

# **Sentence Structure Made Simple**

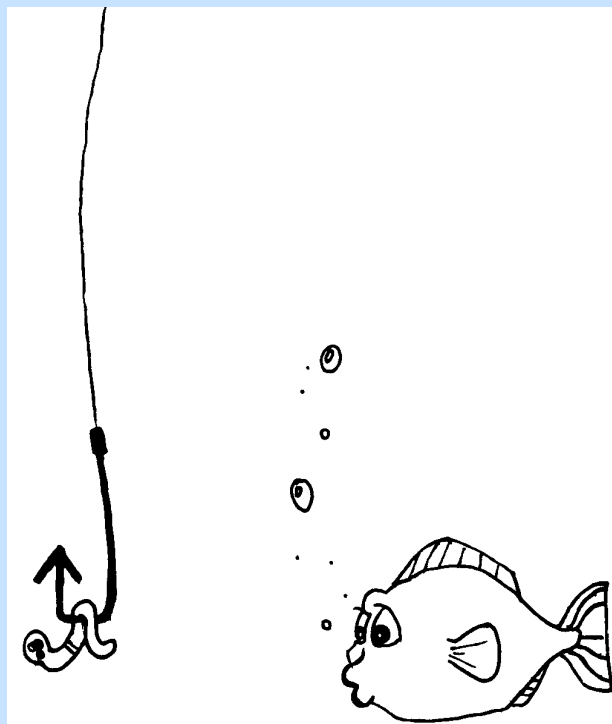


**By JoAnne Moore**

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# Teaching Sentence Structure with Primary Writers



## Sentence Structure

Incomplete sentences, missed periods or capitals, and a lack of varied sentence starters are a source of endless frustration in the writing process. How many children and teachers are tired of writing/reading stories in which most sentences begin with: "Then he.... So then... But then.... The man.... He... She.... Because...."? Why is it children write this way? How can it be transformed?

The first reason many children struggle with writing incomplete sentences, missing periods or capital letters is that concrete explanations on the abstract concept of subject and predicate are difficult to give. Teaching in this area must be simple enough for young children to grasp, explain, and apply. Most children are able to verbalize that a sentence can be made using: a *person/noun* plus a *verb/action word*, a *thing/noun* plus a *verb/action word*, or a *place/noun* plus a *verb/action word*. Therefore, they can write a simple sentence correctly placing the capitals and periods in a sentence which reads "The clown juggled.", because the example contained only the noun and verb. Should the sentence read "The clown juggled balls down the street." the bulk of the class is at a loss to explain why the period comes after the word "street" and not after the word "juggled". To understand why the period comes after the words "balls down the street" instead of "juggled" requires a grasp of predicate.

Concrete teaching on predicate can be accomplished using the question words: who, what, why, where, when and how. The question words are used to vary sentence beginnings and change sentence structure. Through oral discussion and written modelling a solid grasp of sentence structure can be laid. Application exercises reinforce the concepts until mastery is achieved.

## Step One: Oral Discussion

**Materials:** Poster/Overhead Transparency of Diagram, pictures of people

### Concept One: Person plus an Action with a word ending

**Teacher:** When speaking, people use groups of words which form ideas that make sense. Each group of words which forms an idea is called a sentence. One way to make a sentence is to join a person plus an action together. Who is in this picture?

**Class:** A baseball pitcher.

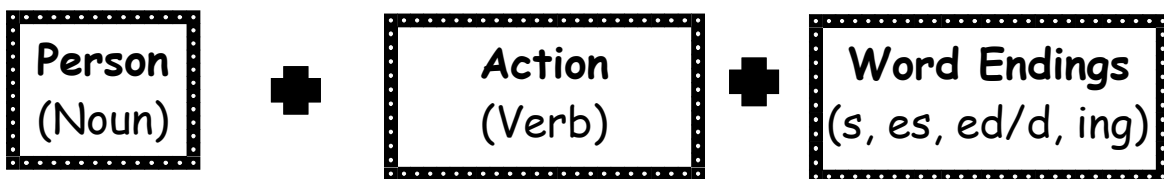
**Teacher:** Good. The person in a sentence can be called a noun. Now, who can show me through drama an action a pitcher might do? The action is called a verb in English. What word(s) would be used to describe the action you did?

**Class:** toss, whip, throw

**Teacher:** Excellent. Now, if we join the person with one of those actions it might sound like this: *The pitcher toss*. Does that make sense or sound right to you?

**Class:** No.

**Teacher:** That's because it needs a word ending. Look at the word ending box. We might say: *The pitcher tossed* or *The pitcher tosses*.



## Concept Two: Helping Verbs

**Teacher:** If we choose the ending "ing" the sentence would say: *The pitcher tossing.* Now it's your turn. Say "The pitcher tossing." out loud. Does it sound like a proper way of speaking? **another way to phrase the question would be to ask students:** Does that sentence sound correct/right to you?

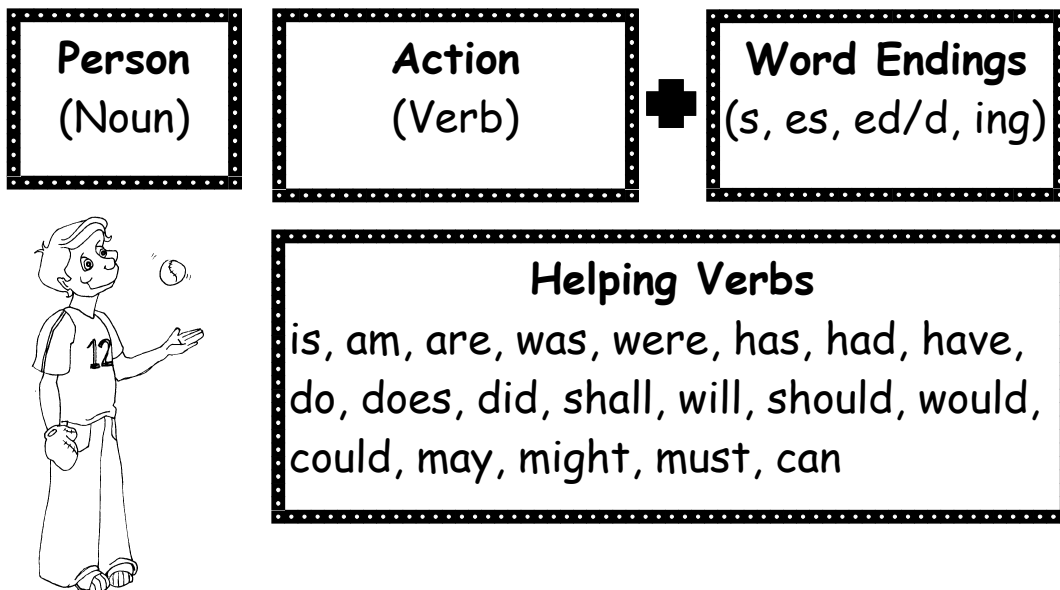
**Class:** No.

**Teacher:** That's because the action word needs help. Some action words/verbs are helpers. Let's look at the **Helping Verbs** box. At times the action word we choose needs a helping verb in order for the sentence to make sense. If we choose "ing" as the word ending we will need a helping verb. Let's read the helping verbs together. Which one could we use to help our "ing" verb?

**Class:** We could use the helping verb "is" or "was".

**Teacher:** Very good. This would make our sentence say either:

1. The pitcher is tossing.
- or
2. The pitcher was tossing.



### Concept Three: Person plus an Action with Question Word Phrases at the End

**Teacher:** You can form a longer, more interesting sentence by adding a **question word phrase** onto the end of your action word. To find out what a **question word phrase** is, let's look at the **question word box**. The words we use to ask questions are: who, what, where, when, why, and how. To find out how the **question words** work in sentences, I'm going to ask you a question about our sentence using one of them.

**Teacher:** The pitcher tossed **what**?

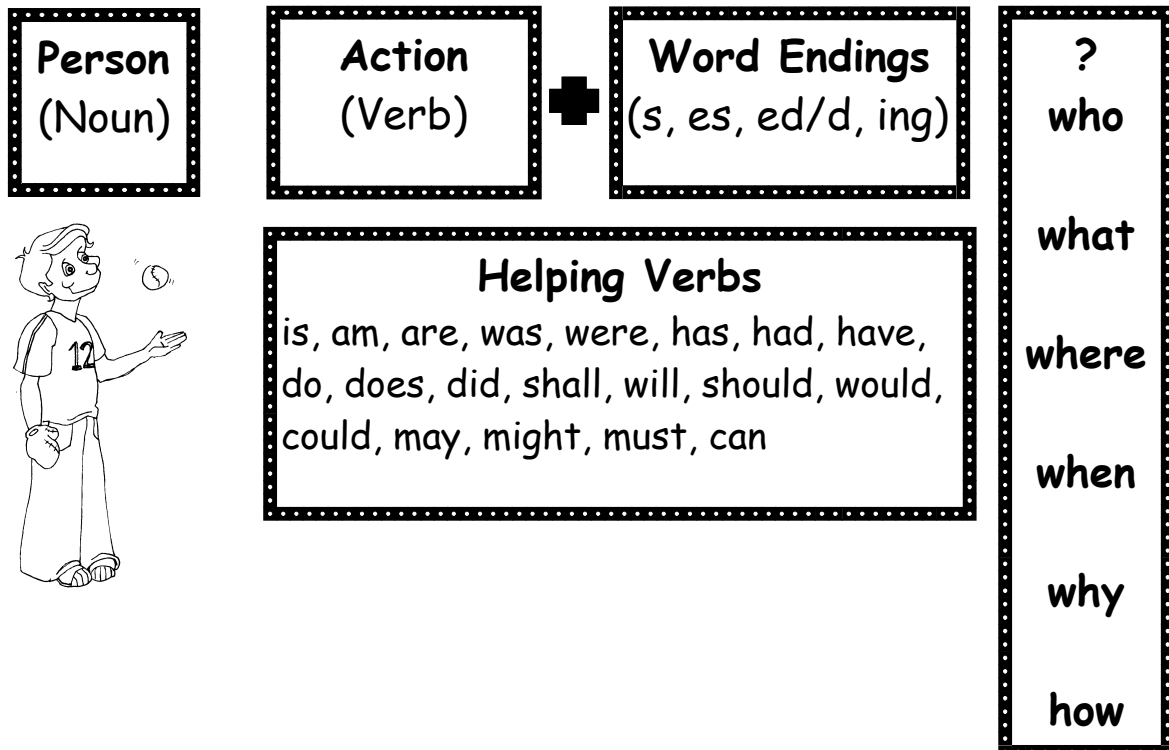
**Class:** the ball.

**Teacher:** Excellent. Now our sentence says "*The pitcher tossed the ball.*" You have just learned that a sentence can be made using a **person** plus an **action** with a **word ending** and a **what** (answer to this question word). Let's try adding on second question word phrase.

The pitcher tossed the ball to **who(m)**?

**Class:** the catcher.

**Teacher:** Well done. Now our sentence says "*The pitcher tossed (what) the ball (who) to the catcher.*" You have just learned that a sentence can be made using a **person** plus an **action** with a **word ending** and the two question word answers of **what** and **who**.



## Defining Question Words

### Exciting "When" Words

- \*Suddenly
- \*At that moment
- \*In a flash
- \*In an instant
- \*In a split second
- \*All of a sudden
- \*Instantly
- \*All at once
- \*In a twinkle
- \*Not a second too soon

### Other "When" Words

- \*times of day (morning, afternoon, evening, night)
- \*seasons (spring, summer, autumn, winter)
- \*time periods (once upon a time, many years ago, long ago, centuries ago, last week)

### "How" Words

- \*ly words (example: quickly)
- \*ing words (example: soaring) which start a sentence

### "What" Words

- |                  |                 |                 |
|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| *colour (purple) | *number (three) | *shape (coiled) |
| *size (tiny)     | *age (young)    | *type (wooden)  |

### "Who" Words

- \*titles (Mr. Mrs. Miss Dr.)
- \*descriptions of noun (Sam, the little old man,)

### "Where" Words (Prepositions)

around, above, behind, beneath, below, beside, between, deep, down, downwards, in, into, inside, on, onto, through, to, toward, upon, under, underneath

## Concept Four: Thing Plus an Action with a Word Ending and Question Word(s)

**Teacher:** A second way to make a sentence is to join a thing plus an action together. What is in this picture?

**Class:** A stegosaurus.

**Teacher:** Good. A stegosaurus is a thing. The thing in a sentence is also called a noun. Now, who can show me through drama an action a stegosaurus might do? Remember the action is called a verb. What word(s) would be used to describe the action you did?

**Class:** lumber, stomp, clomp

**Teacher:** Excellent. Now, if we join the thing with one of those actions it might sound like this: *The stegosaurus lumber.* Does that make sense or sound right to you?

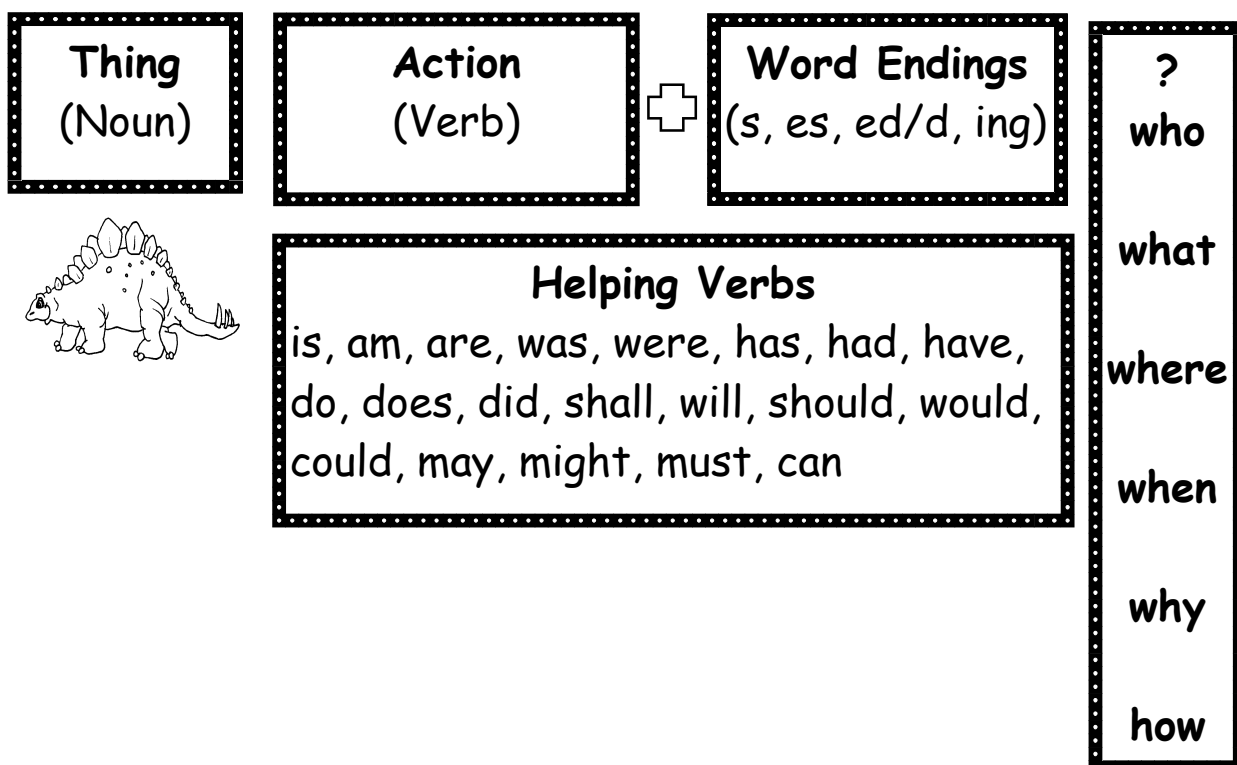
**Class:** No.

**Teacher:** Why not?

**Class:** We need to add a word ending.

**Teacher:** Great remembering! Which one(s)?

**Class:** How about "ed" or "s"?





**Teacher:** Both will work. Who can tell me what the sentence says with a word ending?

**Class:** The sentence might say:

1. The stegosaurus lumbered.

or

2. The stegosaurus lumbers.

**Teacher:** Wow! You've got it! If you were to add the "ing" word ending, what else would you need to add in the sentence?

**Class:** We would need to add a helping verb. We could use "is" or "was".

**Teacher:** Exactly. What sentences could you make?

**Class:** We could make:

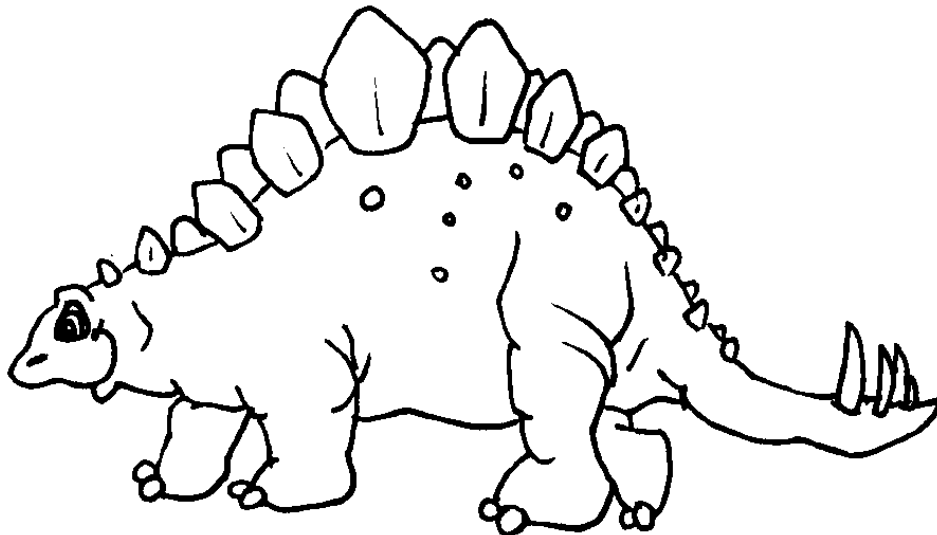
1. The stegosaurus is lumbering.

or

2. The stegosaurus was lumbering.

**Teacher:** Great job! Now, who can take this sentence and add one/two question word phrase(s). Remember the question word phrases are based on the answers to: who, what, where, when, why, and how.

**Class:** If we use **where** and **why** we can make the sentence: The stegosaurus was lumbering (where) in the field (why) to find some food.



## Concept Five: Place Plus an Action with a Word Ending and Question Word(s)

**Teacher:** A third way to make a sentence is to join a place plus an action together. What is in this picture?

**Class:** A castle.

**Teacher:** Good. A castle is a place. The place in a sentence can also be the noun. Now, who can show me through drama an action a castle might do? Remember the action is called a verb. What word(s) would be used to describe the action you did?

**Class:** tower, rose, stretch

**Teacher:** Excellent. Now, if we join the place with one of those actions and a word ending it might sound like this:

1. The castle towered. or 2. The castle towers.

**Place**  
(Noun)

**Action**  
(Verb)



**Word Endings**  
(s, es, ed/d, ing)



**Helping Verbs**  
is, am, are, was, were, has, had, have,  
do, does, did, shall, will, should, would,  
could, may, might, must, can

**?**  
who  
what  
where  
when  
why  
how


## Concept Six: Noun, Helping Verb & a Question Word


**Teacher:** When writing sentences about people, things or places sometimes a helping verb is used alone. This occurs when it is followed by a "what" question word.

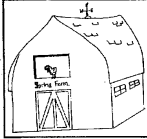
**For example:**

1. The girl was beautiful.  
person + helping verb + what
2. The dog is enormous.  
thing + helping verb + what
3. The castle was shiny.  
place + helping verb + what

# Student Writing Samples

<b>Person Thing Place</b> 	<b>Verb/Action</b> sit _____ (s, es, ed/d, <u>ing</u> )	<b>Add 1 or 2:</b> who what <u>where</u> when why how
<b>Helping Verbs</b> is, am, are, <u>was</u> , were, has, had, have, do, does, did, shall, will, should, would, could, may, might, must, can		
The king was sitting on his throne.		

<b>Noun Person/Thing/Place</b> <b>Pronouns</b> he, him, she, her, it, them, they 	<b>Verb (Action)</b> _____ (s, es, ed/d, ing)	<b>Add 1 or 2:</b> <u>who</u> <u>what</u> where when why how
<b>Helping Verbs</b> <u>is</u> am, are, was, were, has, had, have, do, does, did, shall, will, should, would, could, may, might, must, can		
Sandy is a puppy dog who likes to play ball.		

<b>Noun Person/Thing/Place</b> <b>Pronouns</b> he, him, she, her, it, them, they 	<b>Verb (Action)</b> loom _____ (s, es, <u>ed</u> /d, ing)	<b>Add 1 or 2:</b> who what <u>where</u> when why how
<b>Helping Verbs</b> is, am, are, was, were, has, had, have, do, does, did, shall, will, should, would, could, may, might, must, can		
The barn loomed into the sky.		

## Concept Seven: How to Vary Sentences by Placing the Question Words At the Beginning

**Teacher:** Let's say we wrote the sentence "The clown danced down the sidewalk." We have used a person + action + word ending + where. Another thing we can do is add a question word at the beginning of the sentence. Let's start with the question word "what".

### 1. **What** kind of clown danced down the sidewalk?

The funny clown danced down the sidewalk.

What (funny) + Person + Action + Word Ending + Where (down the sidewalk)

### 2. **When** did the clown dance?

One morning the funny clown danced down the sidewalk.

When (morning) + What (funny) + Person + Action + Word Ending + Where (down the sidewalk)

### 3. **Why** did the clown dance?

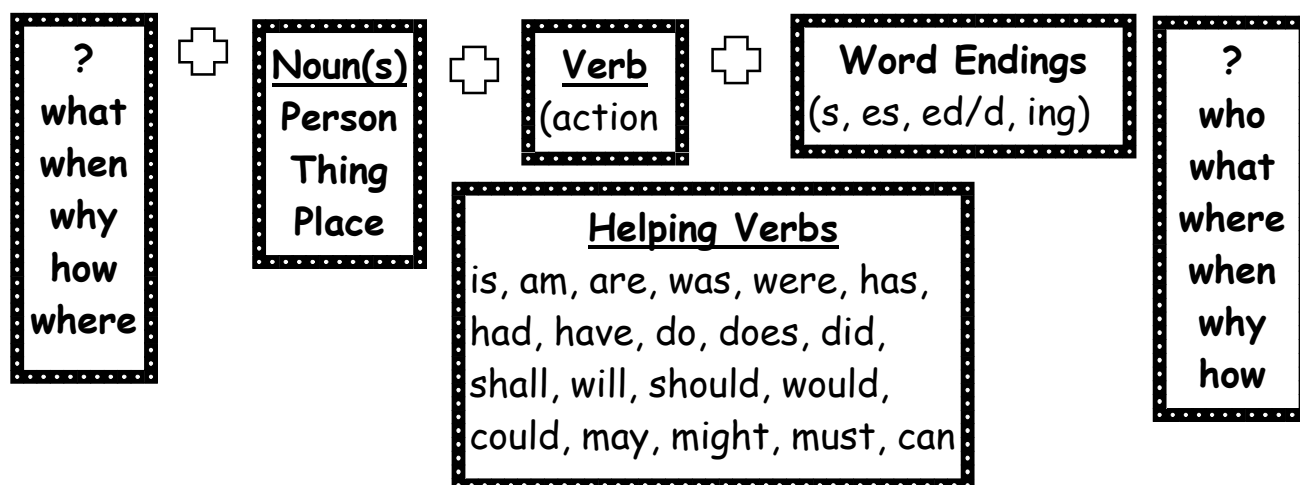
For fun one morning, the clown danced down the sidewalk.

Why (for fun) + When (one morning) + Person + Action + Word Ending + Where

### 4. **How** did the clown dance?

Wiggling his arms, the clown danced down the sidewalk.

How (wiggling) + What (his arms) + Person + Action + Word Ending + Where



## Using the Question Words as Sentence Starters:

### 1. "What" Words

**Plural Nouns** (*Stars* dotted the sky.)

**Number words** (*Six* men stood still.)

**Size words** (*Large* hills rose into the sky.)

**Shape words** (*Round* tables filled the tent.)

**Age** ( *Young* men lined up for miles.)

**Colour words** (*Purple* flowers poked their noses up through the grass.)

**Description words** (*Dainty* lace flowed from the collar of the dress.)

### 2. "When" Words

\*Suddenly

\*All of a sudden

\*At that moment

\*Instantly

\*Soon

\*All at once

\*In a twinkple

\*Just then

\*In a flash/twinkle

\*Later on

\*Not too long

\*In a while

\*A short time later

\*Next

\*In a few minutes

\***Times of Day** (morning, afternoon, evening, night)

\***Seasons** (spring, summer, autumn, winter)

\***Time Periods** (once upon a time, many years ago, long ago, centuries ago, last week)

### 3. "How" Words

\***ly** words (example: Quickly, the boy snatched up his ball.)

\***ing** words (example: Soaring, the plane flew into the sky.)

### 4. "Where" Words

around, above, behind, beneath, below, beside, between, deep, downwards, down, in, inside, into, on, onto, over, passed, through, to, toward, upon, under,

### 5. "Who" Words

\***Titles** (Mr. Mrs. Miss Dr.)

\***Descriptions of characters**

**Example One:** The little old man limped along.

**Example Two:** The furry creature bounded up to my nose.

\***Names of characters** (Herbert, the horse, flicked his tail.)

\***Pronouns** (I, it, he, her, him, me, my, she, them, they, we)

## Paragraphs with Sentence Starter Practice

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### 1. "What" Words

\*Plural Nouns

\*Number Words

\*Size Words

\*Age

\*Shape Words

\*Colour Words

\*Description Words

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### 2. "When" Words

\*Suddenly

\*All of a sudden

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\*In a flash

\*Later on

\*Not too long

\*In a while

\*A short time later

\*Next

\*In a few minutes

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### 3. "How" Words

\*ly words

\*ing words

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#### 4. "Where" Words

around, above, behind, beneath, below, beside, between, downwards, down, in, inside, into, on, onto, over, through, to, toward, upon, under

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#### 5. "Who" Words

**\*Titles** (Mr. Mrs., Miss, Dr. Rev.)

**\*Description of characters**

**Example one:** The little old man limped along.

**Example Two:** The furry creature bounded up to my nose.

**\*Names of characters** (Herbert, the horse, flicked his tail.)

**\*Pronouns** (I, it, he, her, him, me, my, she, them, they, we)

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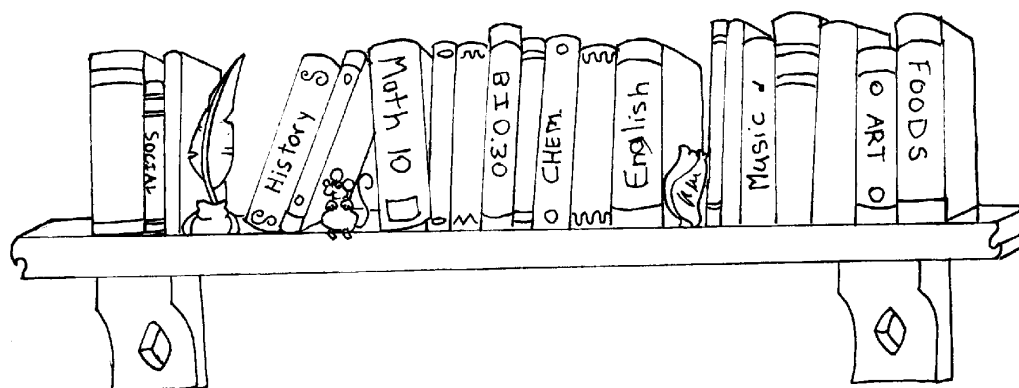
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## Student Example # 1

### Sentence Starter Practice

#### 1. "What" Words

- |               |               |                    |      |
|---------------|---------------|--------------------|------|
| *Plural Nouns | *Number Words | *Size Words        | *Age |
| *Shape Words  | *Colour Words | *Description Words |      |

Bees slurped up the nectar.

#### 2. "When" Words

- |                     |                  |                   |
|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| *Suddenly           | *All of a sudden | *At that moment   |
| *Instantly          | *Soon            | *All at once      |
| *In a twinkling     | *Just then       | *In a flash       |
| *Later on           | *Not too long    | *In a while       |
| *A short time later | *Next            | *In a few minutes |

A short time later they were making honey.

#### 3. "How" Words

- \*ly words
- \*ing words

Quietly, the bees settled down for a nap.

#### 4. "Where" Words

around, above, behind, beneath, below, beside, between, downwards, down, in, inside, into, on, onto, over, through, to, toward, upon, under

Below the hive was a bear!

#### 5. "Who" Words

\*Titles (Mr, Mrs., Miss, Dr. Rev.)

\*Description of characters

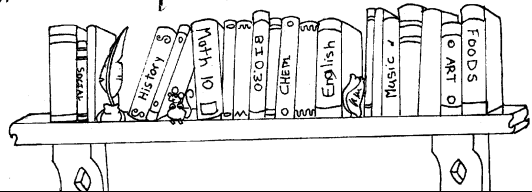
Example one: The little old man limped along.

Example Two: The furry creature bounded up to my nose.

\*Names of characters (Herbert, the horse, flicked his tail.)

\*Pronouns (I, it, he, her, him, me, my, she, them, they, we)

The furry creature scooped out a handful of honey.



## Other Variations on Sentence Starters #1 and #3

### Sentence 1: "What" Sentence Starters

- Number Words:** Six bees slurped up the nectar.
- Size Words:** Tiny bees slurped up the nectar.
- Age:** Young bees slurped up the nectar.
- Shape Words:** Fuzzy bees slurped up the nectar.
- Colour Words:** Golden bees slurped up the nectar.
- Description Words:** Hungry bees slurped up the nectar.

### Sentence 3: "How" Sentence Starters

**"ing" Words:** Settling down for a nap, the bees were quiet.



## Student Example # 2

### Sentence Starter Practice

Name \_\_\_\_\_

#### 1. "What" Words

\*Plural Nouns

\*Number Words

\*Size Words

\*Age

\*Shape Words

\*Colour Words

\*Description Words

Sneaky little trap door  
spiders hide in their dens.

#### 2. "When" Words

\*Suddenly

\*All of a sudden

\*At that moment

\*Instantly

\*Soon

\*All at once

\*In a twink

\*Just then

\*In a flash

\*Later on

\*Not too long

\*In a while

\*A short time later

\*Next

\*In a few minutes

Just then a worm wiggles  
by. In a flash he grabs it!

#### 3. "How" Words

\*ly words

\*ing words

Clutching it tightly he scram-  
bles back inside.

#### 4. "Where" Words

around, above, behind, beneath, below, beside, between, downwards,  
down, in, inside, into, on, onto, over, through, to, toward, upon, under

Beneath the ground the  
spider plops it in to his mouth.

#### 5. "Who" Words

\*Titles (Mr. Mrs., Miss, Dr. Rev.)

\*Description of characters

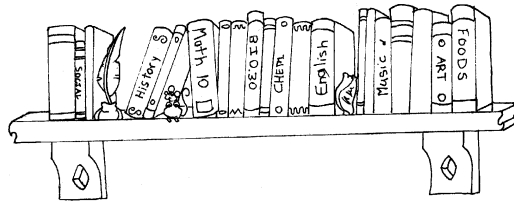
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Example Two: The furry creature bounded up to my nose.

\*Names of characters (Herbert, the horse, flicked his tail.)

\*Pronouns (I, it, he) her, him, me, my, she, them, they, we)

He was plump!



## Other Variations on Sentence Starters #1 and #3

### Sentence 1: "What" Sentence Starters

- Plural Nouns:** Trap door spiders hide in their dens.  
**Number Words:** Three trap door spiders hid in their dens.  
**Size Words:** Small trap door spiders hid in their dens.  
**Age:** Old trap door spiders hide in their dens.  
**Shape Words:** Skinny trap door spiders hide in their dens.  
**Colour Words:** Brown trap door spiders hide in their dens.

### Sentence 3: "How" Sentence Starters

- "ly" Words:** Tightly clutching, the worm, he scrambles back inside.

\* To teach prepositions, play the game "Simon Says" using buttons and cups to teach prepositions.

## Sentences Starting with "Where"

**Teacher:** If the sentence begins with the question word "where", *the order of the noun and verb can be reversed.*

**5. Where** was the mouse?

Example: Deep in the haystack was a mouse.

Where (deep in the haystack) + Helping Verb (was) + Thing

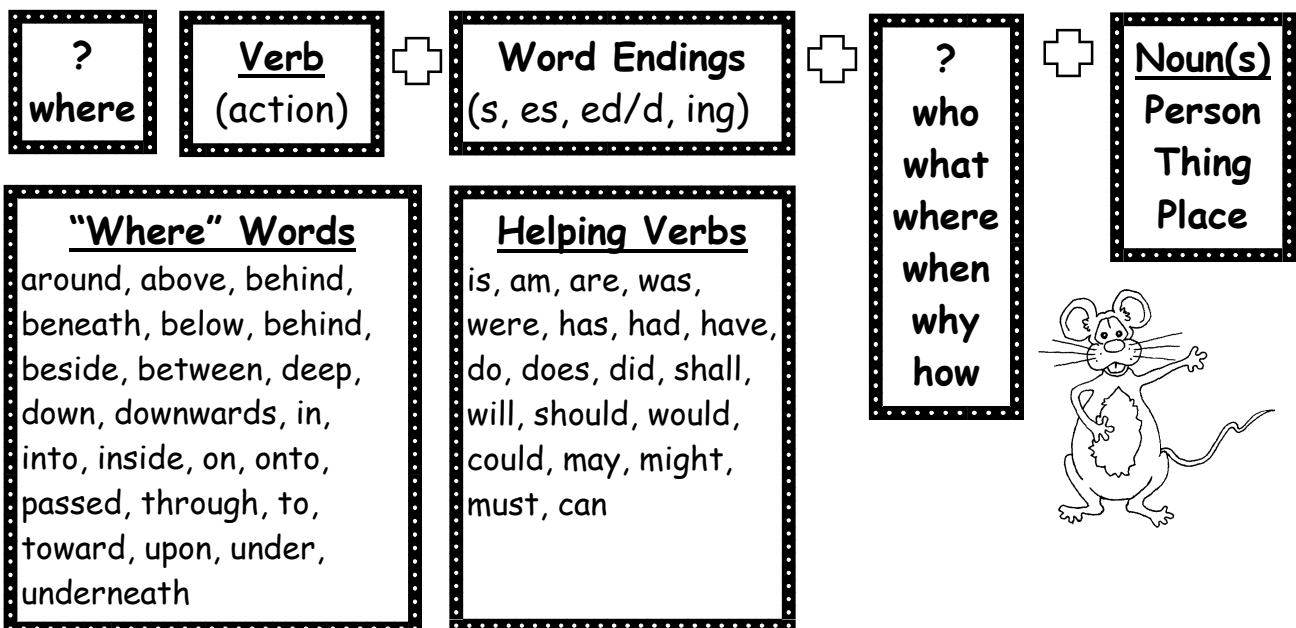
**Teacher:** Notice how the verb came before the noun in the sentence above.

**Teacher:** When starting a sentence with the question word "where" a second question word "what" may be added BEFORE the person/thing.

**6. Where** was the mouse and **what** kind of mouse was it?

Example: Deep in the haystack was a little mouse.

Where (down the sidewalk) + Helping Verb + What (little) + Thing



## Concept Eight: Exciting Sentence Starters & Glue Words

**Teacher:** In stories, authors use exciting "when" words to start sentences in order to catch the reader's attention. These are shown in the diagram above. An example of a sentence using an exciting "when" word at the beginning might be:

Suddenly a dog leaped out of the crowd!

**Note:** "Once upon a time" is a traditional "when" beginning used to start stories.

**Teacher:** Glue words are used to join two sentences together. Only two sentences may be joined before a period must be used. Glue words can also be used to join one sentence together along with a second action and its question word phrases. Glue words are called conjunctions in grammar. In story writing we mainly use the glue words "and, as, while, because". There are many other conjunctions, but they will not be introduced at this time. Note: introduce more conjunctions as context dictates.

### 1. An example of using a glue word to join two sentences together is:

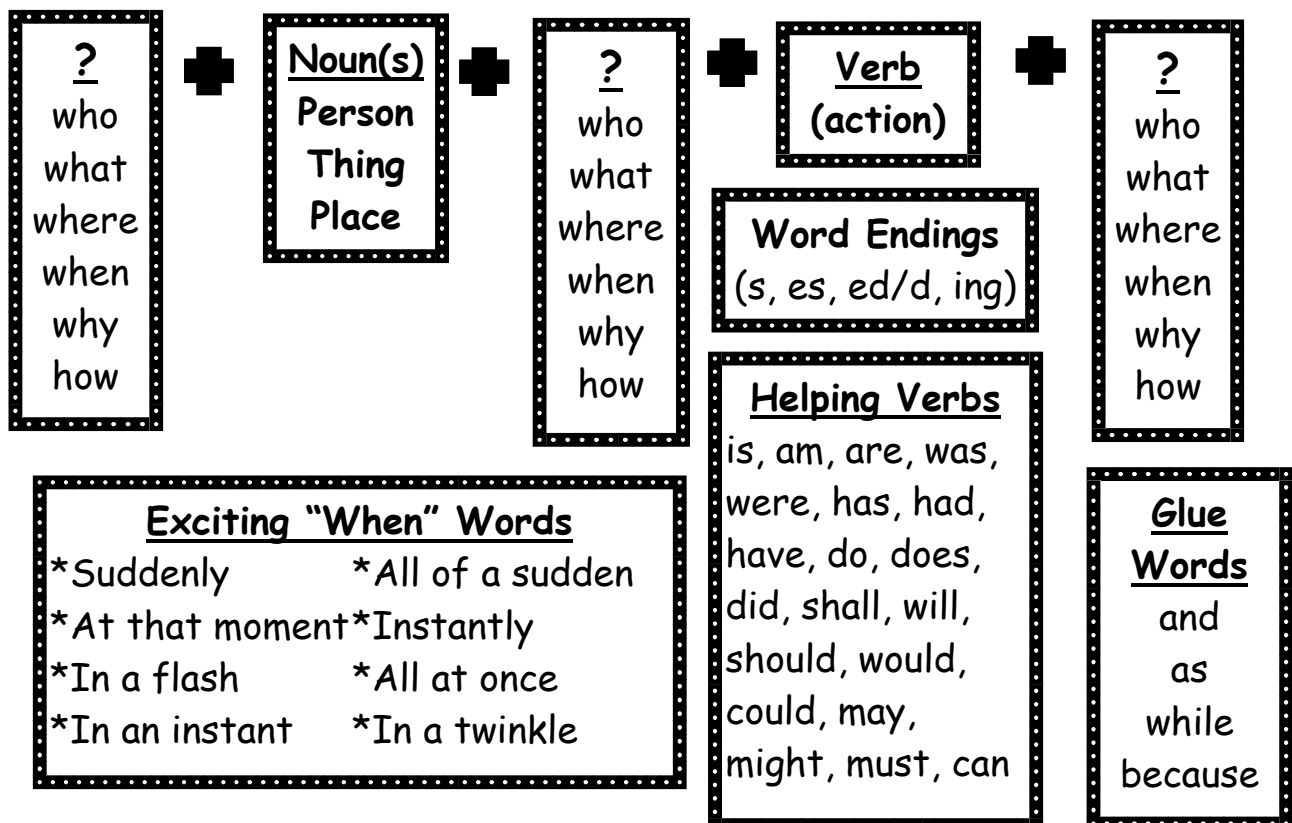
Suddenly a dog leaped out of the crowd and then it licked the clown!

when (suddenly) + thing + action + word ending + where + glue word (and) + when (then) + thing (it) + action + word ending + who (the clown).

### 2. An example of using a glue word to join one sentence with a second action is:

At that moment a dog leaped out of the crowd and landed on the clown's shoulder!

when + thing + action + where + glue word + second action + where



## **Concept Nine: Using Question Word Phrases Between the Noun and Verb**

**Teacher:** Question word phrases (who, what, where, when, why, how) can be inserted at the beginning, end, and middle of sentences.

**Example 1:**

The juggler at the circus tumbled across the field.

Noun + Where (at the circus) + Verb + Where (across the field)

**Example 2:**

Harry, a veterinarian, examined the small puppy.

Noun + Who (veterinarian) + Verb + What (small puppy)

## **Concept Ten: Using Plural Nouns and “ing” Sentence Starters in Stories**

**Teacher:** In stories, authors try to begin sentences with different words. This is a challenge. It is tempting to begin sentences using only the following words: name of the character, he/she, they, then, the, so, because, but. Starting sentences with different words can be accomplished using two basic tools.

**Tool one: Sentences can be started with plural nouns by omitting “the”.**

**Example 1:** The seals slapped their paws together.

**Change to:** Seals slapped their paws together.

Plural noun (seals) + Verb (slapped) + What (their paws) + How (together).

**Example 2:** The clouds drifted over the barn.

**Change to:** Clouds drifted over the barn.

Plural noun (clouds) + Verb + Where (over the barn)

**Tool two: Sentences can be starting with “ing” words (participles).**

**Example 1:** Swinging, the monkey leaped from branch to branch.

How (swinging) + Thing + Verb + Where (from branch to branch)

**Combining these two strategies in writing:**

Clouds drifted over the barn. Strutting up and down the fence, a rooster crowed noisily.

## Concept 11: How Students can Achieve these Strategies:

### 1. Creating Word Webs of Nouns and Verbs

Word webs of nouns and verbs give children lists of plural nouns to start sentences with. Matching verbs can be selected and used to form sentences. Most verbs can be turned into "ing" words. Once they become an "ing" word, they can be used to start sentences with. Here is an example of a word web:

Setting Word Web for a Farm	
Nouns	Verbs
clouds sunlight wind grain ducks kittens barn	drifted, floated, sailed blazed, beamed, scorched, shone whispered, whistled, rustled waved, stretched, danced paddled, bobbed, dove, splashed licked, yawned, snuggled, scratched rose, stood, towered

Word webs give children visual, concrete choices. They can actually choose a plural noun to start their sentence with by circling it. Then, they can choose and combine a matching verb. For a different kind of sentence starter, students can circle a verb from the word web and turn it into an "ing" word to use at the beginning of their next sentence. Next, they can circle the matching noun and follow it up with a verb and question word phrase. When these two skills (plural nouns and "ing" words) are combined with using the question word phrases of "what, where, when, why, how" it becomes much easier to vary sentence starters. The difficulty in story writing is that most children don't have a solid grasp of sentence structure and they don't have word webs to work from.

Word webs contain nouns and verbs which are the building blocks for creating simple sentences. For early or weak writers these nouns and verbs serve as a base for creating sentences. Simultaneously, they can act as a springboard to stimulate vocabulary for strong writers who can be encouraged to use the web as a starting point for stretching their vocabulary.

The process of how to create *contextually* useful word webs with students is addressed in any of the story writing projects.

**Sunlight** beamed down on the old farm. **Ducks** paddled and bobbed in the pond as the wind whispered through the tall grass. **Over** the meadow and down a hill, stood the old barn. **Yawning** and licking their paws, two small kittens snuggled deep inside.

# Sentence Structure Exercises

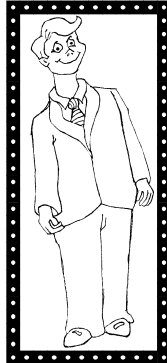
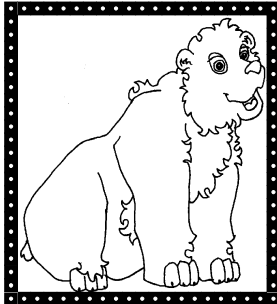
1. Sentence structure exercises may be photocopied for students to write on or used as transparencies for modelling.
2. Model pages for teaching the concepts are shown first. They are followed by reproducible student exercises.
3. If students use these exercises, it is helpful to give them a graphic of a noun to glue onto their page. Graphics of people, things, places have been included at the end of this section. It is easiest to have all students work with the same noun and do a class brainstorm of coordinating verbs. Students may then choose their own verbs to match the noun when creating their own sentences.

Noun  
Person  
Thing  
Place

Pronouns  
he, him, she,  
her, it, them,  
they



Verb  
(Action)



\_\_\_\_\_ (s, es, ed/d, ing)

### Helping Verbs

is, am, are, was, were, has, had, have, do,  
does, did, shall, will, should, would,  
could, may, might, must, can

### 1. Thing + Action + Word Ending

a. Bear leaped.      b. It leaped.

### 2. Thing + Helping Verb + Word Ending

a. Bear was swimming.      b. It was swimming.

### 3. Person + Action + Word Ending

a. Tom jumps.      b. He jumps.

### 4. Person + Helping Verb + Word Ending

a. Tom is jumping.      b. Tom jumps.

**Model One: Noun plus an  
Action/Helping Verb with a  
Word Ending**

Noun  
Person  
Thing  
Place

Prounouns  
he, him, she,  
her, it, them,  
they



Verb  
(Action)

\_\_\_\_\_ (s, es, ed/d, ing)

**Helping Verbs**

is, am, are, was, were, has, had, have, do,  
does, did, shall, will, should, would,  
could, may, might, must, can

Handwriting practice lines consisting of eight sets of three horizontal lines (top solid, middle dashed, bottom solid).



**Noun: Person**



**Verb: Action**

\_\_\_\_\_ (s, es, ed/d, ing)

**Helping Verbs**

is, am, are, was,  
were, has, had,  
have, do, does,  
did, shall, will,  
should, would,  
could, may, might,  
must, can

**Add 1 or 2:**

who

what

where

when

why

how

**1. Person + Action + Who**

The pitcher smiled at the coach.

**2. Person + Action + What**

The pitcher was strong.

**3. Person + Action + Where**

The pitcher leaped into the air.

**4. Person + Action + When**

The pitcher played in the evening.

**5. Person + Action + Why**

The pitcher jerked when the ball hit him.

**6. Person + Action + What + How**

The pitcher snagged the ball quickly.

**Model Two: Question Words  
at the End of a Sentence with  
a Noun Plus an Action**

## Defining Question Words

### "Who" Words

- \*titles (Mr. Mrs. Miss Dr.)
- \*descriptions of noun (Sam, the little old man,)

### "How" Words

- \*ly words (example: quickly)
- \*ing words (example: soaring) when used at the beginning of a sentence

### "What" Words

- |                  |                  |
|------------------|------------------|
| *colour (purple) | *number (three)  |
| *shape (coiled)  | *size (enormous) |
| *age (young)     | *type (wooden)   |

### Exciting "When" Words

- |                    |                        |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| *Suddenly          | *All of a sudden       |
| *At that moment    | *Instantly             |
| *In a flash        | *All at once           |
| *In an instant     | *In a twinkle          |
| *In a split second | *Not a second too soon |

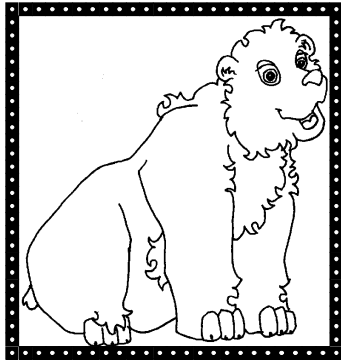
### Other "When" Words

- \*times of day (morning, afternoon, evening, night)
- \*seasons (spring, summer, autumn, winter)
- \*time periods (once upon a time, many years ago, long ago, centuries ago, last week)

### "Where" Words (Prepositions)

around, above, behind, beneath, below, beside, between, down, downwards, in, into, inside, on, onto, through, to, toward, upon, under, underneath

Noun: Thing



Verb: Action

\_\_\_\_\_ (s, es, ed/d, ing)

Helping Verbs

is, am, are, was,  
were, has, had,  
have, do, does,  
did, shall, will,  
should, would,  
could, may, might,  
must, can

Add 1 or 2:

who

what

where

when

why

how

**1. Thing + Action + Who**

The bear ambled toward me.

**2. Thing + Action + What**

The bear is scary.

**3. Thing + Action + Where**

The bear climbed into the lake.

**4. Thing + Action + When**

The bear eats in the morning.

**5. Thing + Action + Why**

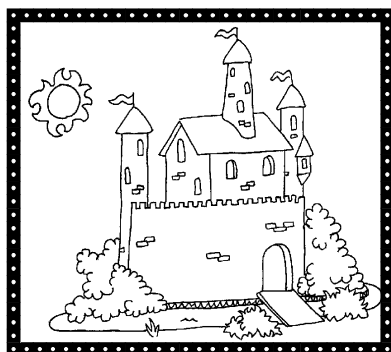
The bear scrambled when it heard a loud noise.

**6. Thing + Action + How**

The bear ambled slowly.

**Model Three: Question Words  
at the End of a Sentence with  
a Thing plus an Action**

Noun: Place



Verb: Action

\_\_\_\_\_ (s, es, ed/d, ing)

Helping Verbs

is, am, are, was,  
were, has, had,  
have, do, does,  
did, shall, will,  
should, would,  
could, may, might,  
must, can

Add 1 or 2:

who

what

where

when

why

how

**1. Place + Action + Who**

The castle was King Henry's.

**2. Place + Action + What**

The castle is beautiful.

**3. Place + Action + Where**

The castle stood deep in the forest.

**4. Place + Action + When**

The castle shone in the morning sunlight.

**5. Place + Action + What + Why**

The castle was strong, because it was made of stone.

**6. Place + Action + What + How**

**Model Four: Question Words  
at the End of a Sentence with  
a Place plus an Action**

Noun  
Person/Thing/Place



Verb  
(Action)



Add 1 or 2:

who

what

where

when

why

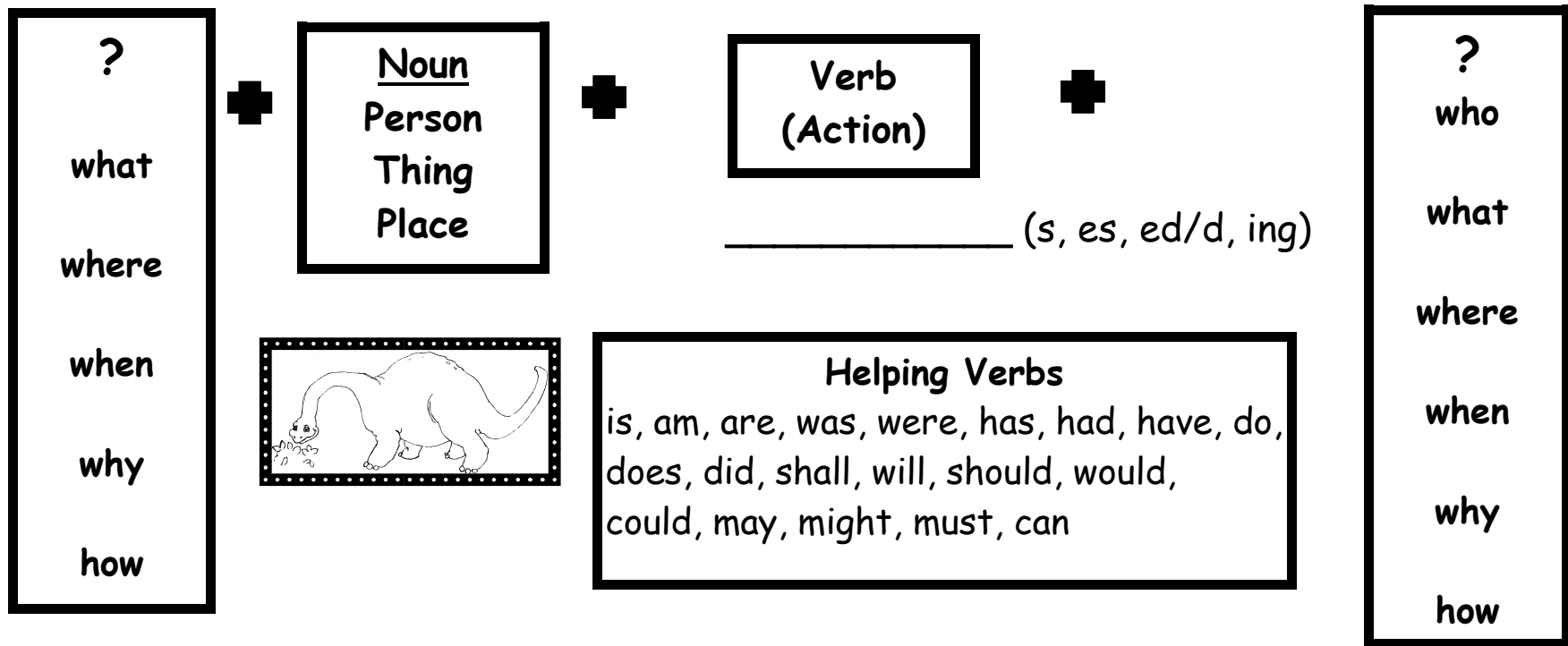
how

Prounouns  
he, him, she, her,  
it, them, they

\_\_\_\_\_ (s, es, ed/d, ing)

Helping Verbs  
is, am, are, was, were, has, had, have, do,  
does, did, shall, will, should, would,  
could, may, might, must, can

Handwriting practice lines consisting of solid top and bottom lines with a dashed middle line. There are five sets of these lines.



**1. What + Thing + Action + What + Why**

Old Long Neck stretched his head to reach the leaves.

**2. Where + Action (Helping Verb) + What + Who**

In the forest was an old dinosaur named Long Neck.

**3. When + Thing + Action + What**

Early in the morning, Long Neck peeked at the sun.

**4. Why + Thing + Action + When**

For fun, Long Neck danced at dawn.

**5. How + Thing + Action + Why**

Wiggling, Long Neck stretches to itch his back.

**Model Five: Question Words at  
the Beginning and End  
of a Sentence**



?  
where



Verb  
(Action)



Noun  
Person  
Thing  
Place



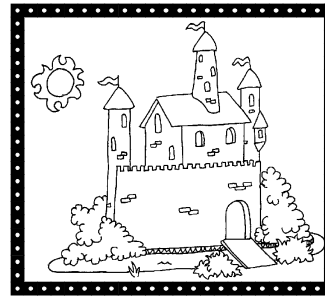
?  
who  
  
what  
  
where  
  
when  
  
why  
  
how

around, above,  
behind, beneath,  
below, behind,  
beside, between,  
down, downwards  
in, into, inside,  
on, onto, through,  
to, toward, upon,  
under, underneath

\_\_\_\_\_ (s, es, ed/d, ing)

### Helping Verbs

is, am, are, was, were, has, had,  
have, do, does, did, shall, will,  
should, would, could, may,  
might, must, can



Many children do not know the meaning of all their prepositions. To teach these positional words play "Simon Says" using a button and cup and/or partners with movement.

#### 1. Where + Action + Place

On a hill, stood the castle.

#### 2. Where + Action (Helping Verb) + Place

In the forest was a castle.

#### 3. Where + Action + Place

Between two mountains, sat a castle.

**Model Six: "Where" as a  
Question Word at the  
Beginning of a Sentence**



?  
where



Verb  
(Action)



Noun  
Person  
Thing  
Place



?  
who  
  
what  
  
where  
  
when  
  
why  
  
how

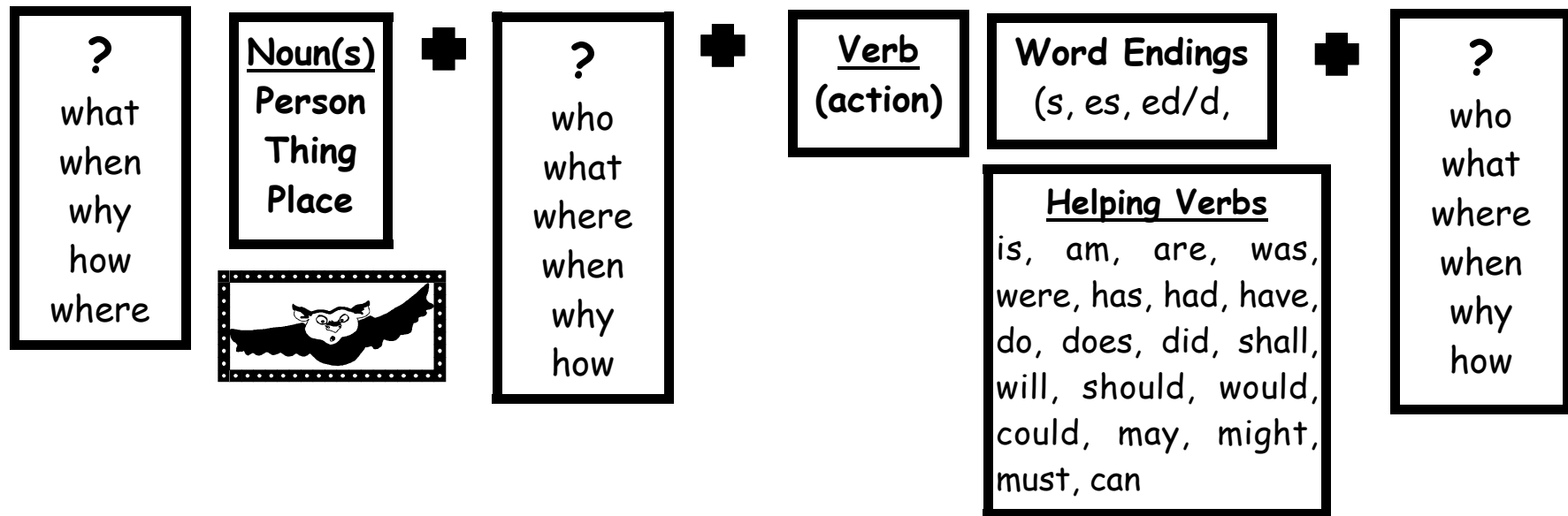
around, above,  
behind, beneath,  
below, behind,  
beside, between,  
down, downwards  
in, into, inside,  
on, onto, through,  
to, toward, upon,  
under, underneath

\_\_\_\_\_ (s, es, ed/d, ing)

### Helping Verbs

is, am, are, was, were, has, had,  
have, do, does, did, shall, will,  
should, would, could, may,  
might, must, can

Handwriting practice lines consisting of multiple sets of solid top and bottom lines with a dashed middle line.



**1. What + Thing + Who + Action + Who**

The sleek bat, named Flappy, dove towards his friend.

**2. When + Thing + Who + Action + What**

Early one evening, Flappy the bat, opened his eyes.

**3. What + Thing + Where + Action + How + Where**

The tiny bat from the forest flew quickly out into the night sky.

**4. How + Where + Thing + Why + Action + Who**

Sailing through the sky, the bat who hated flying followed his brother.

**5. Why + Thing + Where + Action + What**

To pass time, the bat in the shrub, chirped his favorite song.

**Model Seven:  
Question Words at the  
Beginning, Middle and  
End of a Sentence**

what  
when  
why  
how  
where

**Noun(s)**  
**Person**  
**Thing**  
**Place**

who  
what  
where  
when  
why  
how

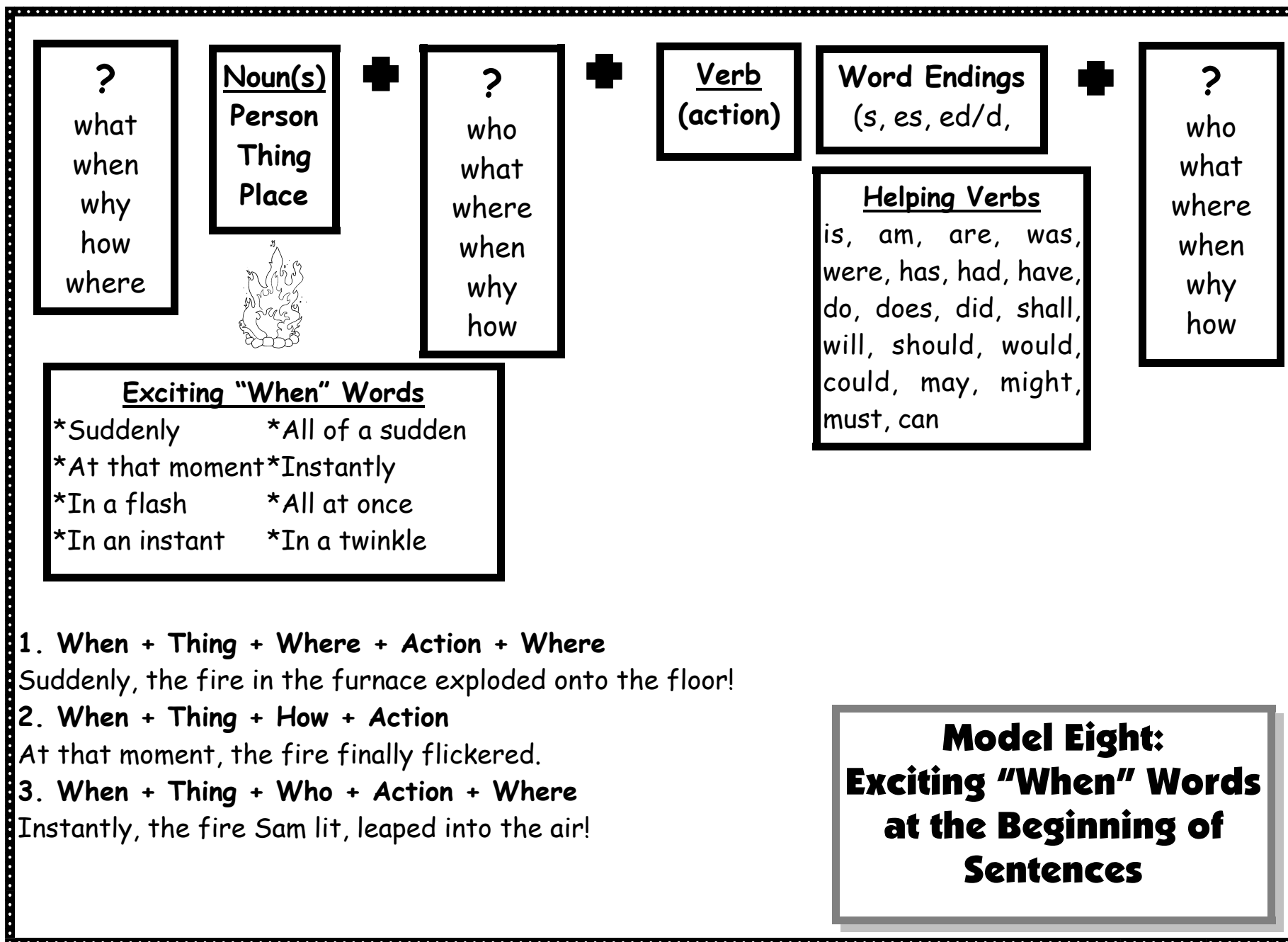
**Verb**  
**(action)**

## Word Endings

is, am, are, was,  
were, has, had, have,  
do, does, did, shall,  
will, should, would,  
could, may, might,  
must, can

who  
what  
where  
when  
why  
how

This image shows a blank sheet of handwriting practice paper. It features four identical sets of horizontal guidelines arranged vertically. Each set includes three lines: a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line. The entire page is enclosed within a thin black rectangular border.



what  
when  
why  
how  
where

Person  
Thing  
Place

who  
what  
where  
when  
why  
how

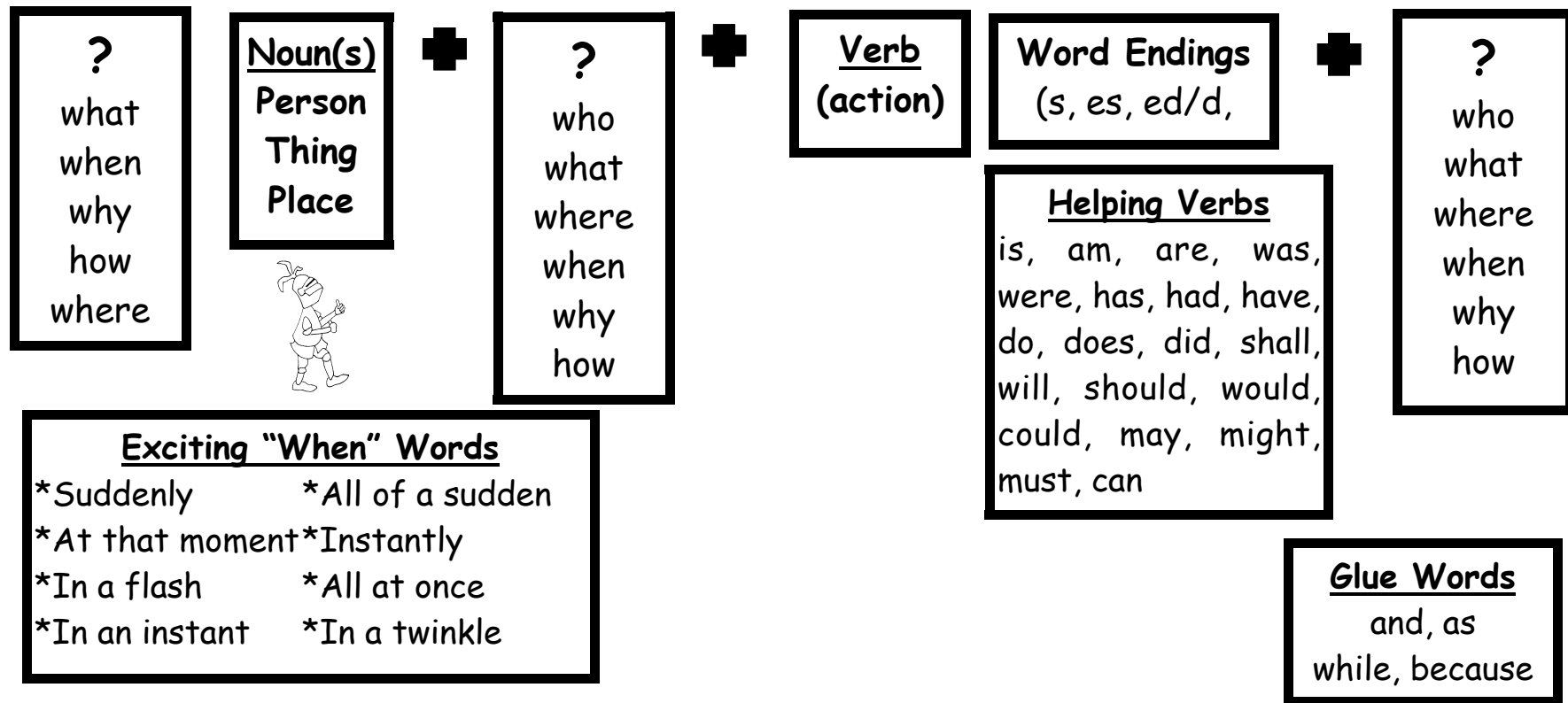
**Verb**  
**(action)**

## Word Endings

who  
what  
where  
when  
why  
how

is, am, are, was,  
were, has, had, have,  
do, does, did, shall,  
will, should, would,  
could, may, might,  
must, can

*Suddenly	*All of a sudden
*At that moment	*Instantly
*In a flash	*All at once
*In an instant	*In a twinkling



- When + Person + Where + Action + Where + Glue Word + Action + Who**  
Suddenly, the knight from Kalamazoo, leaped into the air and stabbed the dragon!
- When + Person + Action + Where + Glue Word + Person + Action + Who**  
At that moment, the knight marched inside the castle, and he saved the princess from the giant.

**Model Nine:  
Glue Words  
(Joining Ideas Together)**

?  
what  
when  
why  
how  
where

Noun(s)  
Person  
Thing  
Place

Pronouns  
he, him, she, her,  
it, them, they

?  
who  
what  
where  
when  
why  
how

Verb  
(action)

Word Endings  
(s, es, ed/d,

Helping Verbs

is, am, are, was,  
were, has, had, have,  
do, does, did, shall,  
will, should, would,  
could, may, might,  
must, can

?  
who  
what  
where  
when  
why  
how

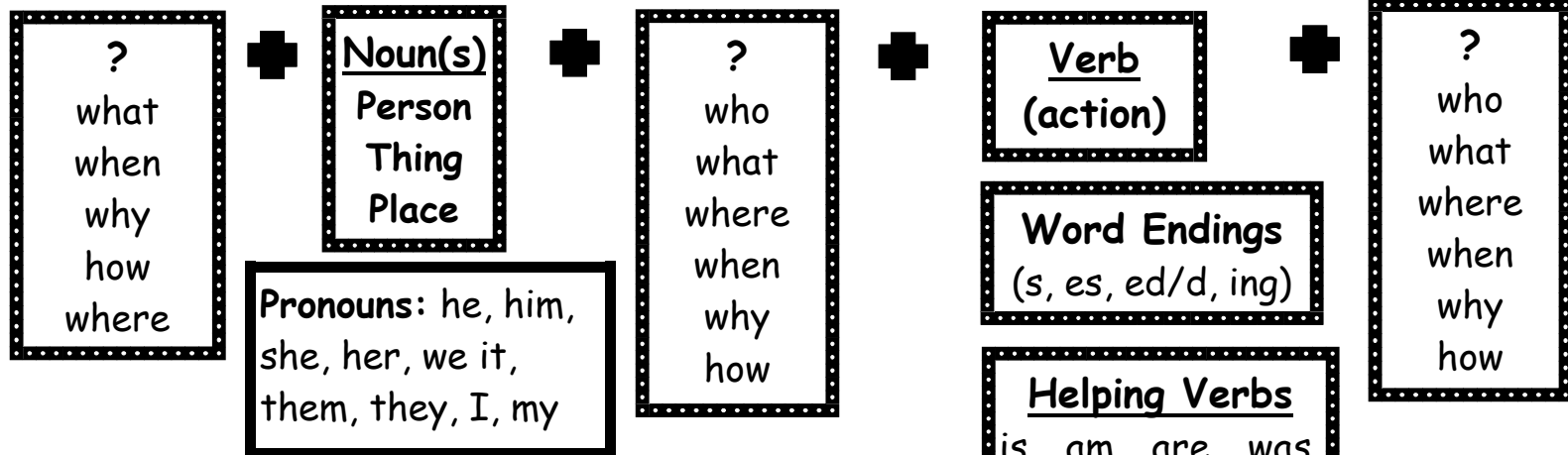
Exciting "When" Words

\*Suddenly      \*All of a sudden  
\*At that moment \*Instantly  
\*In a flash      \*All at once  
\*In an instant   \*In a twinkle

Glue Words

and, as  
while, because

# Sentence Structure Tool



## Exciting "When" Words

- \*Suddenly
- \*At that moment
- \*In a flash
- \*In an instant
- \*All of a sudden
- \*Instantly
- \*All at once
- \*In a twink

## "What" Words

- \*colour
- \*shape
- \*age
- \*number
- \*size
- \*description

## "How" Words

- \*ly words (example: quickly)
- \*ing words (example: soaring)

## "Who" Words

- \*titles (Mr. Mrs. Miss Dr.)
- \*descriptions of noun (Sam, the little old man,)

## Five Sense Verbs

saw, heard, tasted  
felt, smelled,

## Glue Words

and  
as  
while  
because

## "Where" Words

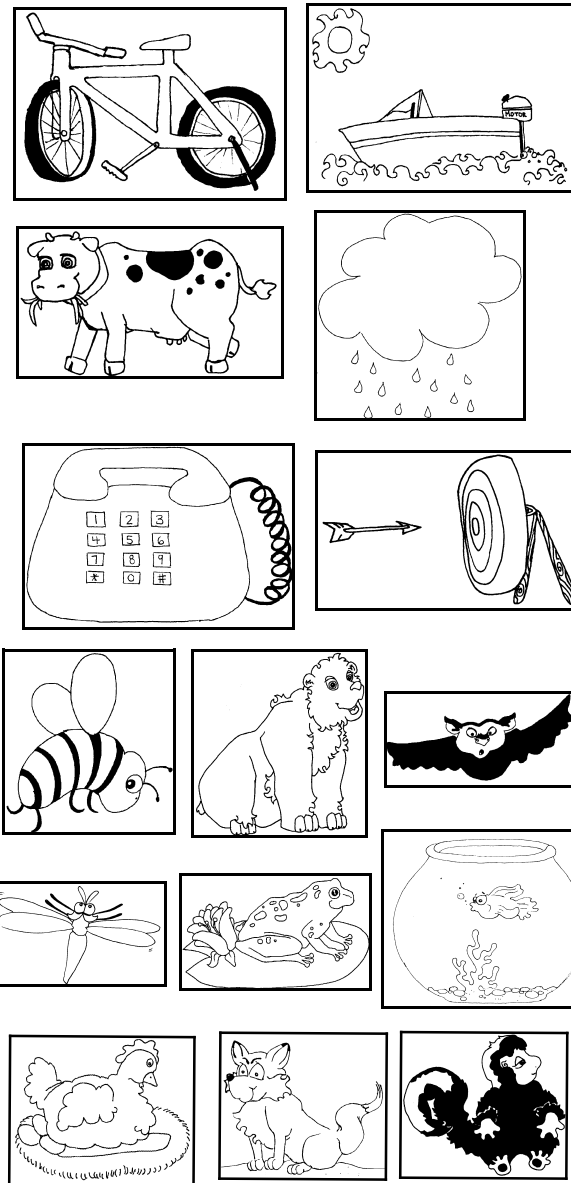
around, above, behind, beneath, below, behind, beside, between, deep, down,  
downwards, in, into, inside, on, onto, over, through, to, toward, upon, under, underneath



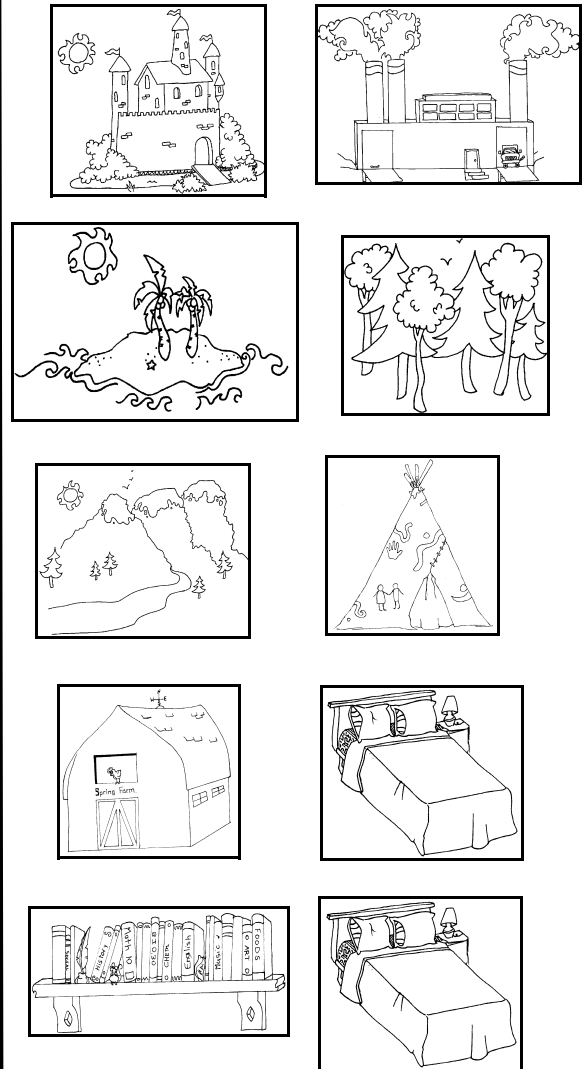
## People Graphics



## Thing Graphics



## Place Graphics



### Developing Fluency: Write Three Sentences

### Example:

Beside the barn in a hole underneath a rock, lived a little mouse named Squeaky. One morning, he scurried through the grass down to the pond. Dancing beside the water, he waved to the little ducks.

### 1. Introduce your character and tell where he lives.

\*Choose a preposition to start your sentence with.

## Prepositions:

around, above, behind, beneath, below, behind, beside, between, deep  
down, downwards, in, into, inside, on, onto, over, through, to, toward  
upon, under, underneath

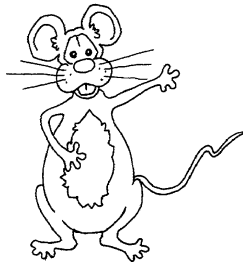
\*Pick a place where your character lives: \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Tell the time of day and where your character went.**

\*Choose: morning, afternoon, evening, night

\*Choose "went" synonym: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Choose a preposition to go with your "went" synonym:



### 3. What did he do there?

\*Use great action words. Try to start your sentence with an "ing" word.

\*Choose "ing" action word: \_\_\_\_\_

## Your turn:

1. Tell where your character lives and who he is.
2. Tell the time of day and where your character went.
3. What did he do there? Do you have three capitals and three periods for your sentences?

This image shows a full page of handwriting practice paper. It features ten identical rows of horizontal guidelines. Each row is composed of three lines: a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line. The rows are evenly spaced and cover most of the page area, leaving margins at the top, bottom, and sides. The entire page is enclosed in a thin black border.

**Sentence Structure:** Teach predicate by adding a question word phrase after the verb

person + action + how



The clown danced quickly.

person + action + why



The clown danced for fun.

person + action + when



The clown danced at night.

person + action + where



The clown danced down the street.

person + action + what



The clown *was/is* funny.

State of Being Verbs are  
used with *what* predicate

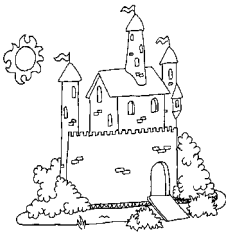
Adjectives:  
colour  
size  
shape  
number  
other descriptors

person + action + who



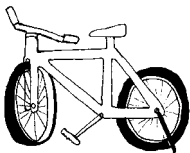
The clown danced for the crowd.

place + action + ? phrase



The castle towered in the distance.  
(*where* phrase)

thing + action + ? phrase



The bike glowed in the dark.  
(*when* phrase)

**Sentence Starters:** Place the Question Word Phrase at the beginning of to vary sentence starters.

how + person + action



Quickly, the clown danced.

why + person + action



For fun, the clown danced.

when + person + action



At night the clown danced.

where + person + action



Down the street the clown danced.

what + person + action

\*must use plural noun

Adjectives:

colour

size

shape

number

other descriptors

Funny clowns *are* dancing.



who + person + action



For the crowd, the clown danced.