

# Grammar and Writing

## Grade 8 Sampler

*Grammar and Writing* is a language arts program created for easy reading and instruction. Behind this program is a team of dedicated teachers who care about your students' success.

This program presents incremental teaching material in a simple format. It consists of a series of **daily lessons**, **review sets**, and **tests** that are carefully sequenced to develop a variety of skills and concepts. Because of the incremental nature of this program, it is essential that all of the lessons be taught in order and that students complete all review sets.

In addition to the daily lessons, this program includes a series of **writing lessons**. These are designed to guide students through the process of composing a complete essay. This program also contains suggested **journal topics** for more writing practice and weekly **dictations** for practice in spelling and punctuation.

This program includes lessons on capitalization, punctuation, parts of speech, sentence structure, spelling rules, and correct word usage with a focus on improving writing. To increase students' understanding of grammar, they will learn to diagram sentences. Diagramming a sentence helps learners understand its structure and the function of its parts. It will help them with correct word usage and punctuation as they write. Knowing how to diagram an English sentence will also make their future study of foreign languages much easier.

It is our hope that this program provides your students with a strong foundation not only for future language arts studies, but also for a lifetime of satisfying and successful writing.

# **Grammar and Writing 8 Sampler**

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In the sentence above, “protecting the local citizens” is a participle phrase modifying “laws.”

We may find a participle phrase either before or after the word it modifies. A sentence becomes confusing if there are too many words between the participle phrase and the word it modifies.

Richard missed his family *sitting on the bench*. (Who is sitting on the bench, Richard or his family?)

This is easier to understand:

*Sitting on the bench*, Richard missed his family.

**Example 1** For each sentence, write the participle phrase and the noun or pronoun that it modifies.

- (a) Following the leadership of John Dickinson, Richard Bassett was one of the most loyal Federalists.
- (b) Using his presidential authority, John Adams named Richard Bassett as one of the notorious “midnight judges.”
- (c) Democratic-Republicans, elected to office, abolished Richard Bassett’s seat on the U. S. Circuit Court.

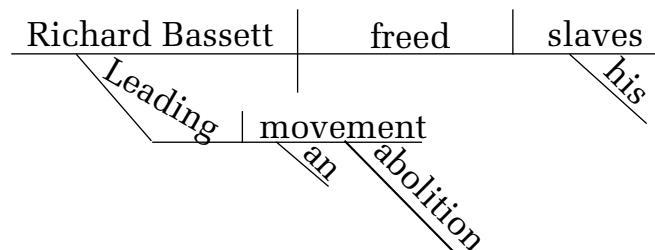
- Solution**
- (a) **Following the leadership of John Dickinson** modifies **Richard Bassett**.
  - (b) **Using his presidential authority** modifies **John Adams**.
  - (c) **Elected to office** modifies **Democratic-Republicans**.

### Diagramming Participle and Gerund Phrases

#### THE PARTICIPLE PHRASE

We diagram the participle phrase under the word it modifies.

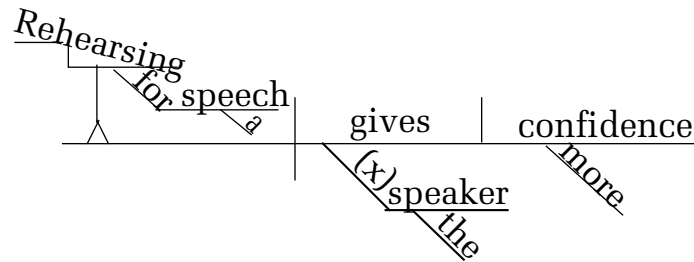
*Leading an abolition movement*, Richard Bassett freed his slaves.



## THE GERUND PHRASE

We diagram the gerund phrase to show how the gerund functions in the sentence.

*Rehearsing for a speech* gives the speaker more confidence.

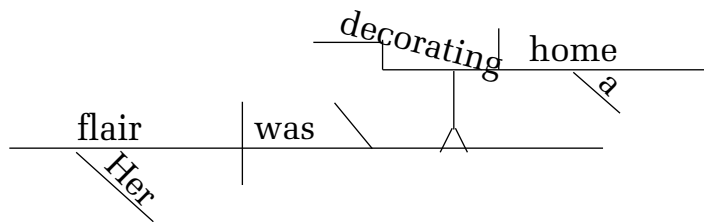


**Example 2** Diagram each sentence.

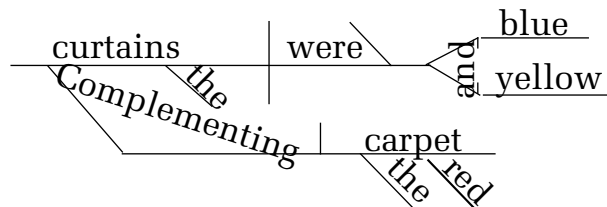
(a) Her flair was decorating a home.

(b) Complementing the red carpet, the curtains were blue and yellow.

**Solution** (a)



(b)



**Practice** For a–d, replace each blank with the correct vocabulary word.

- When wind fans campfires, they often \_\_\_\_\_ brightly.
- Richard Bassett's \_\_\_\_\_ for politics resulted in his term as a U.S. Senator.
- A \_\_\_\_\_ shot into the sky signaled the beginning of the firework display.

- d. \_\_\_\_\_ are words with the same sound but with different spellings and meanings.

For e–h, write the participle phrase and the noun or pronoun it modifies.

- e. Antony, sitting in the back row, never said a word.
- f. Participating little in the Revolution, Jacob Broom still retained influence in his region.
- g. Ernesto noticed an American flag torn by the fierce hurricane.
- h. The tourist admired Delaware’s first cotton mill, built by Jacob Bloom.

Diagram sentences i and j.

- i. Building a cotton mill required ingenuity.
- j. The workers harvesting cotton look weary.

### More Practice

See Master Worksheets.

### Review set

Choose the correct word to complete sentences 1–11.

56

1. (Delphic, Dionysian, Bacchanalian) means ambiguous, or unclear.  
(53, 55)
2. (Biannual, Biennial) means every two years, or every other year.  
(54)
3. Apollonian means (calm, loud, frenzied).  
(53)
4. A(n) (uninterested, disinterested) person is indifferent and unconcerned.  
(52)
5. A filibuster is a method of (speeding, helping, delaying) legislative action.  
(29)
6. When used as the subject of a sentence, a noun or pronoun is in the (nominative, objective) case.  
(50)
7. Has Elmer (wore, worn) those same socks every day this week?  
(49)

- 8.** This briefcase is mine; (your's, yours) is under that chair.  
(53)
- 9.** The present participle of a verb functioning as a noun is a(n) (infinitive, gerund, preposition).  
(16)
- 10.** The executor of the estate will apportion the funds among the siblings and (he, him).  
(21, 51)
- 11.** Which is the (more, most) complete of the two agendas?  
(40)
- 12.** Write the plural of each noun.  
(10, 11) (a) Abby (b) caddy (c) grant-in-aid
- 13.** Write each predicate adjective in this sentence: Frederic Henry, an American soldier, was young and handsome.  
(38)
- 14.** In this sentence, write the verb phrase and name its tense: Frederic Henry was returning to the Italian front.  
(17)
- 15.** Write four pairs of correlative conjunctions.  
(35)
- 16.** Rewrite this sentence so that it is in active voice: A British nurse was met by Lieutenant Rinaldi.  
(27)
- 17.** Write whether the following is a phrase or a clause: to hide their mutual attraction  
(20)
- 18.** In this sentence, write the verb and label it transitive or intransitive: World War I affected the soldiers in different ways.  
(21, 26)
- 19.** In this sentence, write the verb and label it action or linking: Rinaldi became discouraged and ill.  
(3, 18)
- 20.** Write the four principal parts of the irregular verb *drink*.  
(13, 49)
- 21.** Rewrite the following, adding periods, commas, and capital letters and making necessary changes to abbreviations for formal writing:  
(25, 47)
- dear professor droner  
on thurs nov 13 2003 you gave a lecture titled "the social and cultural history of the ancient world" I do not remember the last half of it  
regretfully  
ms snoozer

- 22.** Use an appositive to make one sentence from these two sentences: The Nile is the longest river in the world. The Nile flows north through Egypt and empties into the Mediterranean Sea.  
*(42)*
- 23.** Write the objective case, third person plural pronoun.  
*(51)*
- 24.** In this sentence, write each pronoun and its antecedent:  
*(46)* Malia said she would leave her gila monster at home.
- 25.** Rewrite the following as it is. Then add proofreading symbols to indicate corrections.  
*(32)*  
Frederic desserts the italian army and trys two find Catherine
- 26.** Write whether this sentence is true or false: Possessive pronouns have apostrophes.  
*(53)*
- 27.** In this sentence, write the dependent clause, circling the subordinating conjunction: As the police chased Frederic, he and Catherine fled to Switzerland.  
*(54)*

Diagram sentences 28–30.

- 28.** I saw Benito sneaking some food for a snack.  
*(21, 55)*
- 29.** Snatching a bag of carrots, he left me the cookies, chips, and soda.  
*(30, 55)*
- 30.** Nourishing his body was Benito's goal.  
*(36, 55)*

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**The Writing Process**

All of the writing we do should be viewed as “work in progress.” Even after you have turned in an essay to your teacher for a grade, you should not feel it can never be touched again. The knowledge that *writing is a process* should guide your thinking throughout the construction of an essay. From the first steps in organizing your thoughts, to creating body paragraphs, to adding transitions, you should feel free to make changes to improve your work.

At each step of the writing process, you should stop to reevaluate both your thoughts and the words you have placed on the page.

It is helpful to do this after each step of the writing process. It is also important to do this after the entire essay is written. In fact, it is probably most helpful to complete an essay, then walk away from it for a day or two, and then come back and read it again.

Many times, sentences that seemed good the first time appear much different a day or two later. Furthermore, you may find that more ideas have come to you, or ideas that were somewhat muddled before have become clearer. Two days later, you can write them in a way that is more meaningful to the reader.

Use the following guidelines to help you evaluate your writing.

**Evaluating Your Writing**

Do not be afraid to change what you have already written. Just because it was typed or written on paper in ink does not mean it cannot be improved.

Ask yourself these questions throughout the writing process:

- Is my introductory sentence interesting? *If it is not interesting to you, it certainly will not be interesting to the reader.*
- Do I have a thesis statement that clearly explains the subject of this essay? (For this assignment, the thesis was given to you.)
- Does my thesis statement clearly state my position?

- Does each body paragraph have a clear topic sentence at the beginning that tells the reader exactly what the paragraph will be about? *Read each topic sentence without the rest of the paragraph to see if it can stand alone as a strong idea.*
- Are there other personal experiences or factual examples that I can add to help improve my credibility and help the reader to better understand my point?
- In my opinion sentences have I described my emotions and feelings so well that they create a picture in the mind of the reader to help him or her feel the same as I feel?
- Does each paragraph (except for the first) begin with an effective transition?
- Are there other arguments that I can add as additional body paragraphs to help me prove my point?
- Are some of my arguments weak and unconvincing? Should they be removed because they do not help me prove my point?
- Do my body paragraphs appear in the best possible order to prove my point? Could I place them in a different order that is more logical or effective?
- Is each sentence constructed as well as it should be? *Read each sentence in each paragraph as if it were the only sentence on the page. This helps you to catch sentence fragments, run-on sentences, misspellings, and grammatical errors. If you are working on a computer, put blank lines between each sentence, so you actually see only one full sentence at a time on your screen. This will make sentence fragments jump out at you.*
- Does my concluding paragraph summarize and reinforce the ideas and opinions expressed in the essay?

**Practice** Use the Evaluation Form on the following page to evaluate the essay you wrote for Lesson 4. Read your essay carefully as you check for the items listed on the Evaluation Form. Write YES or NO in the blank next to each question.

When you are finished, you will either be confident that you have a strong essay, or you will know where it needs to be improved.

If you answered NO to one or more of the questions on the Evaluation Form, rewrite to improve those areas.

When you can answer YES to every question on the Evaluation Form, you will have completed this assignment.

## Essay Evaluation Form

Thesis: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Is my introductory sentence interesting? *If it is not interesting to you, it certainly won't be interesting to the reader.*

\_\_\_\_\_ Do I have a thesis statement that clearly explains the subject of this essay?

\_\_\_\_\_ Does my thesis statement clearly state my position?

\_\_\_\_\_ Does each body paragraph have a clear topic sentence at the beginning that tells the reader exactly what the paragraph will be about? *Read each topic sentence without the rest of the paragraph to see if it can stand alone as a strong idea.*

\_\_\_\_\_ Have I included personal experiences that improve my credibility and help the reader to better understand my point?

\_\_\_\_\_ In my opinion sentences have I described my emotions and feelings so well that they create a picture in the mind of the reader to help him or her feel the same as I feel?

\_\_\_\_\_ Does each paragraph (except for the first paragraph) begin with an effective transition?

\_\_\_\_\_ Have I included every strong argument to prove my point?

\_\_\_\_\_ Are all of my arguments strong and convincing? Do they all help to prove my point?

\_\_\_\_\_ Do my body paragraphs appear in the best possible order to prove my point? Is their order logical and effective?

\_\_\_\_\_ Is each sentence structured as well as it could be? *Read each sentence in each paragraph as if it were the only sentence on the page. This helps you catch fragments and run-on sentences and evaluate the overall strength or weakness of each sentence.*

\_\_\_\_\_ Does my concluding paragraph summarize and reinforce the ideas and opinions expressed in the essay?

**More  
Practice  
Lesson 56**

For 1–6, underline each participial phrase and circle the word it modifies.

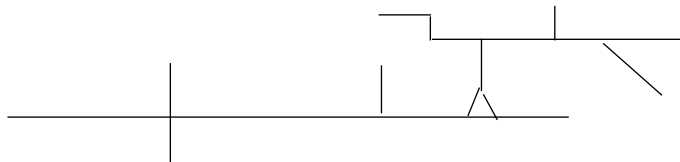
1. The pilgrim, strengthened by adversity, kept the faith.
2. Having stated her objections, Isabel stood firm.
3. That miner leading the mule is my uncle.
4. Jogging along the levee, Ms. Rivas saw some hedgehogs.
5. Having lost his keys, Nigel could not start his car.
6. The little girl building sand castles is my niece.

For 7–10, complete the diagram of each sentence.

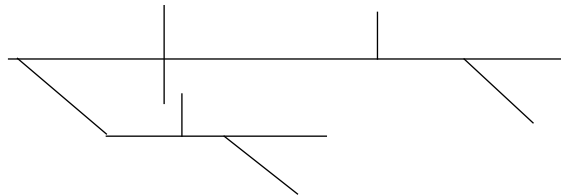
7. Your worrying will accomplish nothing.



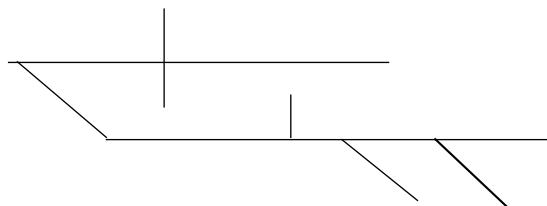
8. Julita enjoys trimming her trees.



9. Supporting the British, Loyalists fought the Patriots.



10. Having painted the entire house, Jenny relaxed.



## Hysterical Fiction #4

### The Presidential Inauguration

Follows Lesson 73

Only one poet would be chosen to read his or her poem at the Presidential Inauguration on January 20. Many

(1) \_\_\_\_\_ poets had entered the contest. Among

them was (2) \_\_\_\_\_, who had written a

(3) \_\_\_\_\_ poem about (4) \_\_\_\_\_.

(5) \_\_\_\_\_'s poem about (6) \_\_\_\_\_ was

(7) \_\_\_\_\_. It included (8) \_\_\_\_\_

descriptions of (9) \_\_\_\_\_ that were

(10) \_\_\_\_\_ (11) \_\_\_\_\_

(12) \_\_\_\_\_.

Having spent (13) \_\_\_\_\_ (14) \_\_\_\_\_

hours on a poem, (15) \_\_\_\_\_ entered the

(16) \_\_\_\_\_ poem of all. In this poem, a(n)

(17) \_\_\_\_\_ tries (18) \_\_\_\_\_ and

(19) \_\_\_\_\_ (20) \_\_\_\_\_

(21) \_\_\_\_\_ (22) \_\_\_\_\_

(23) \_\_\_\_\_.

The poet selected to read at the President's Inauguration ceremony was (24) \_\_\_\_\_ with a poem entitled

(25) \_\_\_\_\_ about (26) \_\_\_\_\_ that apply to

all people. Future generations will read and perhaps enjoy

this (27) \_\_\_\_\_ poem.

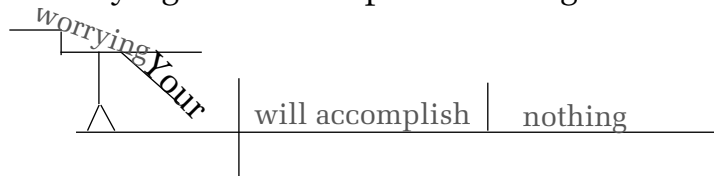
**More Practice Lesson 56**

For 1–6, underline each participial phrase and circle the word it modifies.

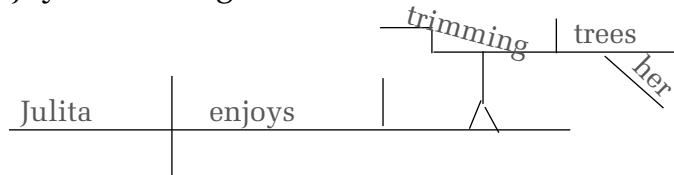
1. The pilgrim, strengthened by adversity, kept the faith.
2. Having stated her objections, Isabel stood firm.
3. That miner leading the mule is my uncle.
4. Jogging along the levee, Ms. Rivas saw some hedgehogs.
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For 7–10, complete the diagram of each sentence.

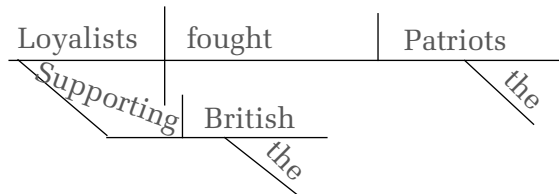
7. Your worrying will accomplish nothing.



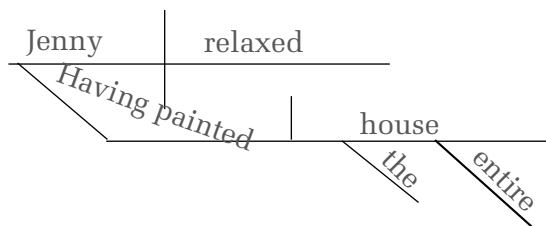
8. Julita enjoys trimming her trees.



9. Supporting the British, Loyalists fought the Patriots.



10. Having painted the entire house, Jenny relaxed.



Give after Lesson 55

Circle the correct word(s) to complete sentences 1–10.

1. Eight associate justices plus one chief justice (compose, comprise) the U.S. Supreme Court.  
(46)
2. The Latin root *tract-* means (to drag or draw, to come, to throw).  
(47)
3. I think that poem by Jane Austen is the (good, better, best) of the two.  
(40)
4. The dark-haired princess tap dancing on stage is (her, she).  
(50)
5. Ms. Hsu and (we, us) visited the Louvre while in Paris, France.  
(50)
6. The humorous birthday card arrived in a large turquoise (envelop, envelope).  
(50)
7. Early morning fog may (envelop, envelope) the coast line.  
(50)
8. The Latin verb (*venire, capere, ducere*) means “to lead.”  
(49)
9. A (deduction, retraction, conjecture) is a withdrawal or taking back of something previously said.  
(47)
10. (Everyone, Every one) of the candidates will participate in the debate next month.  
(24)
11. In the following sentence, underline each prepositional phrase, circling the object of each preposition:  
(14, 28)  
Some critics believe that the title of Jane Austen’s *Mansfield Park* represents her abolitionist views on behalf of the slaves in Antigua.
12. Circle the verb phrase in the sentence below. Then circle to indicate whether the verb is transitive or intransitive.  
(26)  
In Jane Austen’s *Emma*, does Emma Woodhouse respond with surprise to Jane Fairfax and Frank Churchill’s engagement? (transitive, intransitive)
13. Write the (a) past tense and (b) past participle of the irregular verb *drink*.  
(49)  
(a) \_\_\_\_\_ (b) \_\_\_\_\_
14. Add periods and commas as needed in the following sentence:  
(31, 43)  
John F Kennedy the thirty-fifth US President was voted “most likely to succeed” out of his high school class
15. Circle the coordinating conjunction in this sentence: A close reading of *Emma* discloses a tight narrative web, a severely restricted setting, and a few characters.  
(33)

- 16.** In the following sentence, circle the pronoun and name its case: Fortunately, she gives tremendous attention to detail. \_\_\_\_\_ case  
(50)
- 17.** Write the plural form of the singular noun *trilogy*. \_\_\_\_\_  
(10, 11)
- 18.** Circle each third person plural pronoun from this list: he, him, she, her, they, them, we, us, you  
(48)
- 19.** Circle each nominative case pronoun from this list: me, him, I, she, them, they, he, her, we, us  
(50)
- 20.** Circle each letter that should be capitalized in the following sentence: mrs. curtis said, “no, i don’t think jane austen made any money during her lifetime from her novel *mansfield park*.”  
(9)
- 21.** In the following sentence, circle the verb phrase and name its tense: Was Mr. Huang teasing you about a missing homework assignment? \_\_\_\_\_ tense  
(17)
- 22.** Circle each infinitive in this sentence: Cleopatra chose to die by snake bite rather than to live without Mark Antony.  
(19)
- 23.** Circle each possessive noun from this list: people’s, peoples, cross, crosses, cross’s, crosses’  
(7)
- 24.** Write the second person singular or plural personal pronoun. \_\_\_\_\_  
(48)
- 25.** In the space below, diagram the following sentence: Writing and entertaining absorbed this woman of many interests.  
(29, 34)