who do what?

**HOW** did who do what?

the drought

may not have been the worst

of the 1930s

on this continent

N/A

N/A

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

**Student Look-Fors:**

- The drought of the 1930s may not have been the worst on this continent.
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.

## "Farming in the 1930s"

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

1. Display or project:

Scientific evidence suggests that the drought of the 1930s may not have been the worst to ever occur on this continent, leaving farmers to wonder when they themselves might have to experience another drought.

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 scientific evidence has found that the Dust Bowl of the 1930s is not the only drought to ever occur on this continent.
- Farmers wonder when they might have to face this type of drought again.
- This sentence contains the pronoun *they* which refers to the farmers followed by the pronoun *themselves* that also refers to the farmers.

4. Display or project:

Florence Thompson herself lived through the Depression and Dust Bowl, leaving Oklahoma in 1925.

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 sentence uses a pronoun to emphasize the preceding noun.
- They should also identify that there is a comma with a dependent clause.
- Student might notice that in the first sentence, the pronoun *themselves* emphasized the pronoun *they*. In this sentence, the pronoun *herself* emphasizes the noun.



6. Say: "These pronoun *themselves* and the pronoun *herself* are called intensive pronouns. They intensify or emphasize the preceding noun or pronoun. If we remove an intensive pronoun from a sentence, the sentence still makes sense.
7. Say: "Now let's build a quality sentence about farming in the 1930s using an intensive pronoun."
8. 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:**

- Even farmers themselves could not keep their crop alive, praying for rain every day.

9. Say: "Now let's construct sentence frames to illustrate the structure of the mentor sentence. We will use these frames to write our own sentences and include the intensive pronouns below."
10. Prompt students to identify other intensive pronouns which place emphasis on a noun. Record those pronouns. 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:**

- \_\_\_\_\_,

myself

yourself

himself

ourselves

yourselves

herself

itself

themselves

11. 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.

## "Farming in the 1930s"

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

1. Display or project:

Scientific evidence suggests that the drought of the 1930s may not have been the worst to ever occur on this continent, leaving farmers to wonder when they themselves might have to experience another drought.

myself

yourself

himself

ourselves

yourselves

herself

itself

themselves

Explain what happened to farmers who left the Great Plains during the 30s.

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. Ask, "What happened to farmers who left the Great Plains in the 1930s?"
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 an intensive pronoun in their sentences.
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:
  - Farmers themselves decided to head west, moving closer to family on the coast.
  - The drought itself was not the only cause of migration.

Note: More complete sentence stems may be provided, as needed, as a method of additional support. For example, "Farmers themselves\_\_\_\_\_."

## MENTOR SENTENCES

2. Remind students to select an intensive pronoun.
3. Encourage students to refer to unit texts to ensure their responses are correct.

### *Out of the Dust*

#### **Mentor Sentence 3: What does this sentence mean?**

1. Display or project:

We haven't had a good crop in three years, not since the bounty of '31, and we're all whittled down to the bone these days, even Ma, with her new round belly, but still when the committee came asking, Ma donated: three jars of applesauce and some cured pork, and a feed-sack nightie she'd sewn for our coming baby.

This sentence means...

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

#### **Student Look-Fors:**

- The sentence means that although things were difficult for Billie Jo's family, they continued to help 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.

### *Out of the Dust*

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

1. Display or project:

We haven't had a good crop in three years and we're all whittled down to the bone these days, but still when the committee came asking, Ma donated: three jars of applesauce and some cured pork, and a feed-sack nightie she'd sewn for our coming baby.

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

2. Provide student pairs or groups with the following sentence chunks on individual strips of paper.

we haven't had a good crop in three years,

and we're all whittled down to the bone these days,

but still when the committee came asking,

Ma donated:

three jars of applesauce,

some cured pork,

a feed-sack nightie she'd sewn for our coming baby.

3. Direct pairs or groups to use the sentence chunks to explore the answers to the projected questions. As students work together, ask guiding questions and prompts to support students:
  - a. "How many ways can you rearrange this sentence and it still make sense?"
  - b. "How did you choose where to begin the sentence?"

- c. "How would you punctuate this sentence? Why?"
  - d. "What phrases or clauses do you notice? How do those help you understand this sentence?"
  - e. "Are there any pronouns in this sentence? Are the pronouns used correctly or are they vague?"
4. Call on 2-3 pairs or groups to share with the class what they notice about the sentence and explain how those ideas contribute to their understanding of the sentence.
  5. Prompt students 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:
    - The sentence is long, so it is hard to understand unless I break it into parts.
    - The parts of the sentence can be rearranged to make several different quality sentences.
6. 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.
  7. 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 using apostrophes or writing different sentence types. 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 6, the skills that need to be reinforced in grade 6, and the skills that need to be explicitly taught in grade 6.

# MENTOR SENTENCES

## *Out of the Dust*

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

1. Display or project:

We haven't had a good crop in three years and we're all whittled down to the bone these days, but still when the committee came asking, Ma donated: three jars of applesauce and some cured pork, and a feed-sack nightie she'd sewn for our coming baby.

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. Prompt students to use information from the text and the unit to answer the summary questions.

**WHO/WHAT?**

Ma

Did/will **DO WHAT?**

donated

**WHEN** did who do what?

since the bounty of '31

**WHERE** did who do what?

N/A

**WHY** did who do what?

to help other families who may be in need

**HOW** did who do what?

dave away food and clothing

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

**Student Look-Fors:**

- Ma donated food and clothing to help other families who may be in need.
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.



## *Out of the Dust*

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

1. Display or project:

We haven't had a good crop in three years and we're all whittled down to the bone these days, but still when the committee came asking, Ma donated: three jars of applesauce and some cured pork, and a feed-sack nightie she'd sewn for our coming baby.

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:

- Students might notice that this sentence has several independent clauses and dependent clauses.
- Students might notice the colons to tell the reader that a list is coming.
- Students might say that this sentence tells what state of health the family is in.
- Ma donates to others even though her own family is hungry.

4. Display or project:

People from Oklahoma did not want to leave their farms, and they needed to make a living, but they could not survive during the Dust Bowl, so they: sold their land, moved west, and started anew.

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

#### Student Look-Fors:

- Both sentences follow the frame: independent clause + comma + conjunction + independent clause + comma + conjunction + independent clause + colon + commas in a series
- Both sentences provide a list. One list is objects; the other list includes actions.

6. Say: "Now let's build a quality sentence about going to the school as told in *Out of the Dust*."
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:**

- Possible response: Students sat to take their six-weeks test, and the sand blew through the cracks of the school, so by the time the tests were done, the students: were covered in sand, needed baths, and were coughing.

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

- \_\_\_\_\_, (conjunction) \_\_\_\_\_, (conjunction) \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.
- independent clause + comma + conjunction + independent clause + comma + conjunction + independent clause + colon + commas in a series

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.

## *Out of the Dust*

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

1. Display or project:

We haven't had a good crop in three years and we're all whittled down to the bone these days, but still when the committee came asking, Ma donated: three jars of applesauce and some cured pork, and a feed-sack nightie she'd sewn for our coming baby.

\_\_\_\_\_, (conjunction) \_\_\_\_\_, (conjunction) \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

How did the drought effect farming methods?

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, "How did the drought effect farming methods?"
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 begin their sentences with prepositional phrases that answer "when."
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 soil was dry and the grass would not grow, but farmers refused to give up, so they lost: land, crops, and homes.

Note: More complete sentence stems may be provided, as needed, as a method of additional support. For example, "The soil was dry and the grass would not grow, but farmers refused to give up, \_\_\_\_\_: \_\_\_\_\_."

### *Out of the Dust*

#### **Mentor Sentence 4: What does this sentence mean?**

1. Display or project:

“And I know now that all the time I was trying to get out of the dust, the fact is, what I am, I am because of the dust.”

From “Out of the Dust”

This sentence means...

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

#### **Student Look-Fors:**

- The sentence means although the author did not want to be in the dust, she looks back now and realizes that being in the dust, changed her as a person.

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.

## *Out of the Dust*

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

1. Display or project:

“And I know now that all the time I was trying to get out of the dust, the fact is, what I am, I am because of the dust.”

From “Out of the Dust”

- 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. “Can we divide this sentence into two or more sentences? What do we have to remove or change?”
    - c. “What phrases or clauses do you notice? How do those help you understand this sentence?”
    - d. “Are there any prepositions in this sentence? What do those prepositions mean?”
    - e. “What punctuation do you notice? How does the punctuation help you understand the sentence?”
    - f. “How do the commas help you to make sense of the language in 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:
  - There are several commas separating the clauses in the sentence.
  - The sentence includes a parenthetical element - a part of the sentence that can be removed without changing the sentence's meaning.
  - Commas are used at the beginning and end of the parenthetical element *the fact is*.
  - The pronoun *I* is used repeatedly to refer to the subject, the speaker.

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 6, the skills that need to be reinforced in grade 6, and the skills that need to be explicitly taught in grade 6.

# MENTOR SENTENCES

## *Out of the Dust*

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

1. Display or project:

“And I know now that all the time I was trying to get out of the dust, the fact is, what I am, I am because of the dust.”

From “Out of the Dust”

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.

<b>WHO/WHAT?</b>	I
Did/will <b>DO WHAT?</b>	know
<b>WHEN</b> did who do what?	now
<b>WHERE</b> did who do what?	N/A
<b>WHY</b> did who do what?	N/A
<b>HOW</b> 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:**

- The author knows now that she was transformed through her experiences.

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.



## *Out of the Dust*

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

1. Display or project:

“And I know now that all the time I was trying to get out of the dust, the fact is, what I am, I am because of the dust.”

From “Out of the Dust”

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 the speaker was changed because of the challenges she faced.
- The sentence includes the pronoun *I* repeatedly.
- The students may notice the parenthetical element.
- Students might notice that *I* is used as the subject of the sentence.

4. Display or project:

“This time I caught her in the slow stirring of biscuits, her mind on other things, but anyhow, she was distracted enough, I was determined enough, this time I got just what I wanted.”

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

#### Student Look-Fors:

- Both sentences use the pronoun *I* repeatedly.
- Both sentences include a parenthetical element set off by commas.

6. Say: “The pronoun *I* that is used in both of these sentences is called a subjective pronoun because it is used as

the subject of the sentence. A different type of pronoun that you might notice as we read is an objective pronoun. An objective pronoun comes after the verb or preposition in a sentence.”

7. Show additional examples of subjective and objective pronouns, as needed.
8. Say: “Now let’s build a quality sentence about the Dust Bowl using subjective pronouns and a parenthetical element.”
9. 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:**

- He continued to try and save his crops, even when it seemed impossible, he continued to plow, praying the rain would come.
- The dust covered the land, causing ripples of silt in houses, but they continued to persevere, against all odds, to try and stay in the plains.

10. Say: “Now let’s construct sentence frames to illustrate the structure of the mentor sentence. We will use these frames to write our own sentences and include the subordinating conjunctions below.”
11. Prompt students to identify other subjective pronouns (i.e., I, you, he, she, it, we, they) which take the place of a subject in the sentence. Record those subjective pronouns.
12. 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:**

- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.
- Independent clause + parenthetical element + independent clause
- Students should note that they should also include subjective pronouns.

13. 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.

### *Out of the Dust*

#### **Mentor Sentence 4: Can I write a quality sentence?**

1. Display or project:

“And I know now that all the time I was trying to get out of the dust, the fact is, what I am, I am because of the dust.”

From “Out of the Dust”

How did lives change because of the Dust Bowl?

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, “How did lives change because of the Dust Bowl?”
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 that they should include a subjective pronoun in their response.
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:
  - They fell ill from the storms, always surrounded by dirt, and coughed often from the dust in their lungs.
  - They tried to grow crops, but, the fact was, there was too much dust and too little rain for a healthy harvest.

Note: More complete sentence stems may be provided, as needed, as a method of additional support. For example, “After the realization of the need for survival and normalcy, \_\_\_\_\_.”