

Teacher notes

Tricky grammar story starters - ellipsis

Teaching sequence for ellipsis

Teaching grammar concepts introduced by the national curriculum can be tricky and getting them to stick can be even trickier. That's where this Y6 grammar and writing challenge can help. It has been designed to help children revisit and remember a key grammatical concept from the national curriculum programme of study for Y6.

This session provides a motivating and memorable image to stimulate discussion, before introducing the grammar element. Children have the opportunity to discuss and practise using this feature, before undertaking a short writing task to apply what they have learnt in the context of creative writing.

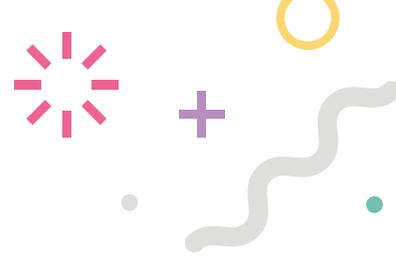
The challenge and image is presented in two forms: a 15-minute discrete teaching session (designed to be used with the whole class or a small group) and a sheet for children to work on independently, either

in class as a standalone activity, as a warm-up in writing lessons or at home as homework.

It has been designed to be used flexibly to help ensure that children understand the grammatical concept and can recognise and understand the feature (supporting the requirements of the GPS test). Most importantly, it will help children to apply the grammar content introduced in Y6 in their independent writing, supporting them to make the link between grammar and good writing.

More in this series





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A New Pet

Teaching sequence for ellipsis



1 Tell the children that Niamh and Daniel are going to get a new pet cat, but they can't decide which one to choose.

Niamh says: I like the tall cat with beautiful grey fur.

Daniel says: I like the tiny kitten with the black and white patches.

2 Ask the children to turn to a partner and decide which cat they would choose. Share their ideas.

3 When Niamh and Daniel's mum arrives, they ask her:

Do you prefer the tall cat with beautiful grey fur or the tiny kitten with the black and white patches?



4 Remind the children that ellipsis is where a word or phrase can be left out because it is expected and predictable. Mum might say ‘I really like the black and orange kitten’ rather than ‘I really like the black and orange kitten, rather than the tall cat with the grey fur or the tiny black and white kitten’. Some of the words are left out without changing the meaning of the sentence.



Ask the children to repeat their conversation with their partner, stating which cat they prefer. As they do it, ask them to look for examples of ellipsis (e.g. “I prefer the stripy one”, rather than “I prefer the stripy cat to the other cats”).

Writing challenge

Ask the children to write a note from either Niamh or Daniel, trying to persuade their mum to choose the cat that they want. Remind them that they may leave out some parts of their sentences as they go, as the full sentence would contain words that are not needed. This is called ellipsis.

Once the children have finished, ask them to look through their writing for examples of ellipsis and to share these with the class.

