



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute  
1981 Volume IV: Writing Across the Curriculum

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## **Sentence—Combining**

Guide for Curriculum Unit 81.04.06  
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This unit on sentence-combining outlines and provides examples of a writing technique which hopefully will promote syntactic maturity, the writing of more complex sentence structures to express ideas and experiences. This technique is developmental, and the student should be able to master it with proper instruction and reinforcement. It is hoped that once the student masters this technique, he will be able to incorporate sentence combining operations in his free writing. This unit is based on studies which seem to indicate that traditional grammar can be a detriment to the development of writing skills. Students sometimes miss the connection between traditional grammar study and actual writing. Students, according to these studies, learn by doing. Furthermore some studies, related to the sentence combining technique, indicate a significant improvement in the writing skills of students who learned this technique.

The basic premise of this unit is that students possess native abilities which relate directly to the manner in which they use language. The child is said to possess linguistic competencies which guide the correct use of his ability to speak and understand sentences within the language. The student is also said to be able to create new sentences using his linguistic competence. The teacher should expect to use this unit to impress upon students a form for expressing their thoughts on paper. This unit will not provide all of the various forms of written expression, but the forms commonly used to express ideas or describe experiences. This unit suggests that the teacher use this technique along with other writing techniques to improve student writing.

(Recommended for 5th-8th grade Language Arts, Reading, and English.)

### **Key Words**

*Writing Instruction Sentence Combining Structure*

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