

SUPPLEMENTAL LANGUAGE LESSON: VERB TENSES

3rd Grade Literature

TEACHING POINT

Writers use specific verb tenses to show time and highlight if something happened in the past, present, or future. Understanding verb tenses helps a reader know when a story took place.

STANDARDS

CURRENT STANDARDS

Language Standards

- **L.3.1.d** — Form and use regular and irregular verbs.

KEY UNDERSTANDINGS

- Verbs tell time (past, present, or future). They tell when an action took place, takes place, or will take place.
- The most common way to show that an action is in the past tense is to add “-ed” to the end of the verb.
- To show that an action is in the future, a writer most often says that the action “will happen.”

ENGAGING WITH THE TEACHING POINT

NOTICE:

Read the following sentence from the text and then prompt students with the question, “What do you notice?” If needed, prompt, “What verbs does the author use? How do they help a reader visualize the action? When does the action in this sentence take place? How do you know?”

- The ant climbed up one leg of the unsuspecting goat and bit him hard -- so hard that the goat leaped up and down and finally left the vegetable garden to return to the hills and mountains.

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

Read the following pair of sentences, and then prompt students with the questions, “How are these sentences alike and different?” and “How does changing the verb change the meaning of the sentence?”

- The ant climbs up one leg of the unsuspecting goat and bites him hard -- so hard that the goat leaps up and down and finally leaves the vegetable garden to return to the hills and mountains.
- The ant will climb up one leg of the unsuspecting goat and will bite him hard -- so hard that the goat will leap up and down and finally will leave the vegetable garden to return to the hills and mountains.

PRACTICE:

Have students identify the verb tense of the following sentence and then rewrite the sentence into two new versions using the tenses not written by the author.

- But since it was such an awfully heavy load for her basket, the ant carried one grain up to the anthill, while the girl helped her by carrying the other.

EXTEND:

During Target Task writing, circulate to prompt students on the verb tense they are using. Ask, "Which tense are you writing in?" Students will not master using correct tenses in this particular lesson. During Target Task writing for the remainder of the unit continue to circulate and provide feedback on the correct use of verb tenses.