

To Conjugate or Not to Conjugate: That Is Not the Question! — Grade Seven

Ohio Standards Connections

Writing Conventions

Benchmark C

Use grammatical structures to effectively communicate ideas in writing.

(Grades 5 - 7)

Indicator 8

Conjugate regular and irregular verbs in all tenses correctly.

(Grade 7)

Lesson Summary:

Students will display an understanding of the three principle parts of verbs and their six tenses and will use the correct verb tense in their own writing to communicate effectively.

Estimated Duration: 120 minutes broken into instructional sessions.

Commentary:

This lesson focuses on building knowledge about verb tenses and having students apply that knowledge when developing their own written expressions.

Before beginning this lesson, the teacher will review with students the meaning of verb conjugation. The pre-assessment and the instructional procedures provided in this lesson offer practice in verb conjugation.

Teachers should keep in mind that the Drill 'n' Kill method of teaching verb conjugation does not apply. The post-assessment elicits creative writing responses by students that contain verbs in their various tenses. Students will see the benefit of relating their knowledge of verb conjugation to their own written expressions. Relating knowledge to real-life usage makes this lesson more meaningful and enjoyable for students.

Pre-Assessment:

Write the following sentence on the board or an overhead:

Mary goes to the movie theater on Friday.

Distribute the attached handout which has a place for writing a sentence in all six tenses. Ask students to decide the tense used in the sentence and write it in the appropriate box. Then change the tense of the verb in the sentence and write new sentences to fill in the other five boxes.

Scoring Guidelines:

3 = Five or six of the tenses written in sentences and labeled correctly.

2 = Three or four of the tenses written in sentences and labeled correctly.

1 = Less than two of the tenses written in sentences and labeled correctly.

0 = Off task or topic.

Post-Assessment:

Ask students to create a product (Web page, poem, picture book, song, essay, etc.) that demonstrates their knowledge of using verb tenses correctly. After completing the product, have them label at least three examples of the verb tense in the product.

Scoring Guidelines:

3 = Product is well organized, uses a verb tense correctly and effectively and three examples of the verb tense are labeled correctly.



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Other Related Ohio Standards

Writing Process

Benchmark D

Use revision strategies to improve the overall organization, the clarity and consistency of ideas within and among paragraphs and the logic and effectiveness of word choices.

(Grades 5 - 7)

Indicator 9

Use precise language, action verbs, sensory details, colorful modifiers and style as appropriate to audience and purpose.

(Grade 7)

2 = Product is organized, uses a verb tense correctly some of the time, and two to three examples of a verb tense are labeled correctly.

1 = Product contains an attempt at organization and verb tense use.

0 = Off task or topic.

Instructional Procedures:

1. Review verb tenses with students, paying particular attention to the present, past and future perfect tenses. The following examples could be used for discussion purposes:
 - Tiger Woods leads an exciting life. (present)
 - Tiger Woods led an exciting life. (past)
 - Tiger Woods will lead an exciting life. (future)
 - Tiger Woods has led an exciting life. (present perfect)
 - Tiger Woods had led an exciting life. (past perfect)
 - Tiger Woods will have led an exciting life. (future perfect)
2. Discuss how the author's meaning changes as the verb tenses change. Have students create other examples of sentences using specific tenses.
3. Discuss the importance of keeping verb tense consistent in writing.
4. Divide the class into groups of four to six.
5. Provide each group with a sentence with a regular verb, and ask them to rewrite the sentence five ways, using the five remaining verb tenses. Students should record their work on chart paper or an overhead transparency.
6. Have each group share its sentences and identify the verb tense found in each sentence.
7. Let each group draw a slip of paper from a paper bag. Each slip of paper should have the name of a verb tense on it.
8. Tell the groups that they are to write a five-sentence paragraph about a topic or event of their choice, using the verb tense on their slip of paper. Remind them to keep the verb tense consistent throughout the paragraph.
9. Have groups share their paragraphs with the class.
10. Discuss the paragraphs and questions or concerns about the tenses that arise as a result of the paragraph sharing.
11. Divide students into pairs. Draw one of the slips out of the paper bag with a tense on it. Tell the students that one of them from each pair is to talk to his/her partner for one minute about a topic of his/her choice. (It may be necessary to provide them with a topic as well.) During that minute, each student must use the tense that was drawn out of the bag.
12. At the end of one minute, draw another tense out of the bag and have the other partner talk for a minute about a topic of his/her choice using the next tense. This activity can be repeated several times, depending on how students do with it. They will probably need more practice with irregular verbs and

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perfect tenses.

13. Ask students to select a piece of writing that they have created previously. Tell them that they are to proofread it, paying attention to verb tenses. Corrections should be made so that the verb tense is consistent throughout the piece.

Differentiated Instructional Support:

Instruction is differentiated according to learner needs, to help all learners either meet the intent of the specified indicator(s) or, if the indicator is already met, to advance beyond the specified indicator(s).

- Give students topics to use if needed.
- English as a Second Language (ESL) students could conjugate verbs in their native languages and then translate them into English. This might also be a good opportunity for students whose native language is not English to share some of the structure of their language as it relates to verbs.
- Have students find examples in newspapers, magazines, etc. of inconsistent use of verb tenses.
- Examine dialects to determine whether or not verbs are used correctly.
- Allow time to revise and edit an existing writing piece.

Extension:

Have students do peer editing for verb tense use.

Homework Options and Home Connections:

Have students listen to the evening news or other television shows for five minutes. Have them examine the lyrics to a song or read a newspaper or magazine article. Ask them to keep track of the verb tenses used. Have students share their findings and make deductions about the most frequently used and least frequently used tenses. Results could be graphed and conclusions drawn.

Interdisciplinary Connections:

The content could be easily tied to social studies, especially to famous people or events. Have students change verb tenses or examine events in social studies to understand the impact the verb tense has on the time frame for the event.

Materials/Resources Needed:

For the teacher: Overhead or chalkboard.

For the students: Change That Tense (Blackline Master) overhead transparencies or chart paper for each group and a paper bag with slips of paper listing the six tenses.

Key Vocabulary:

- verb
- principle parts
- past
- present
- future
- past perfect
- present perfect
- future perfect



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- regular
- irregular

Technology Connections:

- Bring up work from Internet sites to revise for verb tense and consistency.
- Allow students to revise work using the computer.
- Have students complete the post-assessment using the computer.

Attachments:

- Change That Tense (Blackline Master)