

Scope and Sequence

A number of people have asked questions in the past about how our books fit into an overall plan with one another or how they integrate with other materials. What we are talking about is a scope and sequence. Below you will find an overview that will answer some of these concerns.

The Grammar Land Series

This series is designed to service three groups of people. The first group is the average 4th-7th grader who has had minimal exposure to grammar study and needs some basic instruction on the parts of speech and a variety of related ideas such as punctuation and usage. The texts are written at a 5-6th grade reading level. The bulk of the students using the books should fall into the above category. A second possible group would be those students who have tried the traditional approach to grammar and want something different. The story format where learning takes place through reading about Tank and his interaction with the various characters he meets on his journey is quite a different approach. It appeals to some students while the traditional approach does not. For these students, grammar becomes acceptable or perhaps even fun. The third group the series helps is those who are remedial. They have been through other programs and just didn't get it. The pace and presentation is thorough yet understandable. A few high school students in this category have had very good results with the series.

Jensen's Grammar

This book is designed for grades 7 through 12. The basic idea is to teach the student how to write good sentences with a variety of constructions using the proper punctuation for each particular construction. Some students will find this series tough if they don't have some familiarity with grammar to begin with since the series moves rather quickly.

The book comes with a separate set of answers and tests. The program covers the parts of speech, the relative clause, sentence combining by addition, and the verbals. Other incidental items of usage and punctuation are found as well. This program is designed to improve writing at the sentence level, which is where most students make their mistakes. It is difficult for students to write decently if they cannot write good sentences, so learning good sentence construction is imperative.

This book can be covered in a 90 day period, or it can be stretched out to a year if a three day per week system is used.

Jensen's Punctuation

This book is in two sections; the first part covers five basic rules constantly violated by many writers, especially students. The second section covers all the punctuation rules and includes a complete manual and lots of practice items. The student is given a short composition and told to make the punctuation right and cite the rule(s) applied. I would use this book after Jensen's Grammar. It should certainly come before or along with any writing series since knowing and applying the rules will dramatically reduce the errors in punctuation. This book would be best used about 8th or 9th grade, definitely before any real writing program. It can be comfortably used either five or three days per week until the review exercises; they should be used once per week. Depending on how it is used, it could take up to year to work through.

Jensen's Format Writing

This book is designed to teach expository writing: paragraphs, essays, and research papers. Other items such as business letters, book reports, answering essay test questions, and resumes are also covered. It should be one of the last books used. After all, a good vocabulary, a solid command of punctuation, and an ability to write good sentences with a variety of constructions are all building blocks to putting together a decent piece of writing. This book is probably best in high school and can be used for about two years. It is too much to cover in a single year and still provide the practice needed for the students to master the material. From then on the students will simply practice what they have learned by generating a variety of papers of varying lengths on a multitude of different subjects.

Jensen's Vocabulary

This book can be used anywhere from 7th through 12th grade, but I believe that 7th-9th grade is best. It is in three parts, and each part can be either a semester or a year long course depending on the time frame you pick. Vocabulary is a basic skill; a limited vocabulary reduces the effectiveness of reading, writing and speaking skills. Younger people pick up on vocabulary much easier than older folks, the upper age limit for easy acquisition being the early 20's. Junior high is a good time to do this book since some of the words will be familiar, and many will not. The book is very routine once the pattern is established, and junior high kids like things they can do. Often the first few lessons are tough, but after the pattern becomes familiar, the students generally get the hang of it and have very few problems.

English Fun Stuff

This book is a series of exercises and games to be used as a supplement, a filler, or just for fun. Some of the activities are better suited for certain ability levels; others are more universal. Most of the activities are based around English skills although a few are rather loosely related. I've used these activities successfully with students from 5th grade through freshmen in college. A good thinking puzzle or activity involving words provides interaction with the language and requires the students to use their minds. It's also fun.

Sound Spelling

Sound Spelling is different from standard spellers. It is suitable for 5th grade and up. The spelling words are drawn from the student's own writing. Three stages exist for each word: identification, preparation, and exercise. A student following these three stages will learn to spell the words he or she is having trouble with. This book is a lifetime speller. It has some template pages that are easily reproducible, and it encourages students to keep their own notebooks of words. It contains a series of sound and letter patterns that unlock keys to spelling. One reviewer said, "This is a totally new concept that is custom tailored to your specific needs."

From Heart to Page

Get your reluctant writers to put their thoughts on paper with this little booklet. 180 starter ideas motivate young writers to keep their journals for a solid year. It's geared to 4th-8th graders but will work for anyone needing prompts to write every day. It contains a bonus section of ideas about how to keep journaling after the booklet is finished. Get those students writing and keep them writing.

Writing to Change the World

Written by an experienced free lancer with hundreds of articles in print, this book is about getting into print. It is filled with tips and techniques to both stimulate writing and to make that writing better. Topics such as essays, stories, plot, character, book reviews, poetry and more are covered. The author's light and engaging style make the book very readable and clear. The thrust of the book is to teach people how to write and get it published. It can profitably be used from the 7th grade up. We expect this book will help produce the next generation of free lance and professional

writers. Now let's put it into chart form so you can have a visual of sorts. There is no hard and fast rule that you must follow. You should pick the books that help your student the most when they need it. Children are different; that's one of the reasons you should be tailoring curriculum to the child, not the other way around.

titles	grade levels
Grammar Land	5-6-7
Jensen's Grammar	7-12
Jensen's Vocabulary	7-12 (7-9 best)
Jensen's Punctuation	7-12 (8-9 best)
Jensen's Format Writing	9-12
English Fun Stuff	5-12
Sound Spelling	5-12
From Heart to Page	4-12 (4-8 best)
Writing to Change the World	7-adult

There is a hierarchy of skills represented in these books, excepting English Fun Stuff. The Grammar Land series deals primarily with the parts of speech and basic sentence formats. Jensen's Grammar reviews the parts of speech and moves

on to sentences and various other constructions such as relative clauses and verbals. Both Jensen's Grammar and the Grammar Land series teach usage and some punctuation along with the various constructions covered. Both cover the basic parts of speech, but that is the focus of the Grammar Land books while it is only the beginning of the Jensen's Grammar series. Jensen's Vocabulary teaches vocabulary and spelling. This book can be integrated at any point, but junior high or early high school is best. Jensen's Punctuation covers punctuation. It can be integrated into any curriculum at any point, but it should precede a writing curriculum. Jensen's Format Writing is the final book since it presupposes skills taught in the earlier books. Its primary purpose is to teach how to organize sentences into paragraphs and paragraphs into essays as well as how to gather information and document it. Any of the books, possibly excepting the grammar books, can easily be used with other English curriculums. The grammar and writing books require the teacher to read and evaluate what the student has written. These books take both class time and some outside time for student and teacher work, but they can be used along with most literature programs. The vocabulary and punctuation books require very little teacher interaction except to give the tests in vocabulary. They can easily interface with other activities. These are guidelines only and can be adjusted to your preference and situation. Just be aware of the skills taught in the various books so that you can use them to teach what your student needs.