

Teaching Notes

Activities

1. Ask students to work with a partner. Assign each pair a selection of sentences that use hyphens to combine several words that are part of an adjective phrase describing a noun. Make sure that some of the sentences use hyphens incorrectly, such as, “My cat is the sweetest, most loyal fifteen-year old cat you will ever meet.” In this example, the second hyphen is missing between the words *year* and *old*. Ask each student to independently mark which sentences use hyphens correctly and which do not. When they are finished, ask students to go over their answers with their partners and explain how they reached those conclusions.
2. Assign students a grade-appropriate excerpt from a literary text. Then, direct their attention to several examples of hyphenation in the text. Ask students to identify the conventions that govern each example from a given list of potential uses. Include a few hyphenation conventions that do not appear in the text as distractors on the list.

Writing Prompts

1. Review with students some of the ways that hyphens can be used to achieve clarity in a text. Then, direct them to write an example sentence using hyphens for each of the following:
 - A prefix that precedes a proper noun or proper adjective
 - A compound adjective describing a noun
 - A case when the meaning of a word or phrase is unclear without a hyphen
2. Provide students a copy of a brief literary text that has had all hyphenation removed. Ask students to read the text and add hyphenation where appropriate. Then, direct students to write a brief sentence to explain each choice they made. Once they are finished, provide the original text and ask students to compare their hyphenation with the author’s.

Additional Resources

Consider these additional resources when teaching L.11-12.2.a:

BrainPOP Lesson Ideas: This resource provides teachers with a useful list of lesson ideas for teaching students when to hyphenate:

- <http://educators.brainpop.com/bp-topic/hyphens-and-dashes/>

Sample Quizzes: These resources provide teachers with sample questions and exercises that could be used to test students on how to identify hyphenation conventions:

- <http://www.shmoop.com/common-core-standards/ccss-ela-literacy-l-11-12-2.html>
- <http://english.clas.asu.edu/files/shared/enged/Hyphens.pdf>