

TIPS FOR TEACHERS

ISSUE 8 – CAPITALIZATION



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READING MANIPULATIVES PRODUCT: Capitalization Skills Cards

LESSON/EXAMPLES

CAPITALIZATION A (FRONT/BACK)

PEOPLE – NAMES & INITIALS:			CAP-1A
Martha Washington	George W. Bush	Albert Einstein	J. K. Rowling
William Shakespeare	F. D. Roosevelt	Elvis Presley	Harry Potter
Names given to ANIMALS are also capitalized. – Snoopy (dog), Bugs Bunny (rabbit), Tweety (bird)			

Number a paper from 1–10. Find the names or initials in each sentence that need to be capitalized. Write them correctly on your paper.

- charles schultz based his charlie brown character on his own childhood.
- An Indian named javier pereira from Columbia, South America, died in 1955 at the age of 166.
- samuel d. riddle left nearly \$4 million in his will to maintain the grave of his racehorse, man o' war.
- president william h. harrison caught cold on his inauguration day and died 30 days later.
- When bugs bunny first appeared in 1935, he was called happy rabbit.

10 SENTENCES

6. sigmund freud and his children collected n

7. barbie and ken dolls were named after the

8. In July 1940, john v. sigmund swam for 89 hours, going 292 miles down the Mississippi River.

9. lucille ball and desi arnez starred in one of the most popular television series ever, *I Love Lucy*.

10. j. k. rowling tells about the adventures of harry potter, ron weasley, and hermione granger.

Write all words from the following paragraph that need capital letters on your paper. Be on the lookout for people's names and initials. Check your work.

laurie and rob roberts were rafting on the Colorado River with their Labrador retrievers. bo was full-grown and dutchess was a puppy. the swift current flipped the raft. laurie and bo were trapped under it. finally, bo was able to escape. he dove back under the raft and pulled laurie out by her hair. she then grabbed on to bo's tail and let him pull her to shore.

Write 3 sentences that contain names and initials of people.

PARAGRAPH

18 LESSON CARDS

ALL CARDS CONTAIN INTERESTING FACTS

Complete card sets and charts review and drill all capitalization/punctuation rules.

There are 18 double-sided cards per capitalization level. Each starts by summarizing a category of words that are capitalized. Students must find the words needing capitals in the 10 sentences and write them correctly on a sheet of paper. The final lesson activity is a paragraph to correct. In level A, the words needing to be capitalized are either examples of the card topic or the first word in the sentence. In level B, no words in the paragraph will be capitalized, so all rules must be considered.

Punctuation cards also begin with a usage summary and examples. Level A contains 18 double-sided cards and covers end-of-sentence punctuation, periods, apostrophes, commas, quotation marks, and colons. Level B has 24 double-sided cards that include all of the above, plus hyphens, semicolons, and parentheses. All capitalization cards must be completed prior to starting punctuation cards. There are no capitals on these cards. Students correct the capitalization, as well as adding punctuation (related to card topic). Level A contains 10 sentences. Level B has 10 sentences followed by a paragraph.

Readable, accordion-style wall charts summarize all of the capitalization and punctuation rules. There are 24 panels for capitalization rules and 34 for punctuation rules. Posting these charts helps students to remember the rules and demonstrates that these are valued, expected skills.

An exceptional feature of these sets is that sentences and paragraphs are nonfiction. The facts and trivia make the activity more interesting.

CAPITALIZATION/PUNCTUATION A	380	\$40
CAPITALIZATION/PUNCTUATION B	385	\$45
CAPITALIZATION/PUNCT. CHARTS	386	\$35

SKILL OVERVIEW: Review and practice all capitalization rules

Written communication, even for the most skilled authors, is a complex, constant quest. Rules are abundant and intricate. Inconsistencies are commonplace, and disagreements about correct usage exist. The following page has some of these.

Students have been taught capitalization and punctuation rules since early grades, yet they tend to be careless in their application, or they do not fully understand all aspects of the rules. Often instruction is so random that skills are not solidified. Additionally, students forget the rules in time due to inadequate review or practice.

The student reference sheet at the end of this TIPS issue summarizes capitalization rules. Review all rules early in the school year. Then give each student a copy of this sheet to refer to when writing. By doing this, you are validating the importance of these rules and setting expectation standards.

RULE INCONSISTENCIES: Capitalization

English usage is constantly changing since there are multiple approaches for handling grammar and mechanics. The following are a few of the instances in which inconsistencies exist.

1. Some sources say to capitalize president and vice president (of the United States) to show respect, even when they are not used as a title before the name. This adds a dimension of confusion. Why should we capitalize president to show respect and not queen? Reading Manipulatives materials capitalize titles only if used before a person's name.
2. Sahara desert, Atacama Desert. If you look on a map, Sahara, rather than than Sahara Desert is the name listed. That is why desert is not capitalized. If proper nouns are always said as compounds, every word is capitalized.
3. African American, black. Most sources use African American without a hyphen as a noun and with a hyphen as an adjective. Most sources also use black as a noun or adjective without capitalization. However, there is inconsistency among sources on both the hyphen and the capital on black.
4. Categories vs. proper nouns. Since Reading Manipulatives skills cards are nonfiction, they contain many category or general names (gin rummy, pope, peregrine falcon). Students often want to capitalize these. If this is an issue in your classroom, a few lessons on this concept are advisable. Encourage students to look up category names in dictionaries to verify that they are not capitalized.

MAKING MATERIALS: Capitalization cards

Sets of skills cards develop skills holistically with written activities. These comprehensive sets assure that students are taught needed skills, particularly those related to written communication, and afforded adequate practice. They are a worthwhile type of instructional material to utilize when multiple concepts need to be introduced or reviewed, repetition is needed, or extensive examples are necessary. Try replacing the copies used in your instructional program with laminated skills cards. You can use them for years, and they are always available when additional reinforcement is needed.

Reading Manipulatives has ready-made, writing-improvement skills cards. Teachers can compose cards, but this is both tedious and time consuming. Another option is to turn worthwhile published materials into sets of reusable skills cards. This can be done by cutting up two booklets (two are needed since both sides of pages are used) and mounting the activities on cards. Use both the front and back of the cards since they should be laminated prior to use.

There are definite benefits to using skills cards rather than worksheets or workbooks. Once the cards have been prepared and laminated, they can be used indefinitely. If students need review, completed cards can be repeated. Reusable cards reduce repetitive lesson preparation.

Construction steps:

1. Use 5 x 8 index cards. If creating lessons on a computer, use 8.5 x 11 card stock, divided in two.
2. Use both sides of the cards since both front and back should be laminated.
3. Compose the cards or mount commercial workbook or worksheet activities on the cards.
4. Begin each card with a nonsequential lesson. Students will not be doing cards in any particular order. Cards should be a similar level and should not build on one another.
5. Make the format consistent so students can work independently. Whenever possible, make answer keys. Students should check their own work since it helps them and you.
6. Cards must be coded in some way in order for students to keep track of their progress through the set.
7. Create a checklist to record the completed sets.

Capitalization

FIRST WORD of SENTENCE

The first word begins with a capital.
Will you always remember this?

NAMES & INITIALS

Elvis Presley John F. Kennedy
W. Shakespeare George W. Bush

I (pronoun)

Bob and I have the same birthday.

TITLES before name

President Lincoln King Arthur
Dr. Bunker Mr. Rogers

GROUPS & ORGANIZATIONS

Boy Scouts Denver Broncos
the Beatles Republican Party

NATIONALITIES, RACIAL, RELIGIOUS

American Latino Protestant
French Asian Jew

FATHER, MOTHER, RELATIVES

When used in place of name. Do not capitalize if modifying word used (the, a, my, our, his, ...)

I like going to **G**randma's house.
I went with *my father* to the show.

CITIES, STATES, NATIONS

Las Vegas Tokyo Europe
California Georgia Canada

GEOGRAPHIC NAMES

Mississippi River Pacific Ocean
Rocky Mountains Mt. Rushmore
North America Africa

SPECIAL PLACES & BUILDINGS

North High School Grand Canyon
St. John's Church Park Central Mall

STREETS & ADDRESSES

Broadway Central Avenue
35 North Pebble Way

REGIONS

Tobacco is grown in the **S**outh.
The **S**outhwest has many deserts.
NOT adjectives or compass directions
We drove **s**outh to get to Texas.
Yuma is in **w**estern Arizona.

DAYS, SPECIAL DAYS, HOLIDAYS

Monday Saturday
Halloween April Fool's Day
Labor Day Fourth of July

STORES, COMPANIES, BRANDS

Safeway Ford Expedition
Target Nabisco Oreo

RELIGIONS, WORDS for GOD

Christianity Judaism Islam
Holy Spirit Jehovah Allah

BOOKS, MAGAZINES, NEWSPAPERS

Minor words (the, a, an, of) are not capitalized unless the first word of title.

*Where the **R**ed **F**ern **G**rows*
Wall Street Journal Newsweek

POETRY—FIRST WORD of line

I think that I shall never see
A poem as lovely as a tree.