

# Frame Sentences

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEVEL

Early Production to  
Speech Emergence

## KEY VOCABULARY

Will depend upon the topic  
for the frame sentences.

## RESEARCH BASE

McCracken, R., &  
McCracken, M. (1995)

**Purpose** Frame sentences can be used to help students understand and build content vocabulary and develop awareness of sentence structure. They may also help you determine students' prior knowledge about a specific topic.

**Key Benefits for ELLs** Very often it is difficult for beginning ELLs to express what they already know about a topic, in either oral or written form. Also, quite frequently they are unfamiliar with specific text structures, such as cause/effect, comparison/contrast, problem/solution, and question/answer sequence. Using frame sentences can help ELLs understand text and sentence structure while learning content information.

## Procedure

Here's an example of how to construct sentence frames for the topic Plants.

1. To determine prior knowledge, ask: *What do you know about plants?*
2. Then introduce the frame sentence:  
Plants are living things that grow.  
Plants are living things that need water.
3. The sentence frame is repeated until students have finished writing their information.
4. After each lesson covering the topic, students can write in new information that they learned using the sentence frame.

You can construct sentence frames that enable students to use nouns, adjectives, verbs, and prepositional phrases.

## Example:

Nouns: Elephants eat leaves.  
Elephants eat grass.

Verbs: Elephants spray.  
Elephants run.

Adjectives: Elephants are big.  
Elephants are loud.

Prepositional Phrases: Elephants live in the jungle.  
Elephants live in herds.

You can also use sentence frames to highlight certain forms of text structure. If a unit of study involves a specific form, use sentence frames to aid students in understanding these structures. For example:

- Compare/Contrast: If \_\_\_\_\_, then \_\_\_\_\_.
- Cause/Effect: Because \_\_\_\_\_, Therefore, \_\_\_\_\_.
- Problem/Solution: A reason for \_\_\_\_\_ was \_\_\_\_\_.
- Question/Answer: Who? \_\_\_\_\_ When? \_\_\_\_\_  
Why? \_\_\_\_\_ Where? \_\_\_\_\_
- Sequence: First \_\_\_\_\_, Next \_\_\_\_\_  
Finally, \_\_\_\_\_.

For additional signal words and text structures, see the list on page 83.

### ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ Extensions ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

- Ask students to use the information from the sentence frames and make a Fact Sheet (page 26) about a given topic, which students can use as a study guide.
- Have students keep the sentence frames in a journal or notebook. This can be used as both a study guide and as an evaluation tool.
- Use student-created frame sentences to construct an informational paragraph. Delete specific content words from the paragraph and ask students to supply the correct word. You can use this as an evaluation tool.

#### Sample Progress Indicators for FRAME SENTENCES

Student will:	A	IP	Notes
Use English to complete sentences that provide a variety of content information.			
Compare and classify information using technical vocabulary.			
Use prior knowledge to enhance content learning.			
Use the appropriate English grammar structures to convey meaning.			



# Fact Sheet

TOPIC \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Use information from your frame sentences and write a fact for each one.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Opinion-Proof

**Purpose** The purpose of Opinion-Proof is to provide a framework for students to develop and organize opinions and transform these opinions into persuasive speaking and writing. Opinion-Proof also requires students to use higher-order literacy skills including evaluation, verification, and persuasion.

**Key Benefits for ELLs** It is very important that ELLs engage in the practice of higher-order literacy skills. This includes the writing process, which can be a challenge for ELLs. In addition, distinguishing between fact and opinion and being able to support that opinion are essential literacy skills. Opinion-Proof requires the student to form an opinion (evaluative), support the opinion (verify), and write convincingly about their opinion (persuasion). In addition, during the peer-editing process, students develop criteria upon which to evaluate their writing, react to the writing of others, receive the opinion of others, and revise their own writing. If the process is paired with “framed paragraphs,” students can work from a basic framework and begin the process of persuasive thinking and writing. This is very helpful to students who are in the beginning stages of learning the “how to” of effective writing. This strategy also provides an opportunity for ELLs to evaluate their own work, share it with a classmate (peer editing), and then revise the paragraph before submitting a final draft.

## Procedure

1. Choose a portion of text to be read silently from which an opinion will be solicited. (This can be used in many content areas.)
2. Give students a copy of the Opinion-Proof Framework Sheet (see page 59) or write it on the board.
3. Ask students to write an opinion and support it with evidence from the text.

### Example:

Opinion Statement	Evidence to Prove My Opinion
Sacagawea was an important member of the Corps of Discovery.	She was an excellent navigator. Since she knew several languages, she could act as a translator. Her presence among the corps symbolized peace to the Indians they met. Meeting her long-lost brother helped the corps get horses and other important items.

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEVEL

Early production  
to Proficiency

## KEY VOCABULARY

- evidence
- opinion
- proof
- prove

## RESEARCH BASE

Santa, C., Dudley, S.C., &  
Nelson, M. (1985)

4. Ask students to write a paragraph using their opinion as the topic sentence. The evidence is used as supporting details for the opinion statement. You can use a “framed paragraph” to provide a framework and transition from information to writing the paragraph.

**Example: “framed paragraph”**

Sacagawea was an \_\_\_\_\_ part of the Corps of Discovery. One reason I feel this way is because \_\_\_\_\_. In addition, \_\_\_\_\_. Also, \_\_\_\_\_. Finally, \_\_\_\_\_.

**Example: completed “framed paragraph”**

Sacagawea was an important member of the Corps of Discovery. One reason I feel this way is because she was such an excellent navigator. In addition, her role as translator was very helpful. Also, she was seen as a symbol of peace to other Indians the corps met. Finally, meeting her long-lost brother helped the corps get horses and other important items.

## Peer Editing

- Students develop criteria for judging their writing, such as, “Does my paragraph state my opinion as the main idea?” “Do I have enough supporting evidence?” “Does each sentence support the main idea?”
- Students divide into pairs and read and respond to each other’s writing.
- Students revise their paragraphs based upon the input given. Students then turn in a final draft of the paragraph.

### Sample Progress Indicators for OPINION-PROOF

Student will:	A	IP	Notes
Develop an opinion and write it as a statement.			
Support opinion with evidence.			
Write a persuasive paragraph.			
React to the work of others (verbally).			
Revise own writing based upon peer input.			



# Opinion-Proof Framework Sheet

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**Opinion Statement**

**Evidence to Prove My Opinion**

## **Framed Paragraph:**

OPINION STATEMENT

One reason I feel this way is because

In addition,

Also,

Finally,

Cognitive Strategies

# Signal Words for Text Structures

## Enumeration/List and Describe

- first, second, third
- to begin with
- next
- then
- finally
- also
- most important
- until

## Time Order/Sequence

- now
- before
- after
- on (date)
- at (time)
- when
- earlier
- always
- later
- into (for example, *into the evening*)

## Compare/Contrast

- however
- but
- and yet
- either . . . or
- as well as
- on the other hand
- likewise
- similarly
- not only . . . but also
- although
- yet
- as opposed to
- nevertheless

## Cause/Effect

- because
- consequently
- therefore
- as a result
- as opposed to . . .
- if . . . then
- since
- thus
- due to . . .
- led to . . .
- so that

## Problem/Solution

- A way this can be solved . . .
- The problem is . . .
- One solution to this . . .
- A solution might be . . .
- An explanation for this . . .
- The challenge is . . .
- The key is . . .
- The answer is . . .
- A resolution for . . .
- The difficulty is . . .
- The trick is to . . .

 SCHOLASTIC

# Comprehension Strategies *for* English Language Learners

Margaret Bouchard

2005

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*Resources*