

GRADE 1 and 2 English Language Arts: Conjunctions

Summary of Learning Opportunity

After reading the book *A House is a House for Me* aloud to the class, students expanded sentences from the text using the conjunctions “and,” “but,” “so,” and “because.” The students generated ideas as a class before moving into pairs, and then onto an individual writing task using a teacher-generated writing prompt. Students used the prompt to create a four page/four sentence story using conjunctions in each sentence. Students drew pictures to accompany each page and read their stories aloud to the teacher once complete.

English Language Arts
1 and 2

Learning Standards

- Language and story can be a source of creativity and joy
- Communicate using sentences and most conventions of Canadian spelling, grammar and punctuation
- Writing processes

Foundational ELA Connections

Instruction and Assessment

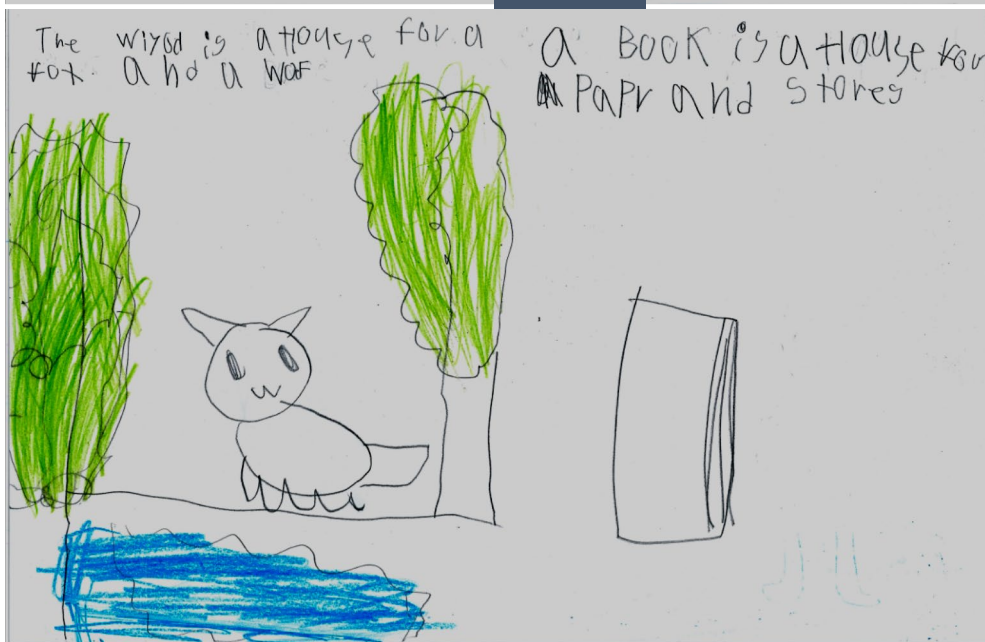
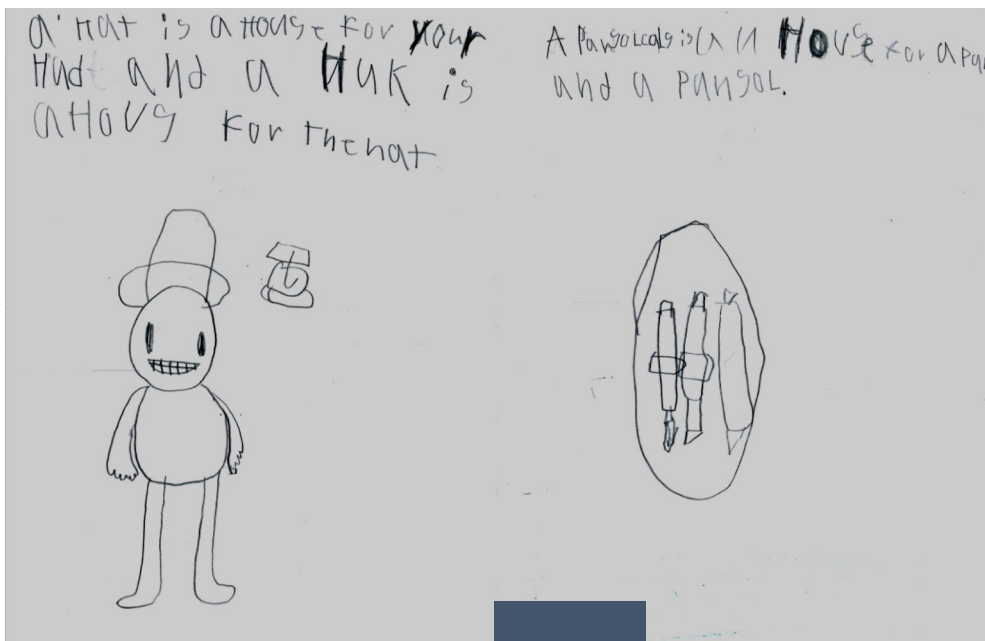
English Language Arts: Oral Language – *Vocabulary*

English Language Arts: Oral Language – *Sentence Construction (Syntax)*

English Language Arts: Writing – *Composition*

1. This lesson uses a mentor text (texts which can be studied and imitated to help students understand writing structures and skills). For this lesson, any book that has a sentence pattern beginning can be expanded. For example, *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie* by Laura Neumeroff: “If you give a mouse a cookie, it will ____.” Students can expand this by adding and/but/so/because _____. In this lesson, the class choral read *A House is a House for Me* by Mary Ann Hoberman.
2. I then provided whole-class instruction on the conjunctions “and,” “but,” “so,” and “because”. I also provided 4 example sentences (written on chart paper) using the four conjunctions:
 - A shoe is a house for a foot and sock.
 - A shoe is a house for a foot but not my hands
 - A shoe is house for a foot so I can run and play.
 - A shoe is house for a foot because it keeps them dry and clean.
3. I led a class discussion to generate more examples of the four conjunctions in a sentence. Students also discussed their ideas with a partner using the pair share strategy. I also used a touch and tell strategy with some learners: touch the page and say, “what will you say here?”, then touch the next page and so on. This may help any students who struggle with getting started right away.
4. Students were given 11x17 paper to be folded in four sections/pages. On each page, students wrote a sentence using the pattern and adding a conjunction. Students drew pictures to accompany their sentences. Each sentence follows the same format:
 - A _____ is a house for a _____ but/and/because/so _____
5. I assessed students’ written work (some students read aloud to me). I assessed whether the student used the conjunctions appropriately, and whether the sentence made sense with the chosen conjunction.

Demonstrations of Student Learning, Teacher Assessment and Reflection



Student A

"A hat is house for your head and a hook is a house for the hat"

"A pencil case is a house for a pen and pencil"

"The wild is a house for a fox and a wolf"

Teacher's Observations and Assessment

Student A: Developing

This student showcased their use of one conjunction repeatedly (and) rather than each of the four conjunctions, demonstrating developing word knowledge.

All sentences followed the pattern, used the conjunction correctly, and made sense, thus demonstrating proficiency in the skill of sentence construction (syntax).

The student uses a mix of invented spelling and conventional spelling for words/concepts previously taught.

Taught short e but did not show evidence of applying short e to new words:

Pan for pen

Pansol for pencil

developing in the skill of Writing-Composition

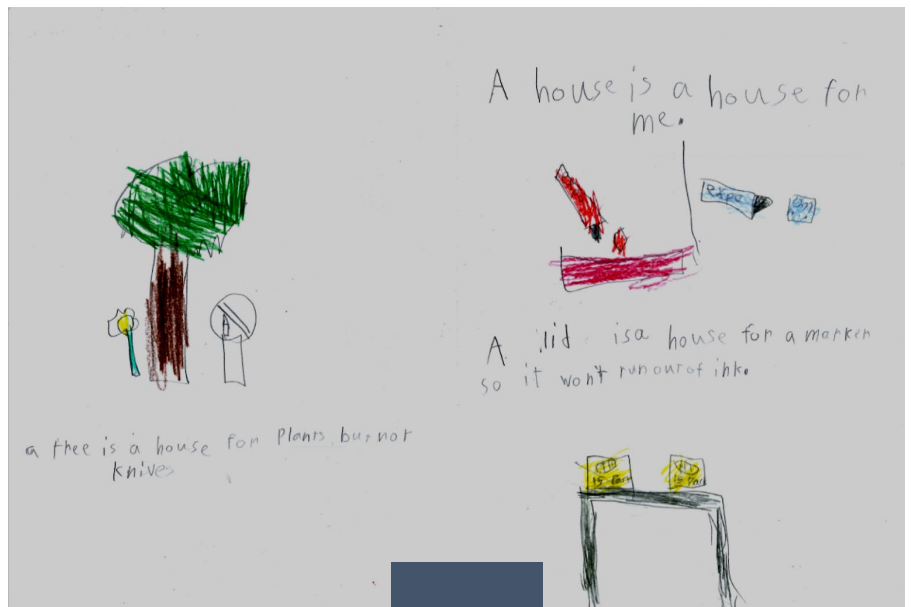
Teacher's Observations and Assessment

Student B: Proficient

This student was able to use all the conjunctions to expand sentences and clearly demonstrates an understanding of commonly used words. They are proficient in word knowledge.

In their story, the student completed four sentences from the provided stems and used a different subordinate conjunction for each sentence. All parts of the sentence connect and make sense, follow the pattern and use conjunctions correctly. When retelling the story orally, the student verbally demonstrated their ability to complete but, because, so, and sentences from sentence stems. They are proficient in the skill of sentence construction (syntax).

The student uses conventional spelling throughout. They are proficient in the skill of Writing-Composition.



Student B

"A nest is a house for a bird **and** a duck."

"Electricity is a house for electronics **because** it can charge."

"A tree is a house for plants **but** not knives."

"A lid is house for a marker **so** it won't run out of ink."

Teacher's Reflection

Teaching expanding sentences using conjunctions in this way brought out creativity in the students' work. It also provided the students with multiple ways to practice foundational language skills orally and in writing. I was able to assess students' understanding of the different uses of conjunctions in their own words.

The assessments helped me plan next steps. Once I assessed all the student work and highlighted conjunctions which students were having difficulty with, I planned to teach the same lesson with a different mentor text, focusing on the tricky conjunction.

The ELA foundational proficiency descriptors helped me isolate areas of vocabulary and syntax development to teach and assess. The wording of "using conjunctions" guided me to teach the skill explicitly and be very targeted in my instruction and expectations. When assessing the work, the descriptions focused my assessment only on the skills taught.