

*Book Review / Recension d'ouvrage*

**Teaching Grammar and Punctuation in the Twenty-First Century**

by Marion Terry

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This useful reference text developed primarily for teachers and professors in initial teacher preparation programs is logically organized to assist the reader to identify and learn about grammar and punctuation skills in order to be able to teach these skills to students. The overarching goal of grammar and punctuation skill acquisition is to support the development of student writing.

The resource is a comprehensive one that covers grammar skills including but not limited to the structure and purposes of complete sentences, distinguishing between action and non-action words, verb tenses, the use of adverbs, subject-verb agreement, and the use of modifiers including the comparative and superlative. In addition to the grammar skills, the resource also provides an overview of and instruction related to punctuation skills including end punctuation, capital letters, quotation marks, apostrophes, hyphens, commas, and colons. Logically divided into three parts according to education levels (Grades 4 to 6, Grades 7 to 9, and Grades 10 to 12), the author has identified grammatical and punctuation topics that are appropriate to the age of the learners. It may be inferred that these topics have been identified to reflect students' cognitive development and to

support their writing and provide instructional strategies to teach the skill at the three stages of introduction, acquisition, and enrichment.

Each section provides a general introduction, acquisition (which is divided into three stages), and finally enrichment strategies and activities. Following the instructional guidance provided to the reader, application activities are suggested that would offer students an opportunity to apply the skills taught. Many of the chapters contain reading passages that may be used to allow students to apply and refine their skills. In some cases, reference is made to an online supplement that contains additional reading passages for various chapters. Part teacher manual and part student workbook, this resource offers a practical approach to learning about and teaching grammatical and punctuation skills.

While the resources provide a thorough and incisive review of grammar and punctuation needed to help students write with accuracy and clarity, the resource's single focus on grammar and the presentation of the skills outlines might appear to advocate for the teaching of grammar in isolation. Many of the instructional strategies focus on sentences in isolation as examples or opportunities for application rather than incorporating the teaching of grammar and punctuation as an element in an integrated writing process.

It is helpful that the resource includes sample reading passages as application activities. Many of the topics chosen for sample reading passages for the application exercises focus on animals or nature. The lack of variety in passages could be seen as a missed opportunity to provide to new teachers a model that advocates for variety and a reflection of students' broad interests and lived experiences. In addition, the text samples all appear to have been developed for the application exercises. Authentic texts drawn from the interests of students and in formats in which they might naturally encounter them (email, text messages, online blogs) would provide to the readers (new teachers) a modelling of effective practice with respect to text selection. The author has endeavoured to modify the conventional terminology used to refer to grammar and punctuation conventions to suit the age level of students for which it is intended. In particular, Part 1 of the resource designed to teach grammar and punctuation to students in Grades 4 to 6 uses terms such as action and non-action words and do-er and be-er word pairs.

For both teacher candidates and faculty members in initial teacher preparation programs, *Teaching Grammar and Punctuation in the Twenty-First Century* is a practical guide to teaching grammar and punctuation that will support the development of student writing skills.