

Language Playlists – Complete Grades 9-10 Bundle

This resource bundle aligns with all of the Common Core State Standards for Grades 9-10 Language. We have included ten of our playlists—content-rich tools that use trusted textual, audio, visual, and multimedia resources to supplement high-quality instruction in specific elements of the Common Core—to guide students through each of the relevant standards for the language strands of English Language Arts.

Each playlist is designed for 30–45 minutes of instructional time and is followed by a rigorous self-check for students. Alternatively you could assign individual student playlists as homework or remedial/extension activities.

The Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts are not intended to be taught in sequential order, and neither are these playlists. Instead, you should feel free to dip in and out of these resources as your instructional needs dictate.

Detailed Standard Coverage Notes:

- Standard L.9-10.1 is covered across two playlists: one focuses on sentence variety and the other focuses on using parallel structure.
- Standard L.9-10.2 is covered across three playlists: one focuses on spelling, one focuses on colons, and the other focuses on semicolons.
- There is no playlist for L.9-10.3 as this standard is best covered in more writing-focused activities.
- Standard L.9-10.4 is covered across three playlists: one focuses on reference materials, one focuses on context and meaning, and the other focuses on patterns of word changes.
- Standard L.9-10.5 is covered across two playlists: one focuses on figures of speech and the other focuses on words with parallel meanings.
- There is no playlist for L.9-10.6. As your students work through the other standards, they will acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases and demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge.



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Grades 9–10 Playlist: Semicolons

Aligns with *CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.2.A*:

- Use a semicolon (and perhaps a conjunctive adverb) to link two or more closely related independent clauses.

Welcome

The semicolon is a very useful punctuation mark; it can link closely related independent clauses. The previous sentence could have been written as two separate sentences, but because the two independent clauses are closely related, the semicolon links them to show how the idea in the second clause explains or gives more information about the idea in first clause. Effective use of the semicolon is often an important part of good writing.

Watch!

This video briefly and clearly explains how to use the semicolon:

- <https://www.opened.com/video/when-to-use-a-semicolon/69918>

Objectives

In this playlist, students will learn how to:

- use a semicolon to link two or more closely related independent clauses.
- use a semicolon along with a conjunctive adverb to link two or more closely related independent clauses.

Review

Key Terms

- A **semicolon (;)** is a punctuation mark that can be used to separate independent clauses in a sentence.
- An **independent clause** is a group of words that includes a subject and a predicate.
- A **conjunctive adverb** is an adverb that can be used along with a semicolon to join together two independent clauses in a sentence.

Exploring the Standard

The most common use of the semicolon is to link two closely related independent clauses. For example:

It takes a long time to drive across the country. It's faster to fly.



Teaching Notes: Semicolons

The goal of L.9-10.2.A is for student to know how to use a semicolon to link two or more closely related independent clauses. The following information contains ideas that teachers can incorporate into their classroom as well as additional resources to peruse and integrate into instruction as appropriate.

Using a Semicolon to Separate Items in a List

Although it is not included in L.9-10.2.A, as mentioned in some of the external resources included in this playlist, a semicolon can also be used to separate items in a list that would normally be separated by commas. This is done when the items themselves contain commas. For example:

I have family members who live in Richmond, Virginia; Orlando, Florida; and Seattle, Washington.

In this example, because each city is separated from its state using a comma, the items in the list are separated using semicolons.

Overuse of Semicolons

When a writer knows how to use the semicolon, it can be tempting to overuse it. Even if two independent clauses are related, they do not always need to be linked with a semicolon. If the clauses are already lengthy, linking them to create one very long sentence is not always wise. For example:

He had already traveled all the way from Little Rock to Albuquerque that day, and he did not feel like driving to Los Angeles that evening; he decided to stop for the night and get some rest before facing the rest of the journey.

This is a very long sentence, and it would be easier to read if it were split into two sentences:

He had already traveled all the way from Little Rock to Albuquerque that day, and he did not feel like driving to Los Angeles that evening. He decided to stop for the night and get some rest before facing the rest of the journey.

Additional Teaching Resources

Consider these additional resources when teaching L.9-10.2.A:

- **“Every Punctuation Mark Matters”**: This lesson plan teaches semicolons in the context of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s “Letter from a Birmingham Jail”:
<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/every-punctuation-mark-matters-260.html>
- **“How to Use a Semicolon”**: This animated video describes how semicolons can be used effectively:
<http://ed.ted.com/lessons/how-to-use-a-semicolon-emma-bryce>



Grades 9–10 Playlist: Sentence Variety

Aligns with *CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.1.B*:

- Use various types of phrases (noun, verb, adjectival, adverbial, participial, prepositional, absolute) and clauses (independent, dependent; noun, relative, adverbial) to convey specific meanings and add variety and interest to writing or presentations.

Welcome

If writers always chose to use basic subject-verb-object sentences, or short, consecutive sentences, then texts would be boring, repetitive, and ineffective. That's why authors use various types of phrases and clauses: to keep readers interested and focused. Incorporating sentences of different types and lengths (while also joining closely related ideas) is what makes writing, reading, and speaking even more precise, and it enhances the audience's experience.

Objectives

In this playlist, students will learn how to:

- identify and use various types of phrases and clauses.
- explain how using sentence variety can add interest and meaning to a text.

Review

Key Terms

- A **phrase** is a group of words that does not contain the subject-verb pair that makes up a **clause**.
- An **independent clause** is a complete sentence, as opposed to a **dependent clause**, which is not a complete sentence on its own and must be connected to an independent clause to form a sentence.
- A **participial phrase** contains a participle (modifier of any verb or noun) that represents either past or present tense (e.g., *giggling*, *giggled*).
- A **prepositional phrase** starts with a preposition (indications of location such as *in*, *on*, *by*, *to*, *since*, etc.) and can act like an adjective or adverb, depending on the sentence.
- **Gerund phrases** begin with a gerund (*-ing* form of a verb; e.g., *writing*) and may also contain the object of the gerund or a complete object or subject phrase. Gerund phrases always act as nouns.
- **Infinitive phrases** begin with an infinitive (basic or simple form of a verb; e.g., *to come*, *to be*) and may also contain the object of the infinitive or a complete object or subject phrase. Infinitive phrases can function as nouns, adjectives, or adverbs (e.g., *to kick the ball*).



Teaching Notes: Sentence Variety

The goal of L.9-10.1.B is for students to use various types of phrases and clauses to convey specific meanings and ensure sentence variety. The following information contains ideas that teachers can incorporate into their classroom to help students develop this skill. Additional resources to read and integrate into instruction as appropriate are also included.

Activities

1. Provide students an informational paragraph on a chosen topic (teachers may wish to copy and paste or retype the paragraph to make it double-spaced). Ask students to first identify each sentence as a simple (S), compound (CD), complex (CX), or compound-complex (CD-CX) sentence, then note how many times each sentence type has been used. Have students discuss the balance of sentence types within the paragraph and identify ways in which the paragraph could be revised to add even more sentence variety.
2. With either the same paragraph or a new one, have students identify which type of phrase begins each sentence. Does the writer consistently begin sentences with the same type of phrase? If so, how could the sentences be revised to add more variety to the sentence structure?

Writing Prompt

Have students write an essay describing an important person in their life. Students should give background information about the person and explain why he or she is significant. After students write their first drafts, have them switch essays with a partner and conduct a peer review. Students should pay close attention to sentence variety in their partner's essay. Have students give feedback on how to incorporate the sentence structures, patterns, and lengths learned in the playlist.

Additional Resources

Consider these additional resources when teaching L.9-10.1.B:

- **Sentence Combining/Sentence Variety:** This worksheet is a great handout to provide students extra practice with combining sentences and using more compound-complex sentences:
https://www.sinclair.edu/centers/tlc/pub/handouts_worksheets/english/sentence_combining_and_sentence_variety.pdf
- **Sentence Variety Lesson Plan:** In this lesson plan, students analyze the sentence structure in a persuasive essay and then respond to a writing prompt to practice using sentence variety in their own writing:
http://www.ode.state.or.us/teachlearn/real/tlr/tlr_lessonplan.aspx?id=127
- **Strengthen Sentence Variety and Sentence Combining:** This interactive online lesson explains how to add sentence variety and combine sentences:
<http://projectsharetexas.org/resource/revision-strategies-strengthen-sentence-variety-sentence-combining-english-1-writing>

