Georgia Performance Standards Framework for ELA Unit 2-8th Grade

Grade: 8
Topic: Sentence Combining
Instructional unit: Expository Text
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The task:
This conventions lesson is designed to move students from writing short, choppy sentences to more complex and mature sentences. One way to do that is to practice taking two simple sentences and combine them into one correct sentence (e.g., compound, complex, compound-complex). Upon review, students will see and be able to illustrate that there is more than one way to combine simple sentences.

For example:

Short/Choppy:
She was homesick. She was counting the days until summer camp was over.
Revised:
Because she was homesick, she was counting the days until summer camp was over.
She was homesick and counting the days before summer camp was over.
She was homesick, and she was counting the days before summer camp was over.

Short/Choppy:
Tara was early. Baxter was late.
Revised:
Tara was early, but Baxter was late.

Differentiation:
1. Provide students with a list of simple sentences and conjunctions. Students must add a comma and a conjunction to each simple sentence and expand the sentence into a compound and mature sentence. After students have expanded each of the simple sentences, the teacher will challenge them to find ways to combine simple sentences given into compound/complex sentences. This should be challenging.

2. Place several simple sentences and some sentence fragments (such as “Because she was homesick”) into a jar. Go around the room having each student draw a simple sentence from the jar and expanding them verbally into more detailed sentences. This assignment could be done in small groups as well, with each group being required to turn in a written list of their expanded sentences.

Focus Standard:
ELA8C1 The student demonstrates understanding and control of the rules of the English language, realizing that usage involves the appropriate application of conventions and grammar in both written and spoken formats. The student
b. Analyzes and uses simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences correctly, punctuates properly, and avoids fragments and run-ons.
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ELA8W4 The student consistently uses the writing process to develop, revise, and evaluate writing.

c. Edits writing to improve word choice, grammar, punctuation, etc.

Circumstances of the assignment/Notes to the Teachers:
This lesson can be used at any point in the pre-writing/writing process.