Linking Words/Connectives Instructional Routine: Crazy Sentences Game

Common Core State Standard

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.1.C Link opinion and reasons using words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., *consequently, specifically*).

Overview

Crazy Sentences game is a 10-15 minute game that challenges students with the task of linking two vocabulary words using connectives in one sentence. Through collaboration with their peers, they are encouraged to deepen their repertoire of connective words by a restriction of not using the connective 'and' in their sentences, practicing their use of connectives that they can effectively use in their own writing and speaking.

Symbol Key

Explicit Instruction

Opportunities to Respond

Feedback

General Instructional Routine

Case Background (Teacher Preparation)

- Select target connective(s) and print/make digital flashcards
- Choose vocabulary word(s) that:
    - Can be meaningfully connected to current learning (e.g., Social Studies unit, CKLA Science unit - Geology)
    - Contains language that students can realistically incorporate into their own writing

Step 1: Introduction (2-3 minutes)

Connect to Previous Learning (if applicable):

- Review previous learning that applies to current lesson
- Reference recent discussions about current lesson

Preview

- 💡 Set the scene/Connect to students' lives:
    - Provide a real-world analogy or example of when linking words are relevant
- 💡 Provide purpose(s)/learning target(s) for students
- 💡 Explain real-world importance

Activate Prior Knowledge

- 💡 Ask questions to activate background knowledge:
    - What do you already know about linking words?
    - What comes to mind when you hear the term "linking words"?
    - How does the focus of today's lesson remind you of something we've talked about/learned before?

💡 ***Review Key Terms***

- Define or review key vocabulary words used in lesson
    - Specific linking words

Step 2: Connectives Game Demonstration (4-6 minutes)
Initial Instruction

- 💡 Present two vocabulary words to class

Teacher Think-Aloud

- 💡 Model pattern analysis during think-aloud process
  - Example:
    - "First, I notice..."
    - Now, I see..."
    - "This reminds me of..."

Guided Pattern Discovery

- 💡 Walk through types of linking words with class
  - Example:
    - Chronological (e.g., first, after, meanwhile)
    - Similarity (e.g., also, furthermore, likewise)
    - Cause and effect (e.g., because, consequently, so)

✋ *Engagement Check*
- Ask questions to check for comprehension
  - "What patterns are we seeing?"
  - "Is there anything you are unfamiliar with or don't understand?"
  - "Why might a writer use different varieties of linking words?"

Step 3: Partner Practice (3-5 minutes)

- ✋ Pair students (or create small groups) for collaborative thinking
- Review partnership expectations
- Partners/groups work together to:
  - Make a sentence with linking words to connect the two vocabulary words
    - Restriction of the linking word 'and'
  - Think about what relationship of the two ideas the linking word(s) show

Teacher Support

- 💡 Circulate among partners/small groups to:

      o Monitor discussions

      o Offer feedback

      o Provide scaffolded prompts

      o Support struggling teams

Team Discussions

- Have pairs/groups:
  - Share discoveries with class
  - Explain relationships shown by linking word(s)

Step 4: Game On (5-7 minutes)

Divide class into teams of 3-4 students where they will:

- Receive a set of picture cards with vocabulary words
  - A team will select two cards at random
  - The team has 20 seconds to formulate a grammatically correct sentence connecting all the vocabulary words
  - After 20 seconds, each team presents their sentence to the class
  - If the sentence is grammatically accurate and does not contain the word 'and,' they earn one point
  - Offer feedback and help refine students' use of linking words as needed
- Repeat for 5-6 rounds, rotating the vocabulary cards among teams

Step 5: Reflection (2-3 minutes)

- Add the linking word(s) to a class reference wall or individual grammar notebook
- Have students connect to their own writing
- Discuss where they might use this grammatical feature in their work

Differentiation:

- **For struggling learners**: Provide a list of common connectives to help students who may struggle with remembering or using a variety of conjunctions.
- **For advanced learners**: Challenge them to incorporate multiple clauses in their sentences or use more advanced connectives (e.g., "despite," "since," "although").