Instructional Units for the Teaching of Composition in the Eighth Grade

Harvey Rodger

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INSTRUCTIONAL UNITS
FOR THE
TEACHING OF COMPOSITION
IN THE
EIGHTH GRADE

Harvey Rodger
Advanced Composition
May, 1962
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PREFACE

"To serve the present age," might well be the theme of the following units. To help one gain valuable skills in the use of his language, gives a person much satisfaction. With the knowledge that we, as English teachers, can help a student understand his language better, this report is begun.

Organised into five instructional units on the teaching of composition in the eighth grade, this outline has been designed for the average (mentally) eighth grader. Merely to organize units with no other purpose in view than that of teaching composition, is questionable. Hence, each unit, though centered around writing activities, includes exercises for the strengthening of the student's skills in reading, literature, vocabulary, spelling and appreciation of the language arts in general.

Students do not learn unless they want to and are interested. One of the safest and surest ways of keeping the program meaningful and significant to the students is to let them help set up the purposes and activities. Above all, language skills taught in the classroom should be related to life experiences of the pupils.

In building units of this scope, it is important to consider the pupils, school and community with which the instructor is working. These units will be used the the Palmyra-Macedon Central School, Palmyra, New York. Enrollment
for the entire school exceeds the 2100 mark. Approximately 180 students are homogeneously grouped in the eighth grade. Many of the students are from rural areas.
NEW YORK STATE SYLLABUS REQUIREMENTS
WRITTEN EXPRESSION - EIGHTH GRADE

I. Storytelling
   A. Telling of stories of heroism, endurance, daring and adventure
   B. Brief original stories of similar nature and of types appealing to individual pupils. Stress direct progress of events.
   C. Brief explanation of actions, choices, causes, reasons, purposes

II. Uses of explanation
   A. Study of paragraphs
   B. Practice in explanation of things familiar to pupils: games, use of tools, etc.

III. Making clear an opinion
   A. Practice in expressing opinion in regard to personal, family and school matters
   B. Practice in brief description, for the cultivation of keenness of observation and vividness of expression. Choice of picturemaking nouns, adverbs and verbs

IV. Sentence work
   A. Use of complete, soundly built sentences of fair length
   B. Practice in combining several closely related details into one clear statement
   C. Attention to accuracy in use of subordination connectives, including relative pronouns
   D. Remedial work for those who are weak in sentence structure
E. Development of short themes

F. Related work

V. Correct usage

A. Form correct habits in the use of:
   1. The verbs sing, eat, drink, draw, throw, run
   2. Comparative and superlative degrees of the adjectives
   3. Adjectives and adverbs as modifiers in sentences
   4. Troublesome prepositions

B. Avoidance of "and" between sentences

C. Form correct habits in the use of:
   1. The verbs speak, blow, drive, fall, drown, burst
   2. Tenses of verbs in sentences and connected discourse
   3. Verbs agreeing in number with their subjects

D. Related work

VI. Punctuation

A. Quotation marks with direct quotations

B. Apostrophes in possessives and contractions.
   Avoidance of apostrophe in possessive case of pronouns (except the indefinite form- somebody's, everyone's)

C. Underlining or quotation marks for titles of books, magazines or papers; quotation marks for chapters and articles

D. Commas for words in apposition and parenthetical expression
VII. Capitals

A. Principal words in titles of books, poems, compositions

B. Names of days of the week and month of the year

C. Names of holidays

D. Names of languages, nationalities and races

E. Avoidance of capitals for school subjects other than languages
FAMILIES AND FRIENDS

Aims:

To develop a desire among the pupils to use picture-making adjectives

To improve oral usage

To have the pupils think critically about the values of friends and friendships

To produce complete, unified sentences and paragraphs

To help students speak clearly and intelligently

To learn the meanings and the spellings of new words

Suggested readings:

Two Rivers - Wallace Stegner
The Duster - Franklin Peck
The Glove and the Lions - Leigh Hunt
The Christ of the Andes - Edwin Markham
Bitter Wind - Barbara Gillman
The Farm Boy - Katherine Grimes
The Red Sweater - Mark Hager
The Christmas Carol - Charles Dickens

Introduction:

After mentioning to the class that we are going to be talking and writing about our families and friends for the next few days, have them write a one-sentence definition of what they consider a friend to be. Introduce the unit via a lively discussion of their definitions of
Introduction: (Continued)

friends and friendships. Use the following questions as guides:

1. What is a friend?
2. What are some qualities you would expect to find in a true friend?
3. What are some things you would and would not expect a friend to do for you?

UNIT I

FAMILIES AND FRIENDS

Lesson I: Understanding People

Materials: The Red Sweater by Mark Hager
Suggested time: two periods

Procedures: 1. After a lively discussion of friends and friendships, mention to the students that we are going to read an interesting story about a true friendship. The Red Sweater by Mark Hager shows what two friends are liable to do for each other.

2. Quickly page through the selection, calling attention to the title and any illustrations that might aid the pupils in their reading.

3. Before reading the story, place the following vocabulary words on the board. Discuss each word briefly.
3. (Continued)
thoughtful: patience
shameful: emotional
generous: pride
rude: recollection
gentle: manage

4. Upon completion of the story, each pupil is to clearly answer the following questions on paper.
   a. Why did Mr. Conway prefer to live alone instead of with his children?
   b. What could he find to love in his old home?
   c. Why did the man in the store sell the shoes for less than the price marked on the box?
   d. There are many sayings in this story. Can you think of any experience in your own life to illustrate the truth of one of these?

5. Discuss each question thoughtfully. Encourage the pupils to think and write clearly.

6. In closing this lesson, have each pupil write five vivid adjectives that describe Mr. Conway.
Lesson II: Communicating Our Ideas

Materials: Opaque projector
Suggested time- three periods

Procedures: 1. Discuss briefly what constitutes a paragraph.
   Also, mention how paragraphs help us to communicate ideas.

2. Once the students have an understanding of paragraph structure, call their attention to directional sentences. Examine directional sentences until each pupil realizes why they are used.

3. Have the students think of several topics about their families and friends that interest them. These may be jotted down on the chalkboard as they are mentioned in discussion. Here are some examples:
   - Kites
   - Birthdays
   - Music lessons
   - A storm
   - A picnic
   - Fishing

4. Ask the pupils to select two or three of these topics and develop directional sentences. When the students have completed this exercise, read some of the sentences to the class. Let the students point out ways to improve these sentences.
5. At this point each pupil should decide which of his directional sentences is the best and develop a short paragraph (70-100 words).

Note: Written work is to be done in class, so that the instructor can best aid the pupils.

6. Perhaps an ideal learning situation occurs when the students profit by the mistakes of others. The instructor should approach the situation in a way which will avoid a feeling of embarrassment to the pupils. If the students understand that we are learning together, then a profitable lesson will occur.

7. Correcting the themes is equally important. Explain the uses of the following symbols and have the pupils correct their own mistakes. Listed below are sufficient symbols to correct an eighth grade theme.

- Pl - Plural
- Sg - Singular
- T - Tense
- S-V - Subject-verb number agreement
- Dang - Dangling construction
- SF - Sentence fragment
- K - Awkward construction
- C - Use a capital letter
7. (Continued)
P - Punctuation incorrect
Abb - Unauthorized, incorrect, or improper abbreviation
Sp - Incorrect spelling
Rep - Avoid repetition
WW - Wrong word
Ref - Reference not clear
\ - Omit
RO - Run-on sentence

In returning the themes, it is helpful to use the opaque projector and to project some of the paragraphs before the group. This is an invaluable aid in helping the students to understand where they made their mistakes.

8. To close this lesson, point out to the students the progress they have made in the last few days. Remind them of what they have learned.

Lesson III: Developing Interesting Themes

Materials: The Farm Boy by Katherine Grimes

Suggested time - three periods


Let the following questions serve as guides for discussion:

a. What are some advantages and disadvantages of being an only child?
b. What are some advantages and disadvantages of being a part of a large family?

c. How were you brought up?

d. How should boys and girls be punished?

2. Read The Farm Boy by Katherine Grimes. Discuss the following questions about the poem:

a. What did the boy mean when he said, "I work better when I dream"?

b. How many kinds of dreaming can you describe?

c. Do you think the father himself probably had dreams when he worked?

d. What do you think of the mother's explanation of the father's behavior?

3. When the discussion is going well, and enthusiasm is high, have the pupils select one of the following topics and write a short theme in class.

   My Dad is a Funny Guy
   They Brought Me Up Wrong
   Dad Brought Me Up by Hand
   A Family Problem
   A Fight with My Brother

Discuss the themes from time to time as they are being written. Point out common mistakes that are being made. In general, teach composition in class.
4. When the pupils have completed this assignment, ask them to exchange papers and correct their neighbor's theme. Then, give each student a chance to correct his mistakes and read the corrected theme in class.

5. In essence, this lesson provides an opportunity for each pupil to speak in class, to better understand themes, and to gain a better appreciation of his family.

6. To conclude the lesson, assign the following spelling words to the pupils. As a diagnostic test for compound sentences, have the pupils use the words in compound sentences.
   - citizenship
   - atmosphere
   - claimed
   - represent
   - educated
   - tale
   - guests
   - treatment
   - memories
   - youth

7. Check the results of the diagnostic test and administer a spelling test for the above words.
Lesson IV: Relating Life Experiences

Materials: Suggested time - one period

Procedure: 1. Probably at one time or another you felt lonely and left out of the neighborhood. Write about your experience. Tell how you finally belonged to the group.

2. After a brief discussion of this topic, read some of the students' work, making sure to withhold names. Call attention to well-built sentences as well as to poorly constructed ones.

Lesson V: Understanding Poems

Materials: The Christ of the Andes by Edwin Markham
The Glove and the Lions by Leigh Hunt
Suggested time - one period

Procedure: 1. Make the students aware of the suggested readings. Point out that they are primarily stories and poems about friendships.

2. Read the two poems listed above in this lesson. Discuss them in class. Both of those poems are exciting.

Conclusion of unit: Perhaps a unit is just the first step for the pupils in a new direction. Each student should be left with a feeling that he has a new area or field to explore. This feeling can only take place when the teacher
Conclusion of unit: (Continued)

has made every effort to make each lesson a new and exciting experience. In order to make this unit most complete, make known to the students that there are many books in the library about friends and friendships.

UNIT CHECK-UP

1. Write a short paragraph (four to ten sentences) that describe your best friend.

2. Use the following words in a meaningful sentence (separate sentences).
   emotional
generous
rude

3. What is a directional sentence?

4. From the story entitled Two Rivers, answer the following questions:
   a. What kind of a man was the father?
   b. How do you suppose he felt when the car wouldn't start?
   c. What can you find in the story to show that he was fond of his family and wanted them to have a nice time?
UNIT II
Patriotism for Our Country

Aims:

To develop in each student a greater respect for his country, its people and its ideals.

To create a desire within each pupil to read and thus explore new avenues of thought.

To have each student understand more clearly how to develop themes.

To have each pupil understand the essential elements within a theme or paragraph.

To begin sentences in a variety of interesting ways.

To have each pupil realize that neatness is essential in preparing written work.

To develop stronger vocabularies.

Suggested Readings:

The Man Without a Country - Edward Everett Hale
The Rise and Fall of Adolf Hitler - William Shirer
In Flanders Field - John McCrae
The Birth of a Nation's Song - Katherine Bakeless
I Am an American - Elias Lieberman
America the Beautiful - Katherine Bates
My People Came to This Country - Struthers Burt
The Name of Old Glory - James Whitcomb Riley
The Crown Is Offered - Nina Brown Baker
Kelly Courageous - John Flaherty
The Star-Spangled Banner - Francis Scott Key.
America - Samuel Francis Smith
The American's Creed - William Tyler Page
Introduction: Perhaps the most effective way to introduce this unit is to simply begin discussing the word patriotism. With some well-directed questions a lively discussion will develop. When enthusiasm appears to reach a crescendo, tell the students that we are going to be reading, writing and thinking about our country for the next few days. Give each pupil a copy of the suggested readings. Briefly discuss some of the selections in order to inform them of the wealth of reading material that is available to them.

Lesson I: Appreciation of One's Country

Materials: The Man without a Country by Edward Everett Hale
Suggested time - four periods

Procedures: Have the students read The Man without a Country. Within a day every pupil should be able to read it. To facilitate their reading, discuss the following words from the story:

- obscure
- fortnight
- skiff
- allusion
- stranded
- garrison
- catastrophe
- rendezvous
- envied
- reality
- insignia
- expedient
- liberal
- virtually
- annexed
- ceased

2. The pupils may use the remainder of the period to read.

3. When the pupils have completed their reading
Procedures: (Continued)

assignment, discuss the following questions:

a. Who was Edward Everett Hale?

b. What role did Aaron Burr play in American politics?

c. What kind of man was Burr? Nolan?

d. Do you think Nolan really meant what he said?

e. Do you think the punishment was too severe?

f. How would you react in Nolan's place?

4. After a thorough discussion of the novel, have the pupils write a short statement on "What My Country Means to Me". Before the pupils begin the writing process, point out the following ways of beginning sentences:

- Inverted order
- Natural order
- Prepositional phrase

Use examples to illustrate each of these methods.

5. Let the students begin writing. Encourage them to insert some of the vocabulary words they learned into their sentences. As the pupils are writing, the instructor should walk around the room pointing out common mistakes that are being made. Constructive criticism is valuable.
6. When the pupils have completed their work, read some of the papers in class. Try to develop a feeling among the pupils that we are learning together to express ideas in writing, as well as to better appreciate our country.

Lesson II: Understanding Paragraph Structure

Materials: Construction paper
Suggested time - three periods

Procedures:

1. From time to time check with the pupils to make sure that they are doing some reading. An oral quiz or discussion in general will keep the students reading. If it appears that they are not cooperating, a short written statement or a book report will occasionally come in handy.

2. Consider the paragraph and its structure for awhile. Make sure that each pupil understands that a paragraph is composed of the following sections:
   a. directional sentence
   b. body
   c. closing statement
Pass to the pupils several paragraphs and have them examine the above parts.
3. To illustrate how a paragraph is connected within itself, construct a building with the foundation as the directional sentence, the walls as the body, and the roof as the closing statement.

**EXAMPLE:**

4. Development of the paragraph is equally important. Mention that paragraphs are generally developed in the following ways:
   a. details
   b. comparison
   c. examples

   Again, examine several paragraphs that were developed in the above ways.

5. Give the students a chance to develop some paragraphs as suggested. To do this, ask the pupils to imagine that they are famous American leaders of the past. They are to write to the President of the United States and tell him what American ideals
Procedures: (Continued)

they would like to see him carry forward. Use the
friendly letter form.

Note: This letter represents a diagnostic test in
letter writing. Letter writing will be
taught in another unit. The results of
their exercise serve as guides for later
work along this line.

6. Have some of the pupils stand before the class
and read their letters.

Lesson III: Preparing Reports

Materials: Reference books
Suggested time - two periods

Procedures:

1. Finding information and reporting it accurately
is a vital part of the student's growth. Hence,
these lessons should be emphasized. Point out how
a paper should look with reference to neatness,
margins, etc.

2. Show the students several sets of reference books.
Teach them briefly how to find information and re­
cord it.

3. Divide the class into groups and assign (homework)
the following reports on the "American flag."
Approximately two people should report on each
topic.
Procedures: (Continued)

a. What do the colors of our flag stand for?
b. Displaying the American flag properly.
c. Changes in our flag over the years.
d. Making the first American flag.
e. The parts of a flag with reference to vocabulary.
f. Saluting the flag.
g. Raising and lowering the flag.
h. Carrying the flag.
i. Care of the flag.
j. Prohibited uses of the flag.
k. When to fly the American flag.
l. Manufacturing flags.

4. When the reports are completed, have at least one pupil from each group read his report to the class. Then, the instructor should read, mark and return each report to the student.

Lesson IV: Recalling Famous Americans

Materials: Suggested time - one period

Procedures:

1. For a little change in classroom procedures, plan a television show like "What's My Line" or a similar program. Let the pupils take turns posing as a famous American who exemplified a patriotic gesture. (Paul Revere, Nathan Hale) The other pupils guess
Procedures: (Continued)

who they are.

UNIT TEST

1. In our reading we sometimes meet a character who shows a real love for his country. Name such a character from a short story, play, or book that you have read, and in about 100 words show how the character displayed true respect and appreciation for his country.

2. How does the union of the flag differ from the danton?

3. Name five prohibited uses of the United States flag.

4. Name the three main parts of a paragraph.

5. Name three ways to develop a paragraph.

6. Select the best answer to the following questions:

a. When Aaron Burr made his first expedition to New Orleans in 1805, he—(1) stopped at Fort Massac for provisions, (2) was accompanied by Phillip Nolan, (3) met Phillip Nolan at a dinner party.

b. Philip Nolan joined Aaron Burr's venture in the Southwest—(1) the first time he met Burr, (2) after a second meeting with Burr while they were riding on a skiff, (3) at a dinner party at Fort Massac.

c. Philip Nolan was tried for treason and was—(1) found guilty, (2) innocent, (3) given a prison sentence.

d. When Nolan was asked at the close of the trial whether he wished to say anything to show that he had always been faithful to the United States, he—(1) disregarded the question, (2) attempted to prove his loyalty to the United States, (3) declared that he never wanted to hear of the United States again.

e. Philip Nolan was—(1) exiled in a foreign country, (2) sentenced never to hear the name United States again, (3) given a life term in a federal prison.
f. When the court sentenced Nolan—(1) he laughed, (2) everybody laughed, (3) he fainted.

g. Philip Nolan was transferred from ship to ship to—
(1) prevent him from seeing the United States, (2) prevent him from becoming too friendly with the sailors,
(3) protect him from unfriendly sailors.

h. While Nolan was on a ship in the Bay of Naples—(1) he was invited to a ball aboard the ship because his stateroom was needed, (2) he refused an invitation to a ball, (3) he was not permitted to attend the ball aboard the ship.

i. Mrs. Graff—(1) refused to dance with Nolan, (2) talked to Nolan about home, (3) left Nolan on the dance floor when he asked for news from home.

j. During the frigate duel with the English in the War of 1812, Nolan—(1) took command of a gun and fought courageously until the English ship surrendered,
(2) stayed in his stateroom, (3) cheered the English.
UNIT III
THE CIVIL WAR

Aims: To better understand the causes and the results of the Civil War

To understand the hardships that wars cause, especially a Civil War

To improve sentence structure

To write informative and interesting friendly letters

To eliminate sentence fragments and run-on sentences

To learn to gather material for reports and put it in outline form

Suggested Readings:

Uncle Tom's Cabin - Harriet Beecher Stowe

The Day Lincoln Was Shot - Jim Bishop

Clara Barton of the Red Cross - Jeanette Nolan

Mosby's Gray Ghost of the Confederacy - Jonathan Daniels

Lee's Greatest Victory - Donald Culross Peattie

When Johnny Comes Marching Home - Anonymous

Lincoln - John Gould Fletcher

Gray Night, the Story of Robert E. Lee - Belle Moses

Billy Yank and Johnny Reb - Earl Miers

Spies for the Blue and Gray - Harnett Kane

Lee and Grant at Appomattox - Mackinlay Kantor

The First Book of Civil War Naval Actions - Trevor Duprey

The Monitor and the Merrimac - Fletcher Pratt
Introduction: Begin by questioning the students on the word civil. Then ask for definitions of the word war. Through a lively discussion the students will be warmed up for the occasion. To better understand the meaning of a civil war, and the problems of war in general, consider the following questions:

1. Why is a civil war so difficult to fight?
2. How does a civil war differ from a revolutionary war?

Allow plenty of time for a free discussion.

Lesson I: An Exercise in Thinking

Materials: Suggested time—two periods

Procedures:

1. Now that the pupils are thinking about the problems of a civil war, refer specifically the Civil War that our country experienced in the 1860's. Have the pupils write a short paragraph that describes the meaning of the following statement:

   "A house divided against itself cannot stand."

2. As the students are thinking and writing, call their attention to sentence fragments and the run-on sentence in particular. Use examples to illustrate these errors.

3. When the pupils have finished, the instructor should call each student to his desk individually and mark his paper. The other pupils may read.
Procedures: (Continued)

In marking papers in this way, it allows the teacher

to best meet individual differences.

4. After the papers have been corrected and returned,

have some of the pupils come to the front of the

room and read their paragraphs.

Lesson II: Writing Friendly Letters

Materials: Suggested time - three periods

Procedures:

1. In Unit II, the class wrote a friendly letter.

It was used as a diagnostic test. Those pupils

who scored well on the letter should be allowed

to read or do some other related activity. The

pupils who lack specific skills in letter writing,

should try to correct their mistakes in this

lesson.

2. As the pupils are thinking about the Civil War,

have each student imagine that he is a soldier in

the war. He is to write a letter to a friend. He

should tell where he is fighting, interesting de-

velopments that have taken place, and describe the

general setting of the war. Encourage the pupils

to use a great deal of imagination.

3. As the pupils are preparing to write, discuss the

essentials of an attractive letter. Make mention
Procedures: (Continued)

of the following:

a. parts of the friendly letter
b. general appearance of the letter
c. content

4. When the class understands the above suggestions for a letter, let them start the writing process. Again, the writing is to be done in class, so as to give the instructor opportunity to make suggestions.

5. When the pupils have finished allow them to exchange letters. Then, each student is to correct his neighbor's paper. In turn they can get together and study their mistakes.

6. Permit some of the students to read their letters before the class.

Lesson III: Describing an Impression

Materials: A picture of "The Battle of the First Bull Run"
Opaque projector
Suggested time— one period

Procedures:

1. When we see something, each of us receives a different impression. So it is with war. Our feelings might run in different directions. Sometimes it is interesting to write our thoughts about a particular picture or scene.

2. With the above in view, place before the pupils

Procedures: (Continued)

a painting of "The Battle of the First Bull Run". This particular picture shows a few picnickers and some of the Union soldiers. It also shows a young soldier dying in the arms of his wife. The picture reflects a great deal of feeling.

3. Have the pupils describe what they see in the picture. There are many details in the painting; hence the impressions that the students draw will vary.

4. Use the opaque projector to flash some of these papers on the screen. Check mistakes and try to appreciate what the pupil is saying in his description.

Lesson IV: Finding and Reporting Information

Materials: Suggested time - three periods

Procedures:

1. Finding and reporting information is a must if students are to advance scholastically. Stress this to the class.

2. Teach the students how to outline material. Have them practice outlining paragraphs.

3. Because so many people participated in the Civil War, and because of the swift action of the war, it provides a wealth of information in just about
Procedures: (Continued)

every encyclopedia. Consequently, each student
can report on a different battle, general or an-
other related topic. Here are a few possibilities:
a. The causes of the Civil War
b. The Monitor and the Merrimac
c. The results of the Civil War
d. Robert E. Lee
e. George E. Pickett
f. Ulysses S. Grant

4. In preparing these reports, each pupil is to first
make an outline of his topic. Then he is to follow
the outline closely as he writes his report.

5. Again, in order to give the pupils a chance to
speak out in a group, each student should read his
report to the class. Discussions should follow
some of the more controversial reports.

UNIT CHECK-UP

1. Use five choice adjectives to describe the characteristics
   of a good soldier.

2. Select a character from a poem or a story that you have
   read about the Civil War. In about fifty words tell
   what he did and why it was significant. Make mention
   of the title and author.

3. Name the parts of a friendly letter.


5. Give an example of a run-on sentence and a sentence frag-
   ment.
UNIT IV
OBSERVING ANIMAL LIFE

Aims: To understand how animals help us.

To use vivid adjectives in written composition

To use compound sentences effectively

To develop the habit of beginning sentences with participles (occasionally)

To create a desire within each pupil to write short stories as a means of enjoyment

To use specific words in descriptions

Suggested Readings:

The Rhinoceros - Ogden Nash
You've Got to Learn - Robert Murphy
A Man of His Own - Corey Ford
The Rum Tum Tugger - T.S. Elliot
Raddled Rhyme in Praise of Poodles - Phyllis McGinley
At Night - Frances Cornford
The Farture - Robert Frost
The Runaway - Robert Frost
Costly-bay, the Outlaw Horse - Ernest Seton
Jambes, the Evil One - Theodore Waldeck
Bucktail Deer - Lew Sarett
The Yearling - M.K. Rawlings
Old Yeller - F.B. Gibson
On a Cat Airing - Alexander Gray
Introduction: Read the poem entitled The Rhinoceros by Ogden Nash to the class. Use the following questions to develop a lively discussion about the rhinoceros and other animals as well.

1. What thought strikes the poet as he looks at the rhinoceros?
2. What other animals do you think might produce a similar reaction?
3. We often think that poetry must rhyme. What word has the poet altered to suit his purpose in this poem?
4. What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of being a rhinoceros?
5. Compare some of these advantages and disadvantages to other animals.

Lesson I: Choosing Specific Words for Descriptions

Materials: Suggested time - three periods

Procedures:

1. Compound sentences aid us immensely in communication. Whether we realize it or not, we use compound sentences regularly when we speak. Often we do not do the same when we write. Therefore we shall try to correct this mistake in our next few lessons.
2. Acquaint the pupils with compound sentences. The definition of a clause should be mentioned, with specific emphasis devoted to independent clauses.
3. Using as many compound sentences as possible, have the pupils write a word snapshot of an animal they
Procedures: (Continued)

have observed. Choose specific, colorful words and write just a sentence or a short paragraph to describe your animal.

4. When the exercise has been completed, have the students read their description to the remainder of the class. Use constructive criticism to teach the most effective methods in using compound sentences.

5. Continue this lesson by discussing animal characteristics that are interesting and somewhat unusual. Also, let the pupils talk about their favorite pets. When the discussion reaches a high point, ask the pupils to prepare a set of directions for training an animal. Encourage each student to think carefully before he writes.

6. These papers should be graded by the instructor, making sure to use symbols in the correction process. Return the papers to the class, make general suggestions, and then have the pupils correct their own errors.

Lesson II: Reading and Writing about Animals

Materials: Suggested time - three periods

Procedures:

1. Have the pupils read A Man of His Own by Corey Ford. Discuss this story in class.
Procedures: (Continued)

2. The students are to select one of the topics mentioned below and write a theme. Familiarize the pupils with participles and urge them to use participial phrases whenever possible.
   A stray dog adopted by your family
   A pet follows you to school
   An animal you have given away refuses to stay with its new owner

3. In correcting and evaluating these themes, pay special attention to participles.

4. Encourage the students to continue to read as many of the suggested readings as possible.

Lesson III: Individuality Among Animals

Materials: Suggested time - two periods

Procedures:

1. One sure way of learning how to write well is to write. Rousseau said, "We learn by doing." So it is with writing.

2. The average eighth grader is eager to observe and participate in a variety of activities. He likes to read and have fun in general. He is not so mature that he is afraid his peers would disown him if he spends time on some of the real joys of childhood, that of being with animals.
Procedures: (Continued)

3. Assign the following exercise:

Some animals show a great deal of individuality such as Caoly-bay. Think of animals you have known. What impressed you most about each? Choose an animal with an outstanding trait or one that you remember for a particular reason. In a short paragraph tell what impressed you most about the animal. Then mention an incident that reveals the characteristics you pointed out.

4. When the pupils have completed the assignment, grade the papers. Those papers that exemplify correct usage and proper sentence structure should be displayed on the bulletin board. To make the bulletin board even more complete, perhaps some of the students would desire to bring attractive animal pictures from home to exhibit.

Extended Activities:

Writing short stories can be fun. Those pupils who desire to do some extra work may do so by preparing a story of fair length (500 - 2000 words) about an animal experience. Stories may be based on actual happenings, or the action need not go beyond the student's mind.
Suggestions for preparing stories:

1. Use a new paragraph when there is an abrupt change of thought.
2. Conversation from time to time makes the story more exciting.
3. Be neat.
4. Use colorful adjectives.
5. Build strong sentences of different lengths.

UNIT CHECK-UP

1. What is a clause?
2. What does independent mean? Dependent?
3. How can you tell what word a participle modifies?
4. Write five compound sentences. Two of the sentences should begin with participial phrases.
UNIT V

THE WESTWARD MOVEMENT

Aims: To better appreciate the hardships and the rewards that each pioneer experienced

To effectively use complete, soundly built sentences of fair length

To write a short poem, and enjoy the experience

To use adjectives and adverbs with power

Suggested Readings:

Little Fritches - Ralph Moody
Oregon Trail - Arthur Guiterman
The Siege of Boonesborough - James Dougherty
Child Pioneer - Honore Morrow
The Night Hunters - Alexander Key

Folklore:

Calamity Jane, the Loud Canary
Sweet Betsy
How Kate Shelley Saved The Express
The Death of Silly the Kid
The Miracle of the Mail
Sam Bass, Texas Robin Hood

Introduction: Settling the West was not an easy task. Sometimes we think that the pioneer's life was a romantic escapade, where he bravely fought Indians, found numerous deposits of gold, and roamed the plains in search of outlaws. This was not always so. In this unit we
Introduction: (Continued)

shall attempt to bring before the students a picture of the early West, as it really was.

Using choral reading, have the pupils read The Oregon Trail. Assign individual parts. After reading the poem, discuss it.

Lesson I: The Rigors of Pioneer Life

Materials: Suggested time - one period

Procedures:

1. Conduct a discussion in regard to the pioneer's life. Consider the following questions:
   a. Why did the pioneers decide to seek a new life in the West?
   b. What kind of people do you suppose the pioneers were?

2. Have the students think of some hardships the pioneers endured and then organize them into clear, concise sentences. Discuss a few of the sentences in class.

Lesson II: Preparing and Producing a Television Script

Materials: Suggested time - three periods

Procedures:

1. Suppose you were to broadcast a television show interview with an early pioneer. Write what the announcer would ask and what the pioneer would reply. Include humorous sayings if you desire. Encourage
Procedures: (Continued)

the students to employ descriptive adjectives and
adverbs in their texts.

3. Upon completion of the scripts, give each pupil an opportunity to read his interview to the class. If two students want to work together, permit them to do so.

Lesson III: Expression Through Poetry

Materials: Suggested time - two periods

Procedures:

1. Settling the West was not all drudgery. Families met occasionally to build houses, raise barns, help each other with farm work and for church.

2. Compose a short poem that describes some of the joys of settling in a new region. Have each pupil read his poem to the class.

3. Poetry is designed to be read aloud, in order to express the poet's feelings. Also, poetry does not have to rhyme.

Extended Activities:

Write an original adventure story about the pioneers and the early West. Use colorful words and complete sentences.
UNIT CHECK-UP

Select one of the following statements and convincingly show why you think it is true.

1. The pioneers endured many hardships.
2. Pioneer life was adventurous.
3. Frontier life was not so hard after all.
4. People today have more problems than the pioneers.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


