

Adapted from *60 KINESTHETIC GRAMMAR ACTIVITIES* (in press)

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1. Compound Sentences with *and, but & so*

THE GRAMMAR: Coordinating conjunctions include *and, but, so, or, yet, for, & nor*, but the most frequently occurring are *and, but, & so*. Coordinating conjunctions are used to combine two independent clauses (S+V), and together they make a compound sentence. Commas are used between the two independent clauses.

- I saw my friend, and she saw me.
- She saw me, but she didn't wave.
- I was confused, so I texted her.

Aim: Students work as a three-headed creature to create meaningful sentences with *and, but, and so*

Level: High-beginner to Low-intermediate (A2-B1)

Preparation: None

Time: 10-20 minutes

Activity

1. Review the elements of an independent clause, and the role and meaning of the conjunctions so students understand that *and* shows an additional relationship, *but* shows contrast, and *so* shows a result. (The context of a rich boy wanting to marry a poor girl works well as a context that illustrates meaning in a broad way.)
2. Ask for three volunteers to become a "three-headed monster." When they come to the front, give them a topic such as animals or food. Then tell A to say a complete clause, tell B to say *and, but* or *so*, and tell C to come up with a new clause that shows the correct relationship of addition, contrast or result. Tell them how you plan to deal with errors. You can:
 - a. Stop the activity and let them try again/give hints.
 - b. Stop the activity and invite others to help.
 - c. Slay the monster by replacing the person who makes the error.
3. Have the first three-headed creature create a compound sentence and give feedback on the relationships between the clauses as necessary.

4. Rotate the roles and rotate in new students so that everyone gets a turn.

2. Modals *should* & *shouldn't*

THE GRAMMAR: We use *should* and *shouldn't* + the base form of the verb to give advice. We also use it when we know something is a good idea, but we might or might not do it.

- You should call your mother.
- I shouldn't eat this cookie.
- He should ask for help.
- She shouldn't spend so much money on shoes!

Aim: Students practice using *should* to give advice when they have a dilemma

Level: High-beginner (A2)

Preparation: A set of dilemmas on slips of paper (see below)

Time: 15-20 minutes

Activity

1. Review the meaning and form of *should* + base form. You can start with a dilemma and ask for advice. "My spouse wants me to become a vegan. What should I do?" Elicit suggestions such as, "You should be a vegan because it's healthy," or "You shouldn't be a vegan because it's too hard."
2. Brainstorm a list of similar dilemmas. You can start with a few ideas, but it will be good if students think of their own. Write them in terms of requests that could elicit *should* and *shouldn't* suggestions. Use the ones below or create your own.
 - My friend wants to be my roommate.
 - My brother wants to borrow money.
 - My parents want me to study medicine.
 - My boss wants me to come in on Saturday.
 - My friends want me to take a trip this weekend.
 - My sister wants me to buy her car.
 - My neighbor wants to give me a kitten.
 - My boyfriend/girlfriend wants to get married this year.
3. Have students choose a dilemma and create details by asking and answering as many *who?* *when?* *where?* and *how?* questions as they can. Circulate and help them develop a description of the problem.

4. Create an alley by having students stand in two lines face-to-face but leaving enough room for someone to walk through.
5. Model the activity by reviewing your problem and asking the people on the left to give you reasons to say no using *shouldn't* (Line A). Ask the people on the right to give you reasons to say yes using *should* (Line B). As you walk down the alley, listen to each person's advice and give corrections as necessary. At the end, turn and tell them what you have decided to do. Then join Line A.
6. Have the first student in Line A follow you. They describe their dilemma and then walk down the alley getting advice from both sides. At the end, they can say what they have decided and then take their place at the end of Line A. Then repeat with the first person from the B Line going down the line, listening to advice, saying what they've decided and joining the B Line. Repeat this process several times.

(Optional) About halfway through, have the lines switch roles, so Line A gives *should* advice, and Line B gives *shouldn't* advice. Continue until everyone has had a turn.

Variation

1. Engage students by asking them to pair-share the following question: *Is it is better to live a long life or an adventurous one*. Give students time to generate ideas and then ask them for advice, eliciting examples to the board and dealing with errors.
2. Divide the class in half. Line A comes up with advice for enjoying life and living for the moment. Line B comes with advice for being healthy and preparing for the future.
3. Have the two sides face each other with enough space in the middle for someone to walk through. Then tell them you will walk through and listen to each person give you advice. At the end, you will choose one row to join.
4. Walk slowly down the middle so that you can hear one piece of advice from each person. At the end join the side that has convinced you.
5. Have the first student on Line A do the same and then join a side. Then the first student on Line B follows. Alternate sides until everyone has walked down the alley.
6. Reflect on which side has the most people. Discuss what that says about the class philosophy. Optional: Have them write a paragraph about the best way to live.

3. Past Perfect

THE GRAMMAR: The past perfect is formed with *had (not) + the past participle (-ed)*. It is used to explain something that happened and was finished before another past event.

- I had forgotten my swimsuit, so I couldn't go in the water.

- They moved slowly down the rope into the cave. It got darker and darker. The temperature dropped, but they kept going until their feet hit solid ground. They had reached the bottom.

Aim: Students become familiar with past perfect in spoken conversation

Level: Intermediate to High-Intermediate (B1-B2)

Preparation: A paragraph or two with examples of the past perfect and past tense (see below)

Time: 10 minutes +

Activity

1. Review the function of the past perfect in moving back in time. Read a couple of sentences in which you take a step forward with each past tense, and a step backward with each past perfect tense. Use the text below or come up with your own.

- *I baked a pie and brought it to the party. I felt proud of it. I had thought people would love it, but then I noticed that no one was eating it. I took a taste and realized that I had forgotten to add the sugar!*

Have students notice the way the simple past sequences forward while the past perfect sequences backward.

2. Have students stand. They should be arranged so that they have room to take steps forward and backward. Tell them to take a step forward when they hear past and a step back when they hear past perfect. Then read your text clearly enough for them to be able to identify the sound. Watch as they step. (Often, they will watch each other for clues.) Use the example text below or create your own.

When I arrived at college, I was so scared that I changed my mind. I told my parents I wanted to go home with them. My mother said no, they had already paid my tuition, and I was going, whether I liked it or not. Then she and my father got in the car and left. It was only later that I found out that my mother had cried all the way home.

Expansion

1. Have students work in pairs to try and recreate the story in written form. Tell them that they must include at least two instances of the past perfect. Then have them share their results with another pair. Show the text on the board or screen and let them check. Discuss the way the past perfect makes sense in showing a reverse in the direction of time.
2. Have a volunteer stand in a line and say something that happened to them when they were young. Say step, and every time you say step, have that student tell the next thing that

happened. Periodically say backstep instead. The student then needs to take a step back and use the past perfect to explain a detail in their story. (This requires a bit of modeling, but it can be fun.)

4. Pronouns (subject)

THE GRAMMAR: Subject pronouns are used to refer back to a noun that has been previously introduced. *He, she, it,* and *they* are the most commonly used subject pronouns.

- My brother Paul works as a mechanic. He likes working on cars.
- My mother is a very caring person. She calls me every night to ask how I'm doing.
- That car is expensive. It costs over \$30,000.
- Her parents live in Cambodia. They own a rice farm.

Aim: Students listen to sentences and identify the correct subject pronoun by slapping it on the board

Level: Beginner (A1)

Preparation: Two fly swatters or rolled-up pieces of paper; a set of statements with subject pronouns

Time: 15 minutes +

Activity

1. Review by writing the pronouns *he, she, it,* and *they* on the board. Ask: *Which pronoun is used for a man? Which is used for a woman? Which pronoun is used for several men or several women? Which pronouns do we use for things or objects? Which one is singular? Which one is plural?*
2. On the board, draw four large boxes. Label the boxes: *He, She, It,* and *They*.
3. Divide the class into two teams. Bring a student from each team up to the board and give each a flyswatter (or a comparable slapping object, such as a rolled-up piece of paper).
4. Tell students they must listen to the sentence you read and slap the pronoun referent that correctly refers back to the subject of the sentence. Read the sentence. Use the example sentences below or create your own.
 - My father works as an airline pilot. (*He*)
 - The students weren't happy about all the homework. (*They*)
 - My sister recently moved to Japan. (*She*)

- The school cafeteria is closed on Fridays. (*It*)
- Her brothers live in different countries. (*They*)
- The bus was late this morning. (*It*)
- My brother studies engineering. (*He*)
- The woman felt embarrassed. (*She*)
- Men in my country like to watch soccer. (*They*)
- The rain was bad this morning. (*It*)

5. Give a point to the student who slaps the correct pronoun box first. Continue until all students have had a chance to come up to the board. The team with the most points wins the game.

Expansion

Ask students to take out a piece of paper. Dictate 5-8 of the sentences and have students copy them down, leaving space between each one. Repeat as necessary. Then ask students to write another sentence after each sentence that uses a pronoun and gives a supporting detail about the main sentence, e.g. *My father works as an airline pilot. He flies about 60 hours per week.*

5. Superlatives

THE GRAMMAR: The superlative is used to make comparisons among groups of three or more people, items, or characteristics. All superlative forms use the article *the*. One-syllable adjectives and two-syllable adjectives ending in *-y* add *-est* to the adjective (and the *y* becomes *i*). Longer adjectives use *least/most* + the base form of the adjective. With nouns, we use *most*, *least* (noncount), and *fewer* (count).

- Jamie is the tallest person in the room.
- He is the messiest person I know.
- This is the most difficult question to answer.
- That's the least possible explanation.
- Who has the most money?
- She has the fewest problems.

Aim: Students line up according to categories using superlative adjectives and nouns

Level: Intermediate (B1)

Preparation: None

Time: 10 minutes +

Activity

1. Review the forms of superlative adjectives and nouns. A fun way to do this is with pictures of aliens that go from cute to intelligent to scary. Alien A is the cutest. Alien B is

the most intelligent. Alien C is the scariest! Practice the different forms and review the way the number of syllables affects the pattern. Remind students that we use *the least* with noncount nouns and *the fewest* with count nouns.

2. Divide the class groups so you have teams of 5–7 students. Tell students that they must arrange themselves in correct ascending or descending order depending on the adjectives and nouns you use. The first team to be in the correct order wins the round.
3. Use the following categories (or your own). Tell the students to line up:
 - a. From the tallest to the shortest
 - b. From the youngest to the oldest
 - c. From the least talkative to the most talkative
 - d. From the longest hair to the shortest hair
 - e. From the quietest to the loudest
 - f. From wearing the cheapest shoes to wearing the most expensive shoes
 - g. From owning the most shoes to owning the fewest shoes
 - h. From having the most siblings to having the fewest siblings
4. Give each team a point for being in the correct order. Confirm the order by observations (e.g. who has the longest hair) or by asking the students questions (e.g. “When were you born?” “How much did your shoes cost?” etc.)

Variation

Review and contrast comparatives and superlatives by having one of the groups form a pyramid in which the tallest student stands front and center, the middle height students crouch in front of the tallest student, and the shortest students form a row sitting on the floor in front. Elicit comparative and superlative examples from the class to review. Have each group take a turn organizing themselves into a pyramid with alternative themes such as age or how busy they are.