

Developmental Series Sample

Objective 5: The student will recognize standard usage and appropriate word choice in written text.

Knowledge and Skills Statement

(3.18) Writing/writing processes: The student selects and uses writing processes for self-initiated and assigned writing.

Student Expectation

(C) The student is expected to revise selected drafts for varied purposes, including to achieve a sense of audience, precise word choices, and vivid images.

ACTIVITY

What Are You Talking About?

Materials

What Are You Talking About? activity sheets— 1 set per student

What Are You Talking About? answer choices— 1 set per group

Procedure

Divide students into groups of three or four, and distribute a set of the *What Are You Talking About?* activity sheets to each student and a set of the *What Are You Talking About?* answer choices to each group. Students read each story beginning and work together to choose the correct replacement for each underlined indefinite reference (pronoun that could refer to more than one antecedent or that is missing an antecedent). The winning group is the first group to correctly complete the activity sheets.

After all groups have completed the activity, discuss the answers as a class.

Enrichment

Find a short story in which there are two or more same-sex characters, and make a copy of it. Use white correction fluid or a dark marker to block out every occurrence of each character's name that comes after the initial introduction of that character. Replace the names with the corresponding pronouns. Make enough copies of the story so that each student can have one. As a class, read the story. Have students try to identify which character's name belongs in place of each written-in pronoun.

This same type of enrichment activity can also be used to practice replacing pronouns that are missing antecedents with more precise wording. To do this, find a short story and make a copy of it. Using white correction fluid or a dark marker,



block out certain nouns or phrases. Replace these with pronouns. Make enough copies of the story so that each student can have one. As a class, read the story. Have students try to think of more specific words or phrases to replace the pronouns that lack antecedents.

These activities will help stress the importance of avoiding unclear references in writing.

Answer Key

Story Beginning

Letter Answers

1	B	C
2	B	A
3	A	B
4	A	C
5	B	B
6	B	A
7	A	B
8	C	A
9	C	B
10	A	C



What Are You Talking About?

Story Beginning 1

It was the first night of the school play. Kamal and Sarah stood on the side of the stage waiting for the curtain to come up. They knew that as soon as the music stopped playing, it would be time to take their places.

"I hope I don't forget any lines," Kamal whispered.

"You won't," she whispered back. "You've been practicing all month. We're both going to do just fine."

Just then it stopped. The girls smiled at each other and headed out on the stage.

Story Beginning 2

Tony, Sal, and Lou stood at the foot of the huge ride, near the ticket booth. Tony looked up, up, up until his eyes found the highest part of the roller coaster. It looked taller than a mountain peak.

"You're not really going to ride this thing, are you, Sal?" Tony asked. He was worried about his brother. Sal had ridden some pretty big roller coasters, but never one quite this big.

"Of course, I'm going to ride it. It's not even that tall," he said.

Tony and Lou took another look at it. They thought it was the biggest, scariest roller coaster they had ever seen.

Just then Tony noticed a sign next to the ride. It read, "You must be five feet tall to ride." Tony smiled with relief. He pointed to the sign and said, "I'm sorry, Sal, but it looks like you'll have to wait until next year to go on this roller coaster."



(1st 2 sets of answer choices of 10)

**What Are You Talking About?
Answer Choices**

Story Beginning 1

The meaning of the sentence with the first underlined word can be improved by changing *she* to —

A Kamal **B** Sarah

The meaning of the sentence with the second underlined word can be improved by changing *it* to —

A the night **B** the stage **C** the music **D** the play

Story Beginning 2

The meaning of the sentence with the first underlined word can be improved by changing *he* to —

A Tony **B** Sal **C** Lou

The meaning of the sentence with the second underlined word can be improved by changing *it* to —

A the roller coaster **B** the ticket booth **C** the mountain peak



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(C) The student is expected to revise selected drafts for varied purposes, including to achieve a sense of audience, precise word choices, and vivid images.

Ina is a third grader. She wrote this paper about how maps help her dad to do his job. Ina would like you to read her paper and suggest ways she could make it better. Read Ina's paper. As you read, think about corrections she should make. Then answer the questions that follow the paper.

A Truck Driver's Friend

(1) My dad drives an eighteen-wheeler. (2) People depend on him to travel hundreds of miles in his enormous truck to deliver their cargo on time. (3) My dad says that when he is on the road, maps are his best friends. (4) Maps show him how to get from one place to another, and they help him to know how long his trip will take.

(5) My dad depends on maps to show him where he was going. (6) Maps make it clear how roads connect cities to each other. (7) Maps give highway numbers to help my dad stay on the right road. (8) By reading a map, my dad can choose the best route to take.

(9) Maps tell my dad how much time he needs to make a trips. (10) Using the symbols on maps, my dad can find out how many miles he will be traveling.

(11) This helps him figure out how long a trip will take. (12) Maps also tell my dad



if there are mountains, towns, or cities along his route that will slow them down.

(13) They are great friends to my dad on his long trips. (14) They help him get to the right place on time.

- 1 What change, if any, should be made in sentence 2?
- A change ***depend*** to **depends**
 - B change ***miles*** to **mile**
 - C change ***his*** to **him**
 - D make no change
- 2 What change, if any, should be made in sentence 5?
- A change ***maps*** to **map**
 - B change ***him*** to **them**
 - C change ***was going*** to **is going**
 - D make no change
- 3 What change, if any, should be made in sentence 9?
- A change ***tell*** to **had been telling**
 - B change ***needs*** to **need**
 - C change ***trips*** to **trip**
 - D make no change
- 4 What change, if any, should be made in sentence 12?
- A change ***there*** to **their**
 - B change ***cities*** to **city**
 - C change ***them*** to **him**
 - D make no change
- 5 The meaning of sentence 13 can be improved by changing ***They*** to —
- A Mountains
 - B Maps
 - C Trips
 - D Miles

