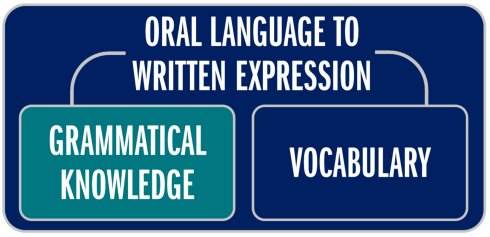
Effective Communicator
GRAMMATICAL KNOWLEDGE



Supporting Students to Communicate Effectively with Grammatical Knowledge

Grammatical knowledge includes understanding the meaning and combinations of words, phrases, clauses and sentences. According to Dr. Young Suk Kim, grammatical knowledge enables the parsing of or breaking down of complex sentences into small meaningful chunks…which is the foundation of constructing an accurate mental model, or comprehending. Likewise, it is essential for precise communication in both discussion and writing (Kim, 2026). The *Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS) for Reading and Writing* states that students must not only demonstrate control over the conventions of language, they must also come to appreciate that language is as much a matter of craft as of rules and be able to choose words, syntax and punctuation to express themselves and achieve intended effects. Doing so requires explicit instruction in how to make meaning of text and compose intentionally.

Connection to Evidence-Based Instructional Practices

While our earliest readers and writers need to develop an understanding of what sentences are, teachers can use students' oral language to support written language skills. As primary students convey their ideas orally, the teacher can support putting those ideas into writing. Institute of Education Sciences (IES) Guide: Teaching Elementary Students to Be Effective Writers recommends evidence-based instruction in developing strong and varied sentences such as sentence framing, expanding and combining (2012). As they grow and develop more sophisticated grammatical knowledge, IES Guide: Teaching Secondary Students to Write Effectively recommends integrating writing and reading to emphasize key writing features (2017). Effective instruction includes using grade-appropriate complex texts that illustrate specific features of effective writing including text and sentence structure, grammar and punctuation. Sentence variation is significant in grades 6-12 for communicating complex, analytical thinking. Explicit instruction for secondary students may place a particular emphasis on transitional phrases, such as Furthermore, Consequently, and On the other hand, and the use of phrases and clauses to vary sentences at a progression appropriate for grade-level learning (Hochman et al., 2024).

Connection to High-Quality Instructional Resources (HQIRs)

Because reading and writing draw on shared knowledge and skills, including grammatical knowledge, many HQIRs embed language development routines like sentence analysis, combining and expansion activities using grade-appropriate, complex texts. By leveraging students' cognitive load within the texts they are reading, higher gains are seen when students write about what they are reading about instead of developing grammatical knowledge in isolated lessons. Both reading and writing instruction around grammar and sentence structure is explicit and embedded in the same topic/lessons to support how the brain learns best.

*References