



Gordon College  
Olongapo City  
College of Education, Arts, and Sciences



# **MODULE IN ENGLISH GRAMMAR**

Topic:

## **KERNELIZING SENTENCES AND EXPANDING KERNEL SENTENCES**

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## INTRODUCTION

In this module, students will learn about Kernel sentences, its function and expansion.



### PRE-TEST

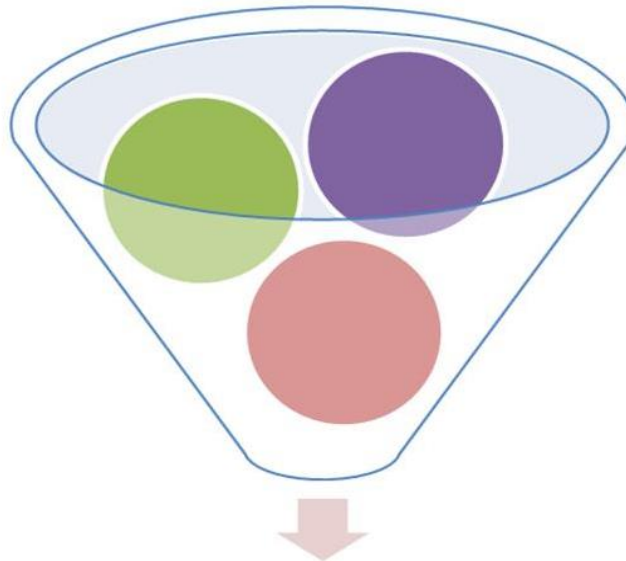
Tell whether the sentence is a Kernel sentence. Draw a 😊 if Kernel and ☹️ if otherwise.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. This is a black cow.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I want to go.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. His engine has stopped.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. The singer whom they picked was unattractive.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Jane does not like the color blue.



### PRE-ACTIVITY

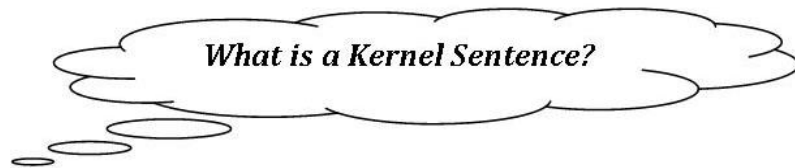
Write the simple sentences that could be formed from the sentence below. Complete the diagram by writing your answers inside the circle.



Kara and Rita were quarelling because Kara lost the concert ticket.

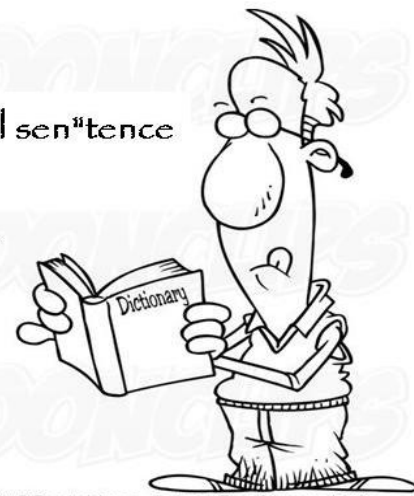


## DISCUSSION



kernel sen"tence

*a simple, active, declarative sentence containing no modifiers or connectives that may be used in making more elaborate sentences*



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### Terminology Guide

**Indicative Mode** - used to make factual statements or to pose questions

**Voice** - tells whether the subject of the verb is acted upon or is acting

**Polarity** - refers to the grammatical system associated with distinguishing between positive and negative clauses .

**Mood** - is the form a verb takes to show how it is to be regarded (e.g., as a fact, a command, a wish, an uncertainty).

### KERNEL SENTENCE

A **kernel sentence** does not contain any optional expression and is simple in the sense that it is unmarked in **mood**, therefore, it is **indicative**. It is also unmarked in **voice** therefore it is **active** rather than **passive**. And, finally, it is unmarked in **polarity** therefore it is a positive rather than a negative sentence. An example of a kernel sentence is 'The man opened the door,' and an example of a non-kernel sentence is 'The man did not open the door.'

That is, it is the simplest of sentences--the kernel of the language--, composed of a subject and a single verb and sometimes a direct object in the active voice and declarative mood. A *kernel sentence* is always affirmative.

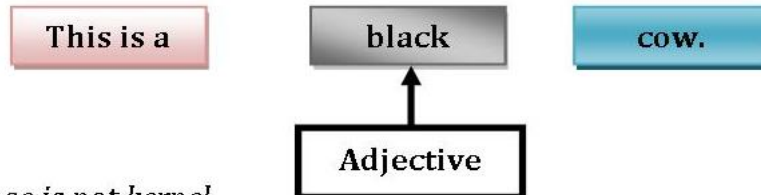
**Example: Mary cried.**

**Subject** + **Verb**



"Even a sentence with an **adjective**, **gerund** or **infinitive** is not a **kernel sentence**.

(i)



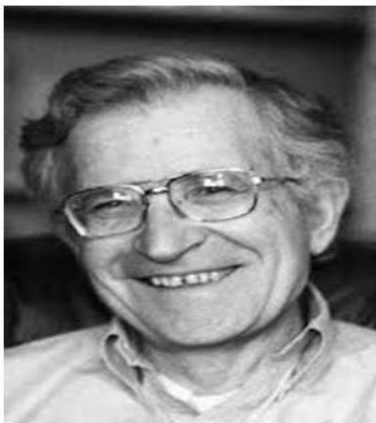
Therefore the sentence is not kernel.

This is a black cow is composed of two kernel sentences:

(1) This is a cow and (2) The cow is black.

(ii) **I saw them crossing the river** is made of *I saw them* and *They were crossing the river*.

(iii) **I want to go** is made of *I want* and *I go*.



## CHOMSKY ON KERNEL SENTENCES

"Every sentence of the language will either belong to the **kernel** or will be derived from the strings underlying one or more kernel sentences by a sequence of one or more transformations.

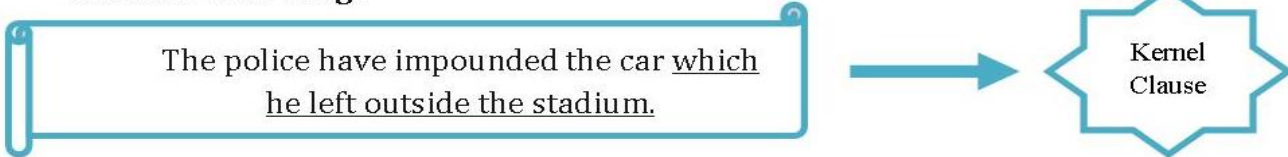
"In order to understand a sentence it is necessary to know the kernel sentences from which it originates (more precisely, the terminal strings underlying these kernel sentences) and the phrase structure of each of these elementary components, as well as the transformational history of development of the given sentence from those kernel sentences. The general problem of analyzing the process 'understanding' is thus reduced, in a sense, to the problem of explaining how kernel sentences are understood, these being considered the basic 'content elements' from which the usual, more complex sentences of real life are formed by transformational development."

## TRANSFORMATIONS

"A kernel clause which is both a sentence and a simple sentence, like *His engine has stopped* or *The police have impounded his car*, is a **kernel sentence**. Within this model the construction of any other sentence, or any other sentence that consists of **clauses**, will be reduced to that of kernel sentences wherever possible.



Thus the following:



**Transforms** of the sentence: *Have the police impounded the car which he left outside the stadium?* and so on.

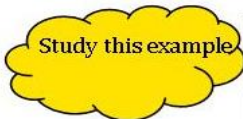
It is **not** a kernel sentence, as it is **not simple**. But the relative clause, which he left outside the stadium, is a **transform** of the kernel sentences *He left a car outside the stadium, He left the car outside the stadium, He left a bicycle outside the stadium*, and so on. When this modifying clause is set aside, the remainder of the main clause, The police have impounded the car, is itself a kernel sentence."

(P. H. Matthews, *Syntax*. Cambridge University Press, 1981)

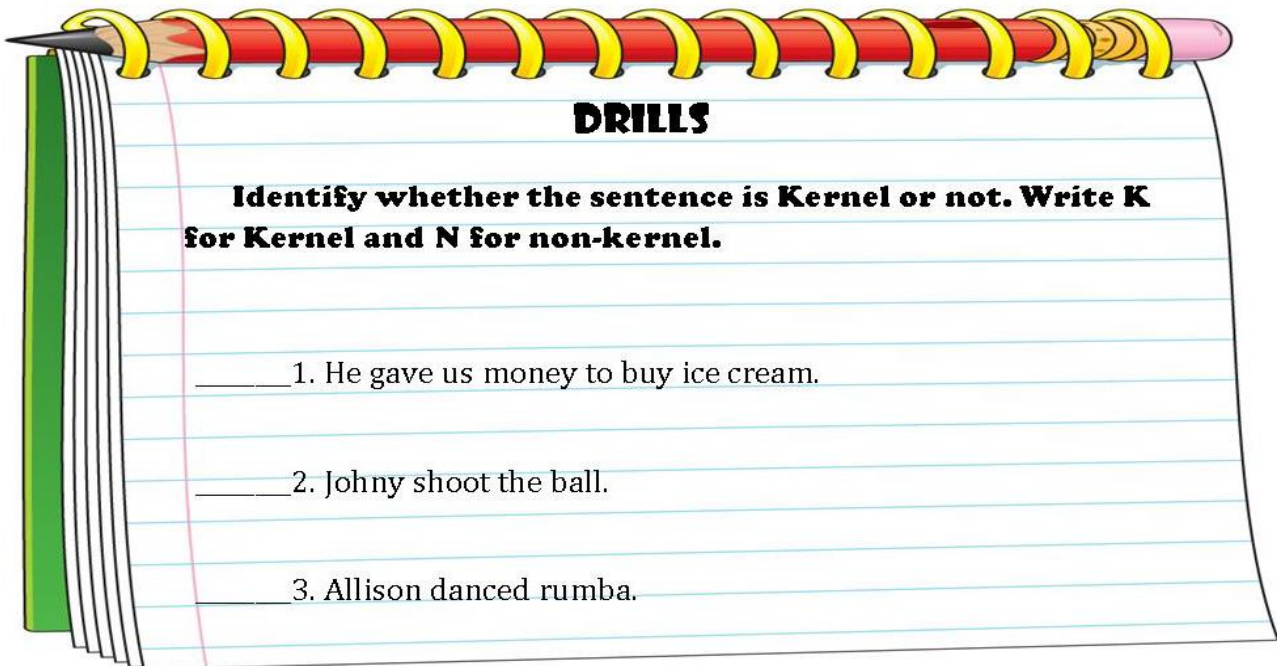
**KERNEL CLAUSES** are essentially the building blocks of a language's sentences. Other phrases or clauses, modifying words such as adjectives and adverbs can be added to kernel sentences. The mood can be changed and the negation of the sentence can also be effected.

Examples of sentences that are **not** kernel sentences:

1. *Yesterday*, Louise ate lunch *with friends and visited her favorite restaurant*. [ Added to *kernel sentence* are an adverb of time--*yesterday*, another verb--*visited*, prepositional phrases--*with friends, at her favorite restaurant*.]
2. The new shoes were chewed by the dog. [The voice is changed to passive since the subject is not the doer of the action.]
3. Jane does *not* like blue. [The sentence has been made negative]



Kernel sentence:	The <b>man investigated the noise.</b>
Then:	<p>The <b>tall, dark-haired</b> man investigated the <b>screeching</b> noise.</p> <p>The tall, dark-haired man <b>fearlessly</b> investigated the screeching noise.</p> <p>The tall, dark-haired man <b>from next door</b> fearlessly investigated the screeching noise.</p> <p>The tall, dark-haired man from next door, <b>who moved in yesterday</b>, fearlessly investigated the screeching noise <b>which was coming from the car.</b></p>



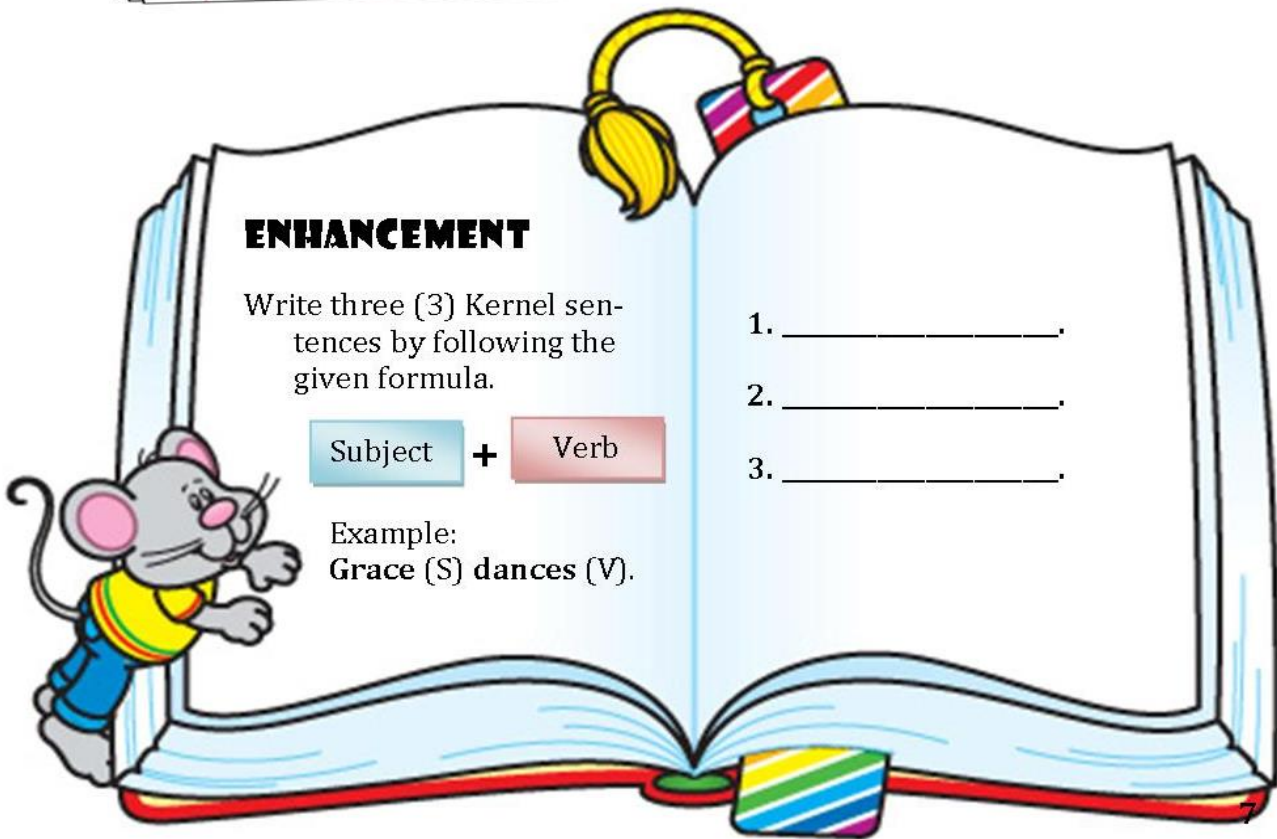
**DRILLS**

**Identify whether the sentence is Kernel or not. Write K for Kernel and N for non-kernel.**

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. He gave us money to buy ice cream.

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. Johnny shoot the ball.

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. Allison danced rumba.



**ENHANCEMENT**

Write three (3) Kernel sentences by following the given formula.

Subject + Verb

Example:  
Grace (S) dances (V).

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_



## ENHANCEMENT

**I. NOW**, try expanding your kernel sentence by adding adjective(s) to your noun. Then, identify its kernel sentences.

Adjective <sup>n</sup> + **S** + **V**

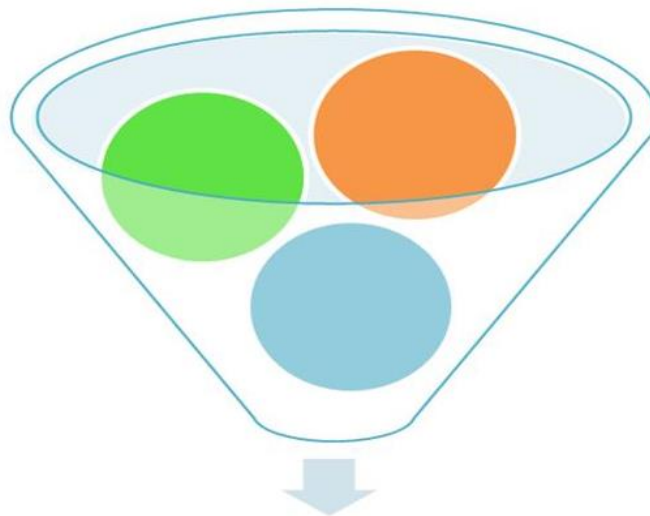
Example:  
 The **beautiful** (Adj) **girl** (S)  
**loves** (V) Math.

K1: The girl is beautiful.  
 K2: The girl loves Math.

1. \_\_\_\_\_.
2. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. \_\_\_\_\_.

## REINFORCEMENT

Complete the Graphic organizer below by Kernelizing the following sentences. Write the Kernel sentence component in the circle inside the funnel.



My brother read his story to Ella and she liked it then slept in the middle of the story.





## REINFORCEMENT


The following are non-kernel sentences. Find the Kernel Sentence and identify the sentence components which made it non-kernel.

1. Sue gave Mira the present last Tuesday.
2. She lives in a red house.
3. Hera is a pianist and a very talented performer.
4. Marie prepared the meal, a lavish feast with six courses.
5. Their staircase with spiral flight of steps, connects the two floors.

## MEANINGFUL ACTIVITY

Write a three (3) paragraph essay  
about your best summer experience.

Identify and write the Kernel sentences  
in your essay. Do this in a whole sheet  
of pad paper.



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## ANSWER KEY

### PRE-TEST

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

**K1:** Kara and Rita were quarrelling.

**K2:** Kara lost the ticket.

**K3:** It is a ticket for concert.

### DRILL

- N
- K
- K

### REINFORCEMENT

- K1:** My brother read his story.  
**K2:** Ella liked it.  
**K3:** Ella slept.
- K1:** Sue gave the present  
– the sentence is not kernel because of the Time Adverbial last Tuesday.
  - K1:** Hera is a pianist.  
**K2:** Hera is a performer  
**K3:** Hera is very talented  
– the sentence is not kernel because it has a lot of modifier
  - K1:** Marie prepared the meal.  
**K2:** The meal is a feast

### FOR ENHANCEMENT

Answers may vary.

### MEANINGFUL ACTIVITY

Answers may vary.

**K3:** The feast is lavish.

**K4:** The feast has six courses.

– the sentence is not kernel because it has a lot of modifier

4. **K1:** Their staircase connects two floors.  
**K2:** Their staircase has spiral flight of steps.

– the sentence is not kernel because it has a lot of modifier

5. **K1:** She lives.

**K2:** Her house is red.

– the sentence is not kernel because of the adjective red

## REFERENCES

Grammar and Composition 2

<http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/node/8704>

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