

“GRAMMAR: WHEN? WHY? HOW?”

Should grammar be taught? Yes! Correct usage helps children achieve their full potential. The question is, more specifically—when, why, and how—to teach it.

WHEN?

Experts disagree when grammar should be taught. My perception is that it needs to be introduced at first grade. Second grade and above require a solid understanding.

WHY?

My rationale for students learning grammar is two-fold. First, I believe that all children benefit from comprehending how their language works. My second reason is that children must speak standard grammar, the vernacular of both business and academic worlds.

Researchers emphasize that parents are their children’s first language teachers. Children learn usage—correct **or** incorrect—from their parents. This verbiage—**right or wrong—sounds *right*** to the family.

Many parents are unaware of this. During seminars to help parents assess their own usage, many have shared this insight: “We thought we spoke fine. **We had no idea our words were wrong; they sounded right to us.**”

HOW?

To teach grammar well, a program that provides learning in a systematic way is essential. This accentuates mastery learning. Sequential, cumulative, cyclical, and memorable learning are components of this process.

Sequential learning means that concepts have been analyzed to introduce the most basic “discreet skill” first. Students understand this skill before being introduced to the next-level one. This “building-block, escalator paradigm,” promotes learning.

Cumulative learning enhances mastery. Using this, students “review” concepts. New brain research reflects that this process of strengthening synapses embeds learning.

A third paradigm for mastery, cyclical learning, incorporates a pattern. Concepts are introduced—reviewed—applied—expanded throughout.

Memorable learning is another mastery strategy. We remember “90% of what we say while doing.” This is why kinesthetic and memorable experiences expedite learning. Just wait until your child exclaims, “Remember when you . . . to teach me . . .!”

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Dr. Wanda Phillips is author of *Easy Grammar* series, *Daily GRAMS* series, and *Easy Grammar Ultimate Series*. Her texts include mastery-learning strategies: sequential, cumulative, cyclical, and memorable learning.

Easy Grammar: Grades 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and *Plus teaching* texts. (*Plus* is recommended for 7th grade and college levels for strong basics.

Daily GRAMS for *Grades 3-7* and *Jr./Sr High* are **daily review** texts, set up cyclically, to enhance mastery.

Easy Grammar Ultimate Series: *Grades 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12+* are (180) 10-minute daily, teaching lessons, set up cyclically, to promote mastery learning.