

# **How to Use the “Art” of Language in Order to Survive Middle School!**

## **A Unit Designed to Introduce and Enhance the Elements of Language Arts**

**Unit Overview:** This unit introduces many of the elements that relate to the middle school level of language arts. It can be used as a diagnostic assessment at the beginning of the year and a mastering diagnostic at the end, as well as a checklist through the year. Once the elements are introduced, any supplemental reading and enhancement activities can be utilized to enrich the comprehension and application of the skill or element. Some of these activities may just be used to “spark” an idea or two. Assignments can be used in class or for homework. These lessons may be as in depth as you wish.

### **Unit Objectives:**

#### **Literary Elements/Genre Elements:**

- What are the elements of short stories?
- What are the elements of novels?
- What are the elements of dramas?
- What are the elements of suspense?
- What are the elements of mystery?
- What are the elements of nonfiction?
- What are the elements of fantasy?
- What are the elements of poetry?

#### **Reading and Vocabulary Skills:**

- What are the active reading strategies?
- How does one predict?
- How does one draw conclusions?
- What is the purpose of summarizing? Paraphrasing?
- How does one infer?
- What is the difference between fact and opinion?
- Main/Central Idea and supporting details
- What is cause and effect?
- What is sequencing?
- What is characterization?
- What is labeling and diagramming?
- What is classification and/or categorization?
- What is a context clue? What are the types of context clues? How do context clues assist in comprehension of various vocabulary words?
- What is connotation?
- What is denotation?
- What are word stems?

### **Writing Skills:**

- What are the steps in the writing process? What is involved with each?
- Why does one write?
- What are the different types of writing means? How does one best correspond or communicate? What are the different writing techniques or formats for the various types of writing?
- What is the best organizing method for writing essays?

### **Grammar/Punctuation Skills:**

- What are the eight parts of speech? What is the role of each?
- What are the various punctuation marks used and how are they used?
- What are the four types of sentences? How are they punctuated?
- What is involved with writing a simple sentence? Compound sentence? Complex Sentence? Compound/Complex Sentence?
- What are various transition words and types of phrases, and how do transition words and various phrases assist in sentence variety?

### **Research/Inquiry Skills:**

- What is a bibliography?
- What is a works cited list?
- How are textbooks sectioned or organized?
- What are some inquiry instruments used to search for information?
- What are some skimming and scanning techniques?
- How are key details highlighted?

### **Cognitive (Thinking) Skills:**

- What are the different levels of thought process, and what are some example "verbs" that demonstrate each level?

## Genre Match

Directions: Match the genre and literary element to its accurate description.

1. Short Story ____	a. another name for a play, contains story elements along with stage directions and dialog
2. Novel ____	b. contains elements of the supernatural and unrealistic, often passed down and changed from generation to generation
3. Mystery ____	c. can be fiction or nonfiction, contains characters, plot, conflict, mood, setting, and resolution
4. Suspense ____	d. usually more than 100 pages in length, can be fiction or nonfiction, contains story elements that change from chapter to chapter
5. Drama ____	e. based on real and true events, contains elements of a story
6. Poetry ____	f. anxiousness and tension about what is happening or about to happen, authors achieve this by shocking their audience
7. Nonfiction ____	g. this type of reading and writing may be in free form or with a specific format. It contains sound devices and figurative language to help express thoughts and feelings.
8. Fantasy ____	h. this genre leaves the audience guessing or trying to figure out the answer to the problem. Once it is figured out, it is solved.

## Reading/Vocabulary Match

Directions: Match the reading and vocabulary skill to its accurate description.

1. Cause and effect ____	a. shortening a story to its main events
2. Categorization/Classification ____	b. guessing what is about to happen
3. Denotation ____	c. making sure the concept is comprehended or understood
4. Connotation ____	d. identifying parts and components
5. Context Clues ____	e. illustrating
6. Fact and Opinion ____	f. putting items in order in which they occur
7. Predicting ____	g. The subject matter that is being covered
8. Labeling ____	h. one is true and can be supported, the other is someone's feelings or thoughts/ideas
9. Diagramming ____	i. using hidden/non-stated clues to make an assumption or guess
10. Paraphrasing ____	j. grouping items based on similarities
11. Inferring ____	k. Using evidence and details to make a final educated guess about an outcome
12. Drawing Conclusion ____	l. words surrounding an unfamiliar word that assists in comprehension of the meaning in context
13. Word Stems ____	m. the feeling or attitude attached to a meaning
14. Sequencing ____	n. the reason something happens and what the outcome is of the event
15. Summarizing ____	o. evidence and details to support a main idea
16. Characterization ____	p. parts of words that have a specific meaning to them
17. Central/Main Idea ____	q. the dictionary meaning of a word
18. Supporting Details ____	r. identifying and detailing characters' actions and thoughts to show effect on the plot of a story
19. Clarification ____	s. Shortening quotes by eliminating irrelevant words.

## Writing Skills Match

Directions: Match the writing skills/elements with their accurate description.

1. Prewriting ____	a. revisiting a piece of writing to check for clarity of ideas, organization, and sentence structure
2. Drafting ____	b. tools used to organize ideas
3. Revising ____	c. words or phrase used to signal change, allows for smooth shift in ideas
4. Editing ____	d. includes grammar usage, punctuation, spelling, and capitalization
5. Publishing/Presentation ____	e. writing for pleasure
6. Graphic Organizers ____	f. transferring thoughts onto paper
7. Content/Focus ____	g. Beginning paragraphs or writing about five spaces to the right
8. Transition Words/Phrases ____	h. the vocabulary used to meet the needs of the audience
9. Voice/Vocabulary ____	i. to convince the audience of a particular idea or thought, position
10. Organization ____	j. forming ideas into well-developed and organized pieces of writing
11. Conventions ____	k. checking a piece of writing for grammar and punctuation errors
12. Structure/Variety ____	l. all writing is aligned on the left margin
13. Persuade ____	m. some of the writing is indented or put on the center line
14. Entertain ____	n. a type of writing used to communicate serious and professional language
15. Inform/Explain ____	o. producing a piece of writing in its final stage to the public
16. Business Writing ____	p. writing to communicate directions, information, etc...
17. Block Style ____	q. putting ideas of a piece of writing in an order that is logical and makes sense
18. Modified Block ____	r. the form a sentence takes to offer a variety
19. Indentions ____	s. the idea or topic that is being discussed, the sub-topics and details must all relate to this idea or topic

## Grammar Punctuation Match

Directions: Match the grammar and punctuation elements to their appropriate description.

1. Noun ____	a. expresses excitement or exclamatory emotion, does not support any other part of speech
2. Verb ____	b. the who and what of the sentence with all other words that describe and relate to it
3. Adjective/Article ____	c. person, place, thing, idea
4. Adverb ____	d. the who or what of the sentence
5. Conjunction ____	e. the verb(s) actions of the sentence
6. Preposition ____	f. a sentence that can stand alone
7. Pronoun ____	g. direction word
8. Interjection ____	h. action of the sentence; also connects the subject with the rest of the sentence; this is the heart of the sentence
9. Simple Subject ____	i. joining together words
10. Complete Subject ____	j. describes nouns and pronouns
11. Simple Predicate ____	k. a phrase or fragment in a sentence that must have a complete sentence attached to it.
12. Complete Predicate ____	l. the action of the sentence and all of the words that relate to it
13. Independent clause/ Main Clause ____	m. a phrase that takes a verb and adds "ing" to it making it a noun
14. Dependent Clause/ Subordinate Clause ____	n. renames a noun, is used when the nouns' overuse becomes awkward
15. Gerund Phrase ____	o. a phrase that begins with "to" and then continues with a verb and its modifiers
16. Infinitive Phrase ____	p. tells how, when, why, where, and to what extreme an action is being performed, usually ends in "ly"

### Inquiry/Research Match:

Directions: Match the inquiry skills and research skills with their appropriate description

1. Bibliography ____	a. a list of credits and sources used to research information and document it
2. Works Cited List ____	b. symbols used to start a new idea, thought, list contents, etc...
3. Index ____	c. writing that is darker and bigger
4. Table of Contents ____	d. writing that is somewhat leaning or slanting
5. Skimming/Scanning ____	e. a list of sources that follow a specific format
6. Bold Print ____	f. an illegal act of copying verbatim without giving proper credit
7. Italics ____	g. Category Titles and Topics
8. Bullets ____	h. A list of skills, authors, etc. categorized by subject and alphabetized found in the back of books, gives page numbers where items can be found
9. Headings ____	i. found in the front of a book highlighting sections, skills, titles, etc. and the page numbers where they begin
10. Subheadings ____	j. details and key items that support a main detail or heading
11. Content Organization ____	k. words that target and relate to topic
12. Search Engine ____	l. quickly looking over and through text to find key words
13. Key Words ____	m. documenting sources after the quote or information
14. End Notes ____	n. documenting sources at the bottom of a page
15. Foot Notes ____	o. how a text is organized, grouped, categorized
16. Plagiarism ____	p. an Internet assistance tool to search and locate websites pertaining to certain topics, key words are used in the search



**Very Vital Vocabulary List**  
**(Building an Intellectual Vocabulary Bank of Impressive Words)**

Word	Selection Title/Context	Denotation used in context	Words that relate to...	Antonym Synonym	Connotation Negative Neutral Positive

## Writing for Purpose, Experience, and Fluency Log

For every writing assignment, log the appropriate information.

Writing Title	Task?	Audience	Purpose	Format/Means

## Tasks to Introduce, Develop, and Enrich the Art of Language

Directions: Complete the following tasks in accordance with your teacher's instructions.

1. Diagram the layout of your school; label the route you will routinely take and the areas that you will be using.
2. List, with numbers or bullets, the essential survival tools you will need for the year. If given a syllabus, highlight the items first.
3. List the main events of the day in sequence. Bullet the events.
4. Summarize your day in the form of an organized paragraph using the key events from number three.
5. List items, objects, persons, etc. that you came in contact with or observed, actions you performed, directions you took, descriptions of objects, items, persons, etc..., and how you performed various actions the first day. Beside each word, put what part of speech it is.
6. Write a different type of sentence and sentence structure regarding your first few days of school.
  - a. Interrogative
  - b. Declarative
  - c. Imperative
  - d. Exclamatory
  - e. Simple
  - f. Compound
  - g. Complex
  - h. Compound-Complex
7. Create a word search or a crossword puzzle using essential and key items or supplies needed to "survive" the school year with success. Exchange with a classmate.
8. If your notebook contained all the essential equipment or aid supplies for you to be ultimately successful for the year, what would it contain? What would be the directions for using it? Create a content check list of everything that should be in your notebook (using syllabus or teacher instructions). Write out your directions for appropriate "putting together", proper use, and how to take care of the contents in a well-organized paragraph. Remember to use transition words or phrases to signal order. Diagram the cover and the inside of your "First Language Aid Notebook". Label the key components.

9. Categorize and/or classify all key elements and materials needed in order to be a middle school survivor. Use teacher instructions, common knowledge, and syllabi, etc. Some items will be used in more than one category. Be creative with your category titles.
10. Research the "old school" routines. Ask a parent, grandparent, neighbor, etc... about his or her schooling. Use the Internet. What year was it? What were their hours? What were their subjects? What were the teachers like? How many were in a class? What were the rules? Record your information in notation form. Prepare a visual presentation draft of the description of their school life. The teacher may wish to have this published on a computer program.
11. Write down two facts about (anything regarding) school.
12. Write down two opinions about your first day back at school.
13. Complete these cause and effect sentences with information covered at school.
  - a. Because            of            \_\_\_\_\_,            I            will  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Because of \_\_\_\_\_, my responsibility will be to  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Because    of    the    importance    of    \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_.
14. What will be your prediction for the upcoming school year?
15. Characterize your teachers; describe their actions.
16. Based on your teachers' actions and words, what do you think they will be like during the school year? Infer.
17. What was the main idea of the first day? What were the supporting details? List in Categories.

## Curing "GOT"cha! and other Grammar Diseases that "Plague" Us!

Directions: Replace each "got" word with another word that would serve the main purpose.

1. I got to school late on the first day.

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2. I got a good teacher.

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3. When I got to math class, I got scared.

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4. I got sick to my stomach.

---

5. The teacher got upset as well.

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6. I would have gotten up and left, but I didn't know if that was allowed.

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7. My friends got my books and carried them for me.

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8. I've got a lot of good friends.

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9. My first day has got to be one of the most memorable.

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10. Regardless of the nervousness, I got an "A" on my first assignment, which got a lot of compliments.

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Directions: Rewrite the sentences appropriately without using the double negatives.

11. Don't never predict what is going to happen.

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12. Don't predict nothing to be on the safe side.

---

13. I wasn't going to never step foot in the school again

---

14. Why doesn't nobody never warn us about how scary school can be?

---

15. They haven't got no manual out there for us.

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Directions: Put the correct use of the underlined commonly confused words.

16. The books are found over their.

---

17. There homework took a long time.

---

18. They're are the restrooms.

---

19. Wear are the lockers?

---

20. We will have to were uniforms.

---

21. I heard all of these things where rumors.

---

22. It's is hard work to be in middle school.

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23. The hardest concept to learn is it's rules.

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## Skill Application Match

Directions: Put what skill or element is described by its example or applicable situation.

1. Based on facial gestures and body language, what was the teacher's next move?	
2. Draw a picture of your school's cafeteria, write all of the sections with descriptions	
3. After reading and hearing all of the school rules, what kind of discipline is administered?	
4. If it rains, what will happen with recess?	
5. First you have English, then Science, then Social Studies, next...	
6. The school is too crowded!	
7. The school has over 800 students enrolled.	
8. Skinny/slim	
9. pre, heat, ed	
10. Words that begin with blends, types of texts, cafeteria rules	
11. I bet that next year will be easier.	
12. The teacher was kind, alert, and knowledgeable.	
13. The day began with breakfast, going to school, soccer practice, family time, dinner, bath, and bed	

**“What Did I Miss?”  
Make-up Work Master**

To be placed in central binder at the end of the day.

Class/Period/Block: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- Notes on: \_\_\_\_\_ (See classmates)
- Class work: Text Page(s): \_\_\_\_\_
- Class work: Handout #: \_\_\_\_\_
- Class work: Teacher Assigned: \_\_\_\_\_
- Media Center: Book Check-out
- Media Center: Computer Lab
- Homework: Text Page(s): \_\_\_\_\_
- Homework: Handout #: \_\_\_\_\_
- Homework: Teacher Assigned: \_\_\_\_\_
- Quiz/Test on: \_\_\_\_\_ (See Teacher)
- Reading Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_
- Writing Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_

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Class/Period/Block: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- Notes on: \_\_\_\_\_ (See classmates)
- Class work: Text Page(s): \_\_\_\_\_
- Class work: Handout #: \_\_\_\_\_
- Class work: Teacher Assigned: \_\_\_\_\_
- Media Center: Book Check-out
- Media Center: Computer Lab
- Homework: Text Page(s): \_\_\_\_\_
- Homework: Handout #: \_\_\_\_\_
- Homework: Teacher Assigned: \_\_\_\_\_
- Quiz/Test on: \_\_\_\_\_ (See Teacher)
- Reading Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_
- Writing Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_

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Class/Period/Block: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- Notes on: \_\_\_\_\_ (See classmates)
- Class work: Text Page(s): \_\_\_\_\_
- Class work: Handout #: \_\_\_\_\_
- Class work: Teacher Assigned: \_\_\_\_\_
- Media Center: Book Check-out
- Media Center: Computer Lab
- Homework: Text Page(s): \_\_\_\_\_
- Homework: Handout #: \_\_\_\_\_
- Homework: Teacher Assigned: \_\_\_\_\_
- Quiz/Test on: \_\_\_\_\_ (See Teacher)
- Reading Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_
- Writing Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_



## Answer Guide:

### Genre Match:

1. c
2. d
3. h
4. f
5. a
6. g
7. e
8. b

### Reading Skills:

1. n
2. j
3. q
4. m
5. l
6. h
7. b
8. d
9. e
10. s
11. i
12. k
13. p
14. f
15. a
16. r
17. g
18. o
19. c

### Writing Skills:

1. f
2. j
3. a
4. k
5. o
6. b
7. s
8. c
9. h
10. q
11. d
12. r
13. i
14. e

15. p
16. n
17. l
18. m
19. g

### Grammar:

1. c
2. h
3. j
4. p
5. i
6. g
7. n
8. a
9. d
10. b
11. e
12. l
13. f
14. k
15. m
16. o

### Inquiry:

1. e
2. a
3. h
4. i
5. l
6. c
7. d
8. b
9. g
10. j
11. o
12. p
13. k
14. m
15. n
16. f

## "Got"cha! Possible Answers:

1. arrived
2. have/received
3. arrived/became
4. became
5. became
6. remove got
7. retrieved
8. remove got
9. remove got
10. received

## Double Negatives:

1. ever
2. anything
3. ever
4. anyone
5. don't have

## Frequently Confused

1. there
2. their
3. there
4. where
5. wear
6. were
7. it is
8. its

## Skill Application:

1. Prediction/  
Inferring
2. label/  
diagramming
3. drawing  
conclusion
4. cause and effect
5. sequence
6. opinion
7. fact
8. connotation
9. stems
10. categorization
11. prediction
12. characterization
13. summarizing