



The Minnesota Literacy Council created this curriculum. We invite you to adapt it for your own classrooms.

Advanced Level (CASAS reading scores of 221-235)

Education Issues: Week 2 of 2

Unit Overview

This is a 2-week unit in which learners explore some controversial issues surrounding educational themes prevalent in the United States. Learners practice interpreting data and statistics, debating educational issues, and using evidence to support a stance. They use the modal “should” to give an opinion or to express that something is wrong. In addition, learners will practice using the present perfect progressive.

Focus of Week 2

- **Reading an article on the possible benefits and risks of extending the school day for middle school students.**
- **Reading, writing, and speaking academic vocabulary in a variety of forms, or parts of speech.**
- **Debating the issue of extending the school day with an assigned stance.**
- **Writing a short essay using evidence.**
- **Using the present perfect progressive.**

Education Issues Unit: Week 2, Monday

<p>Objectives <i>Learners will be able to...</i></p> <p>Literacy: read an article on the possible benefits and risks of extending the school day.</p> <p>Listening/speaking: pronounce academic vocabulary, understanding that with many, if different syllables are stressed, the words have different functions.</p> <p>Transition & Critical Thinking: use dictionaries to infer words of similar connotation but different parts of speech from those on their Focus Word list.</p> <p>Grammar: determine when to use each form of Focus Word (e.g. verb, noun, adj., etc.).</p>	<p>Materials</p> <p>Make Student Copies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Handout: Strategic Education Research Partnership (SERP): Word Generation, Unit 3.11, pp. 61, 62 (copy back to back to save paper) <p>Make Single Copies or Reference</p> <p>Props, Technology, or Other Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A projector; a set of dictionaries
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Lesson Plan

Warm up for today's Lesson

Description: Small Group Word Webs for SCHOOL DAYS

Materials/Prep: None

Activity 1: Listening/Speaking

Description: Read through the Focus Words as learners chorally repeat, stressing the stressed syllables of multisyllabic words.

Materials/Prep: Handout: **SERP: Word Generation, Unit 3.11, p. 61**

Activity 2: Literacy

Description: Read the passage, "Is an Extended School Day the Right Choice for Middle School Students?"

Materials/Prep: Handout: **SERP: Word Generation, Unit 3.11, p. 61 (same page)**

Activity 3: Grammar, Literacy & Critical Thinking

Description: Fill in the Forms/Examples/Notes sheet in pairs or small groups.

Materials/Prep: Handout: **SERP: Word Generation, Unit 3.11, p. 62**; American English student dictionaries

Activity 4: Checking for Understanding

Description: Volunteers share example sentences containing forms of the Focus Words with the whole class.

Materials/Prep: a projector

Teacher Directions: Warm up: Word Webs

Learners get into small groups and create word webs for the noun phrase SCHOOL DAYS, writing down the first words that they associate with the phrase. After about 5 min, a representative from each small group shares out with the whole class. Learners may offer such words as “bus,” “books,” or “teachers.” Words that are applicable to school days are suitable for the word web. Inform learners that they will be learning about the traditional length and number of school days in the United States and why many people are advocating for extending the school day.



Teacher Directions: Activity 1: Listening/speaking –Materials: Handout: SERP: Word Generation, Unit 3.11, p. 61; highlighters (optional)

Join the national conversation!

IS AN EXTENDED SCHOOL DAY THE RIGHT CHOICE FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS?

Word Generation - Unit 3.11

Focus Words
extend | radical | crucial | attain | initiative

WEEKLY PASSAGE

Marisa Green knew sixth grade was not going to be easy. On the first day of class, Principal Hedges told the students of a **radical** change to their schedule. The school day was going to be **extended** until 5:00. Students would even have to attend classes on some Saturdays.

Principal Hedges explained that other countries such as Germany, Singapore and Japan have up to 280 days in a school year. Most American students attend school only 180 days a year. Test scores suggest that 180 days may not be enough. In 2006, fifteen-year-olds from the U.S. scored lower on an international math test than students in 23 other developed countries. Principal Hedges said U.S. schools need to improve if Americans want to compete in the

such as art or music. People who support an extended school day believe it is **crucial** for students who need extra time to **attain** grade-level reading and math skills.

Some people think extending the school day is insufficient to improve student achievement. They argue that just adding hours will not make a difference to student attainment in reading, math, and science. They point out that teachers will need more time to prepare lessons for the extended day. Teachers may need more materials for the lessons as well. Also, extended days do not guarantee that the teachers who are hired to teach are teaching subjects they know best. For example, some schools don't have enough math teachers. In those schools,

*Note: The parts of speech for each Focus Word are as they appear within the text. Inform learners that some vocabulary can have different parts of speech if stressed differently. **Unfortunately, stressing the wrong syllable is often cause for misunderstandings.***

Step 1: Context

Read through the Focus Words one-by-one, pointing out the stressed syllable of each multisyllabic word. (Pronunciation guides from www.learnersdictionary.com)

1. **extend** (v.) /ɪk'stend/
2. **radical** (adj.) /'rædɪkəl/
3. **crucial** (adj.) /'kru:ʃəl/
4. **attain** (v.) /ə'teɪn/
5. **initiative** (n.) /ɪ'nɪʃətɪv/

Step 2: Guided Practice

Learners chorally repeat after instructor, clapping on stressed syllable or tapping a table/thigh. Learners denote which syllable is stressed by placing a mark above the letters on their handout or by highlighting the stressed sounds/syllable with highlighters (as demonstrated within the plan).

Step 3: Partner Practice

Learners pair up and take turns reading the Focus Words to one another. Learners may give each other feedback on whether or not the correct syllable is being stressed. If pronunciation/stress is in question, call upon the instructor for guidance. This should take no more than a few minutes.

Teacher Directions: Activity 2: Literacy –Materials: Handout: SERP: Word Generation, Unit 3.11, p. 61 (continuing with the same handout)

The handout is titled "IS AN EXTENDED SCHOOL DAY THE RIGHT CHOICE FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS?" and is part of "Word Generation - Unit 3.11". It includes a "Focus Words" section with the words: extend | radical | crucial | attain | initiative. Below this is a "WEEKLY PASSAGE" with two columns of text. The left column discusses Principal Hedges' perspective on extended school days, mentioning that in countries like Germany, Singapore, and Japan, students attend school for 280 days a year. The right column discusses the benefits of extended school days, such as extra time for reading and math skills, and mentions that some schools don't have enough math teachers.

Step 1: Independent or Pair Reading

Learners independently or pair read through the passage “Is an Extended School Day the Right Choice for Middle School Students?” and should be encouraged to question the text as they read. Since they are reading reproducible documents, they should take advantage of the opportunity to write in the margins and to highlight or underline confusing vocabulary. Learners should strive for fluency at this point and attempt to use context clues instead of their dictionaries as much as possible.

Step 2: Guided Reading

Listen to the instructor read the passage aloud while following along to the text.

Before reading, inform learners to:

- 1) Follow the text, not your face--no matter how animated, concerned, etc. you might be!
- 2) Listen closely for the pronunciation of words they highlighted or underlined.
- 3) If they questioned the text, did the second reading help to answer any or did some new questions arise?

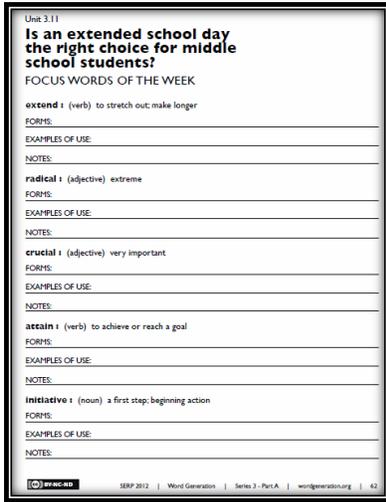
Note: Step 2 is a literacy activity and not a pronunciation exercise. For this reason, learners need to follow the text and not the instructor. You can explain to learners that they may grow in their appreciation for literature by listening to a passage, but they will not improve their reading or spelling skills by simply listening.

Step 3: Class Discussion

Discuss the text. Draw the answers to the following questions out of the learners; DO NOT tell the answers to the learners!

- What was the main idea?
- What vocabulary was so confusing that it hindered, or blocked, comprehension of a large part of the text? Were there any context clues or parts of the words themselves that could have helped in understanding?
- What's the author's attitude toward an extended school day? Was the author neutral? How do you know?

Teacher Directions: Activity 3: Grammar, Literacy, & Critical Thinking –Materials:
SERP: Word Generation, Unit 3.11, p. 62; American English student dictionaries; a projector



Step 1: Instructor Demonstration

Place a copy of the FOCUS WORDS OF THE WEEK Handout on a projector and demonstrate “extend” for learners. Be very explicit in your instructions and show learners what each line of the worksheet represents (i.e. possible parts of speech and examples of usage in sentences).

Step 2: Pair Work

Learners partner up and work together to find the Focus Words in classroom dictionaries. Learners may also use electronic dictionaries, but must be familiar with how the parts of speech are denoted on their personal devices. The Internet via classroom computers is another option. Check with the site coordinator for recommended and up-to-date learner dictionary sites.

If learners copy an example sentence from the dictionary, encourage them to add one of their own as well.

Teacher Directions: Activity 4: Checking for Understanding

Volunteers approach the projector and share one or two of their example sentences with the class as the instructor facilitates corrections.

Remind learners as they work, if the term doesn't have the root word, it isn't a form of the word. If they are only finding a prefix or suffix, but not the root, it is a different word. The first step in identifying forms is to be aware of the roots, or base forms. For example, if "initiate" is the root, then every form of the word must contain "initiate," not only "in-" or "-tive."

Join the national conversation!

IS AN EXTENDED SCHOOL DAY THE RIGHT CHOICE FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS?

Word Generation - Unit 3.1.1

Focus Words

extend | radical | crucial | attain | initiative



WEEKLY PASSAGE

Marisa Green knew sixth grade was not going to be easy. On the first day of class, Principal Hedges told the students of a **radical** change to their schedule. The school day was going to be **extended** until 5:00. Students would even have to attend classes on some Saturdays.

Principal Hedges explained that other countries such as Germany, Singapore and Japan have up to 280 days in a school year. Most American students attend school only 180 days a year. Test scores suggest that 180 days may not be enough. In 2006, fifteen-year-olds from the U.S. scored lower on an international math test than students in 23 other developed countries. Principal Hedges said U.S. schools need to improve if Americans want to compete in the global economy.

The late Senator Edward Kennedy also supported extending the school day. He proposed an **initiative** that is being tested in Massachusetts. Schools that are part of this initiative have added two extra hours to every school day. In some schools, students spend the extra time on Mondays through Thursdays focusing on academics. They use the extra hours on Fridays for enrichment activities,

such as art or music. People who support an extended school day believe it is **crucial** for students who need extra time to **attain** grade-level reading and math skills.

Some people think extending the school day is insufficient to improve student achievement. They argue that just adding hours will not make a difference to student attainment in reading, math, and science. They point out that teachers will need more time to prepare lessons for the extended day. Teachers may need more materials for the lessons as well. Also, extended days do not guarantee that the teachers who are hired to teach are teaching subjects they know best. For example, some schools don't have enough math teachers. In those schools, English teachers may have to teach material they have not been trained to teach. Many people argue that we need to focus on improving school quality, rather than just extending the day.

What is your opinion? Should schools extend the school day to improve student academic attainment?

Unit 3.11

Is an extended school day the right choice for middle school students?

FOCUS WORDS OF THE WEEK

extend : (verb) to stretch out; make longer

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

radical : (adjective) extreme

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

crucial : (adjective) very important

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

attain : (verb) to achieve or reach a goal

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

initiative : (noun) a first step; beginning action

FORMS:

EXAMPLES OF USE:

NOTES:

Education Issues Unit: Week 2, Tuesday

Objectives <i>Learners will be able to...</i>	Materials
<p>Literacy: read data about extended school days and extended academic years.</p> <p>Listening/speaking: critically discuss...“Which kind of initiative would win more support from parents?” and, “Which one would do a better job of helping students attain excellence?”</p> <p>Listening/speaking: dictate sentences to a classmate and listen in order to write comprehensive sentences. Use memory and logic to orally express sentences on the topic of an extended school day.</p> <p>Transitions & Critical Thinking: provide evidence to support whether or not a long summer vacation is crucial for middle school students.</p> <p>Grammar: use the present perfect continuous.</p>	<p>Make Student Copies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handout: SERP: Word Generation, p. 63 • Textbook: Grammar in Use Intermediate, p. 18 • Handout: Memory Cards (one set per 3-4 players) <p>Make Single Copies or Reference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handout: Extended School Day Walking Dictation (single sheet can be cut into strips and posted in hall) • Handout: Find Your Match Cards (one set per class) <p>Props, Technology, or Other Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a projector

Lesson Plan

Warm up for today’s Lesson (Review of vocabulary)

Description: Find Your Match or Memory (Dependent on class size—Find Your Match is suitable for 9-12 learners; whereas Memory is suitable for smaller classes of 4-8.)

Materials/Prep: Handout: **Find Your Match/Memory Cards**

Activity 1: Grammar

Description: Introduce the present perfect continuous.

Materials/Prep: Textbook: **Grammar in Use Intermediate, p. 18**

Activity 2: Literacy, Listening/speaking & Critical Thinking

Description: Read “Problem of the Week” and address the Discussion Question.

Materials/Prep: Handout: **SERP: Word Generation, p. 63; a projector**

Activity 3: Listening/speaking & Literacy

Description: Complete a walking sentence dictation.

Materials/Prep: Handout: **Extended School Day Walking Dictation**

Activity 4: Grammar/Checking for Understanding

Description: Correct sentence dictation at the board with learner volunteers completing sentences that were dictated to them. Identify any sentences that contain the present perfect continuous.

Materials/Prep: **None**

Teacher Directions: Warm up: Find Your Match Cards/Memory

extend (v)	To stretch out or make longer
radical (adj)	Extreme
crucial (adj)	Very important
attain (v)	To achieve or reach a goal
initiative (n)	A first step; beginning action

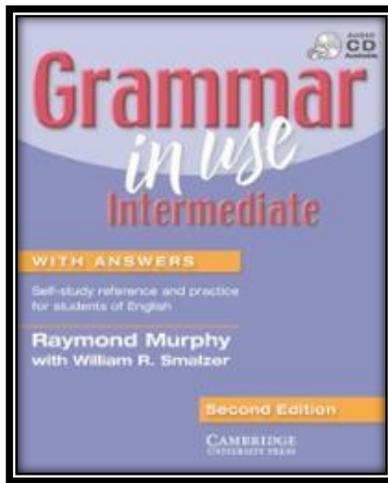
Nikki Carson-Padilla, Minnesota Literacy Council, 2014 p. 14 Advanced Education Issues Unit

If the class consists of at least 10 learners, consider playing the **Find Your Match** version of the warm-up by giving the first 10 people to walk into the room a card with either a Focus Word or a definition on it. If there are an odd number of learners, the instructor will have to participate. Ask the learners to circulate the room and mingle until they find their matches and to stay together once they've found one another. As other learners enter the room, ask them to assist those who are having trouble finding their matches. Have pairs report out to the whole class, so everyone can determine whether the matches are accurate or not. ***What were the key words in the definition that told the two people they were a match?***

If the class consists of fewer than 10 learners, consider playing the **Memory** version of the warm-up by making one or two sets of the cards to be placed face down on a table in two rows of five. Learners take turns turning over two cards at a time, being careful to keep them in the exact same position and making sure all players have an opportunity to view the two cards before turning them back over. If a learner turns over a Focus Word and its definition, he/she can take the pair. The learner with the most pairs wins!

Note: You may also play this version with a larger class, but it will require more prep, because every 3-4 learners must have a set of cards.

Teacher Directions: Activity 1: Grammar –Materials: Textbook: *Grammar in Use Intermediate, p. 18*



Step 1: Context

Explain to learners that they will be studying when to use the present perfect continuous. The structure is:

have/has + past participle of “to be” (been) + present participle (base verb + ing ending)

The present perfect continuous is also known as the present perfect progressive. It is used when we want to explain an action that started in the past, but continues or continued over a period of time. Usually, the action is still occurring or just recently ended.

That is the purpose and scope of today’s grammar lesson. Learners will develop mastery of production throughout the week.

Step 2: Read & Discuss

As a whole class, volunteers read aloud information and examples from Sections A, B, and C of p. 18. Further discuss and provide additional examples as appropriate. For example, learners may have questions about the difference between the present perfect continuous and the simple past. Section C of the text on p. 18 does an excellent job of showing the difference between present continuous and the present *perfect* continuous, but there is no comparison/contrast between simple past and present perfect continuous.

Teacher Directions: Activity 2: Literacy, Listening/speaking & Critical Thinking-

Materials: SERP: Word Generation, Unit 3.11, p. 63; a projector

Unit 3.11

Is an extended school day the right choice for middle school students?

PROBLEM OF THE WEEK

Option 1: Senator Edward ("Ted") Kennedy thought it was crucial for Massachusetts schools to improve. He thought it would take radical change to attain that goal. He started an initiative to extend the school day.

Most American students now go to school for 180 six-hour days. How many total hours is this?

A) 1080
B) 680
C) 6080
D) 186

Option 2: Senator Kennedy's initiative to extend the school day proposed increasing each student's school time by 30% - a radical increase. Sadly, Senator Kennedy died in 2009. He was unable to attain his goal while he was in office.

If each 6-hour school day was extended, each day would be how many hours?

If the 180-day school year was extended, each year would be how many days?

Discussion Question: Which kind of extended school time would be a more radical change, more hours each day, or more days each year? Which kind of initiative would win more support from parents? Which one would do a better job of helping students attain excellence? Some students think it's crucial to have a long summer vacation. Do you agree?

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Step 1: Context

Volunteer learners read the Option 1 and Option 2 paragraphs and statistics aloud as the whole class follows along. Check for comprehension by asking individual learners to re-explain, or rephrase, to the class. The questions for learners to answer are: If there are 180 school days and each is a six-hour day, how many total hours of instructional time is this? And, if we increased everything by 30%, a 6-hr day would be... and a 180 day academic year would be... how many hours and days?

Step 2: Think-Pair-Share

Learners think about their responses, then pair up and share their ideas about both options, then report out to the whole class.

Step 3: Whole Class Discussion

A volunteer reads the Discussion Question aloud. Hold a class discussion to address, "Which kind of extended school time would be a more radical change, more hours each day, or more days each year?" Learners must have support, or evidence, for their choice. They must also address, "Which kind of initiative would win more support from parents?" and finally, "Some students think it's crucial to have a long summer vacation. Do you agree?" The whole class discussion could take some time as it is multi-faceted. Take no more than 20 minutes to engage the class in this discussion, so there is sufficient time for the Walking Dictation activity.

Teacher Directions: Activity 3: Grammar, Literacy & Listening/speaking –

Materials: Handout: **Extended School Day Walking Dictation**

Extended School Day Walking Dictation
(round 1)
Students in Germany and Japan have up to 280 school days per year.
American children have been traditionally spending 180 days per year in school.
Extending the school day may help prepare Americans to compete in the global economy.
Some schools in Massachusetts have been adding two hours to every school day.
Some schools spend extra time focusing on academics.

Round 1

Extended School Day Walking Dictation
(round 2)
In some schools, teachers have been teaching subjects they have not been trained to teach.
Some teachers need to prepare more lessons and materials for an extended day.
Some people believe an extended day is crucial for students to attain grade-level reading and math skills.
Many people argue improving school quality is more important than extending the day.
In some schools students have been attending classes on Saturdays.

Round 2

Step 1: Walking Dictation

Review extended school day content with a special walking dictation. If an odd number of learners, the teacher will need to pair up with someone. First, tape sentences in the hallway just outside of the classroom. Explain to the learners that one learner from each pair will need to leave the room, memorize (not write down!) individual sentences, return and dictate each to his/her partner. Learners may return to the posted sentences as frequently as necessary, but as few times as possible, is the goal. When all 5 have been completed, change the sentences for 5 new ones. Writers become walking dictators and the former dictators take a seat to write the newly posted sentences.

Step 2: Facilitated Corrections/Checking for Understanding

Ask one person from each pair to write one of the completed sentences on the board as the teacher facilitates corrections in a whole class discussion format. Discuss whether any sentences contain the present perfect continuous.

Find Your Match/Memory Cards

extend (v)	To stretch out or make longer
radical (adj)	Extreme
crucial (adj)	Very important
attain (v)	To achieve or reach a goal
initiative (n)	A first step; beginning action

Is an extended school day the right choice for middle school students?



PROBLEM OF THE WEEK

Option 1: Senator Edward (“Ted”) Kennedy thought it was **crucial** for Massachusetts schools to improve. He thought it would take **radical** change to **attain** that goal. He started an **initiative** to **extend** the school day.

Most American students now go to school for 180 six-hour days. How many total hours is this?

- A) 1080
- B) 680
- C) 6080
- D) 186

Option 2: Senator Kennedy’s **initiative** to **extend** the school day proposed increasing each student’s school time by 30% - a **radical** increase. Sadly, Senator Kennedy died in 2009. He was unable to **attain** his goal while he was in office.

If each 6-hour school day was extended, each day would be how many hours?

If the 180-day school year was extended, each year would be how many days?

Discussion Question: Which kind of **extended** school time would be a more **radical** change, more hours each day, or more days each year? Which kind of **initiative** would win more support from parents? Which one would do a better job of helping students **attain** excellence? Some students think it’s **crucial** to have a long summer vacation. Do you agree?

Extended School Day Walking Dictation

(round 1)

Students in Germany and Japan have up to 280 school days per year.

American children have been traditionally spending 180 days per year in school.

Extending the school day may help prepare Americans to compete in the global economy.

Some schools in Massachusetts have been adding two hours to every school day.

Some schools spend extra time focusing on academics.

Extended School Day Walking Dictation

(round 2)

In some schools, teachers have been teaching subjects they have not been trained to teach.

Some teachers need to prepare more lessons and materials for an extended day.

Some people believe an extended day is crucial for students to attain grade-level reading and math skills.

Many people argue improving school quality is more important than extending the day.

In some schools students have been attending classes on Saturdays.

Education Issues Unit: Week 2, Wednesday

Objectives <i>Learners will be able to...</i>	Materials
<p>Literacy: read a stance on extended school days and write 2-3 pieces of evidence in support of that stance.</p> <p>Literacy:</p> <p>Listening/speaking: converse in a timed setting using and addressing Focus Words as appropriate.</p> <p>Listening/speaking: orally share a stance drawn and the evidence determined to support the stance with the entire class.</p> <p>Transitions & Critical Thinking: provide evidence for a stance even if it is not of their personal opinion.</p> <p>Grammar: use the present perfect continuous.</p>	<p>Make Student Copies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handout: SERP: Word Generation, Unit 3.11, p. 64 • Textbook: Grammar in Use Intermediate, p. 19 <p>Make Single Copies or Reference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handout: SERP: “Debating the Issue,” Word Generation, p. 65 • Handout: Conversation Line Prompts <p>Props, Technology, or Other Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A projector

Lesson Plan

Warm up for today’s Lesson

Description: Conversation Line

Materials/Prep: Handout: **Conversation Line Prompts**

Activity 1: Literacy, Listening/speaking & Critical Thinking

Description: “Debating the Issue”

Materials/Prep: Handout: **SERP: Word Generation, Unit 3.11, p. 65**

Activity 2: Literacy, Listening/speaking & Critical Thinking

Description: Thinking Scientifically: Learners read about a program implemented in a high school and brainstorm an approach to solve a problem for new middle school students.

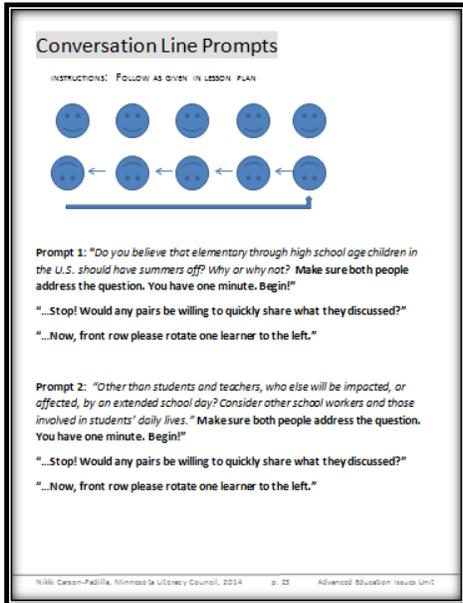
Materials/Prep: Handout: **SERP: Word Generation, Unit 3.11, p. 64**

Activity 3: Grammar & Checking for Understanding

Description: Complete exercises 9.1-9.3 to practice the present perfect continuous.

Materials/Prep: Textbook: **Grammar in Use Intermediate, p. 19** and a projector

Teacher Directions: Warm up: Conversation Line-Materials: Handout: Conversation Line Prompts (single copy for teacher to read aloud to learners)



Set up:

Divide the class in half (exactly half; if an odd number, teacher or coordinator will need to participate). Ask one half to come to the front of the room and make a straight line from left to right facing the class. Ask the other half of the class to come forward and stand one by one, face-to-face, in front of their classmates.

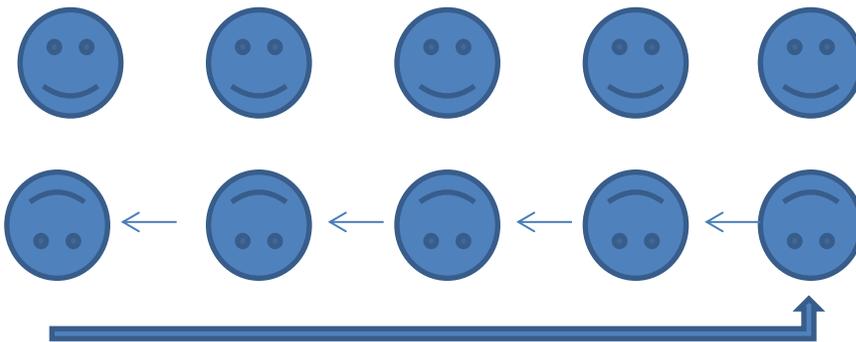
How to converse:

Read the first prompt to the class. Both learners in a face-to-face pair must address the question as thoroughly as possible using only English in one minute. Teacher must announce "stop" when one minute has expired. Ask a couple of pairs to report out.

What did they discuss? Was one minute enough time? Did the time limit help them to stay on task or did it cause pressure and make it difficult to concentrate?

How to rotate:

The learner on one far end of the most convenient line (*not* both lines) must move all the way to the other end of the line while each learner moves one down. This guarantees that each pair has a new conversing duo. See diagram below. After rotating, ask the next question/prompt and give learners another minute to converse.



Teacher Directions: Activity 1: Listening/speaking & Critical Thinking –Materials:
Handout: SERP: Word Generation, p. 65 “Debating the Issue”

Cut out stance A, B, C, and D. These will be drawn by small groups as assigned positions/stances.

Unit 3.11
Is an extended school day the right choice for middle school students?
DEBATING THE ISSUE
Get ready...
Pick one of these positions (or create your own).
A Schools are fine as they are now. We do not need a radical change.
B Schools need to be improved, but extending the school day is not the answer. First, schools should find a way to make improvements with the amount of time they already have.
C Schools in the United States should have an extended day and classes on Saturdays, if that is what is necessary for students to attain the skills necessary to compete in our global economy.
D Schools should have an extended day so students can either attain grade-level skills or start working on higher level skills. Most students just hang out after school. Extending the school day would help kids make better use of their time.
Get set...
Be ready to provide evidence to back up your position during your class discussion or debate. Jot down a few quick notes.

Step 1: Context

Explain to learners that extending the school day is a **controversial issue** because many people feel that it is a waste of resources and time while others feel it is necessary in order to improve test scores and become globally marketable. Something that is controversial is a public dispute or argument.

Step 2: Assign Stances

Learners pair up or form small groups of no more than 4. One person from each group draws a stance from options A-D. Learners should be **unaware** of the specific positions A-D at this point. Once all groups have drawn, ask one person per group to be the designated reader and to slowly, loudly and clearly read the stance aloud to his/her group. *Even if members of the group disagree with what is stated, that is the stance the group must support!*

Step 3: Group Discussion/Preparation

Pairs or small groups work together to choose at least two pieces of evidence to support their stance. Evidence does not have to be researched for today’s in-class mini-debates. “Evidence” should be any fact from daily life or from in-class reading that supports the group’s stance. Be sure learners understand that statements such as, “We believe this is true,” or “We support this,” are not considered evidence. Evidence *shows* that something is true or provides *an example of* support. If the statement, “We believe this is true,” is followed by “because...” and the reason is strong and logical, the team making that statement will get credit. If not, no evidence was provided and no credit will be given to that group.

“Why would I want to defend a position that I don’t personally support?” A couple of responses might be:

- *To learn **empathy** (to be understanding of how it would feel to be in the opposition’s shoes)*
- *To “**play devil’s advocate**” (to know what attacks might come at your personal stance in the future and to be prepared for them)*

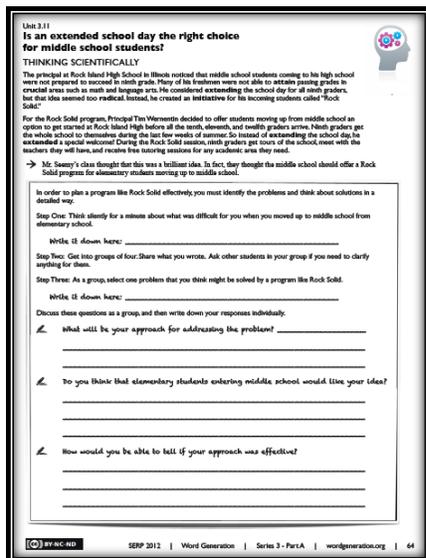
Step 4: Report Out

One person from each group stands and reports out its stance and evidence.

As a class, discuss:

- Which team had the strongest evidence?
- Did your personal opinion change in any way, or if you didn't have one, do you now?
- Do you have a new appreciation or any empathy for another view on school day extension?

Teacher Directions: Activity 2: Literacy, Listening/speaking & Critical Thinking – Materials: Handout: SERP: *Word Generation, Unit 3.11, p. 64* “Thinking Scientifically”



Step 1: Context

The next activity deals with scientific inquiry. Learners read about a program called “Rock Solid” that was implemented in a high school for incoming freshmen. Before learners can understand the nature of the program, they must be familiar with the structure of the American education system. Review week one’s tier of educational levels in the United States: pre-school, elementary school, middle or junior high school, high school, etc. Make sure learners are aware that each of these levels of education is usually in different facilities, or buildings. This is often one of the greatest challenges for incoming learners—navigating a new place and system. The scope of scientific inquiry for today’s lesson is to...

- Select a problem from several potential problems
- Choose the best approach
- Decide how to measure its effectiveness

Step 2: Read Together

Volunteers read the introductory paragraphs aloud as the class listens and considers the Rock Solid initiative. Review the Focus Words if necessary.

Note: The “Thinking Scientifically” handout specifically asks learners to get into groups of 4, but smaller groups (pairs or groups of 3) often encourage more participation.

Also, learners may not have completed middle school or any level equivalent to middle school and this is fine. They should consider their children or a similar experience or need at that age (around 11 years old).

Step 3: Think-Group Discuss-Share

Learners follow the planning format provided on the Thinking Scientifically handout. First, it learners think silently for a few minutes about what was difficult for them when they moved up to middle school from elementary school. Then, in groups of 3 (or in pairs, depending on class size), share ideas and select one problem that might be solved best by a program like Rock Solid. Learners should work together to create a plan. If working in pairs, both learners may write and share the responsibility of reporting out. However, if working on a team of 3, learners will most likely find it easiest to complete the task if each person has a distinct role.

Either assign roles or allow learners to self-select from the following:

1. **Note-taker** (writes down ideas on handout)
2. **Time and task manager** (reminds group of time remaining, asks all to participate)

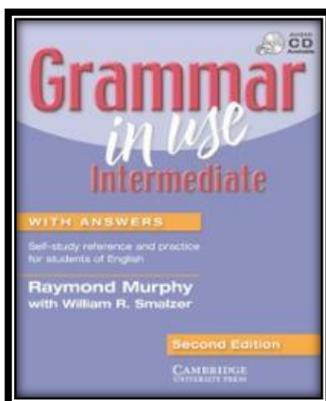
3. **Presenter** (reports out to whole class)

Step 4: Report Out

Ask each group’s Presenter to report its new middle school student potential problem and approach to solving it. Allow for some Q/A.

Teacher Directions: Activity 3: Grammar & Checking for Understanding–Materials:

Textbook: *Grammar in Action Intermediate*, p. 19 and a projector

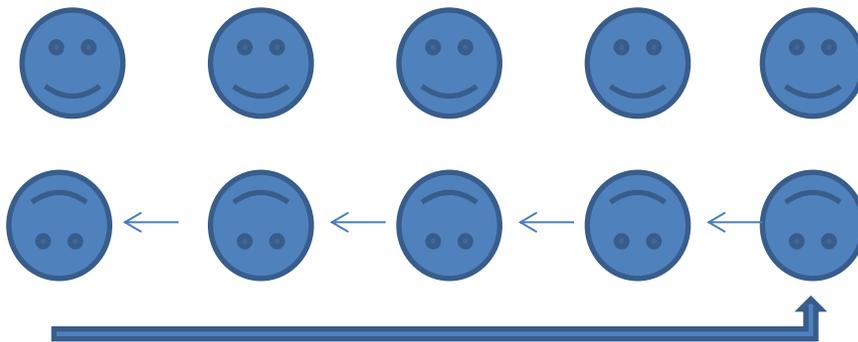


Complete Exercises 9.1 through 9.3 in pairs. Correct together as a class by asking learners to volunteer to come to the projector and fill in answers. Instructor facilitates discussion of correct answers.

Learners suggest how present perfect continuous could be used in the context of school before leaving for the day. This is their “exit ticket.”

Conversation Line Prompts

INSTRUCTIONS: FOLLOW AS GIVEN IN LESSON PLAN



Prompt 1: *“Do you believe that elementary through high school age children in the U.S. should have summers off? Why or why not? Make sure both people address the question. You have one minute. Begin!”*

“...Stop! Would any pairs be willing to quickly share what they discussed?”

“...Now, front row please rotate one learner to the left.”

Prompt 2: *“Other than students and teachers, who else will be impacted, or affected, by an extended school day? Consider other school workers and those involved in students’ daily lives.” Make sure both people address the question. You have one minute. Begin!”*

“...Stop! Would any pairs be willing to quickly share what they discussed?”

“...Now, front row please rotate one learner to the left.”

Is an extended school day the right choice for middle school students?



THINKING SCIENTIFICALLY

The principal at Rock Island High School in Illinois noticed that middle school students coming to his high school were not prepared to succeed in ninth grade. Many of his freshmen were not able to **attain** passing grades in **crucial** areas such as math and language arts. He considered **extending** the school day for all ninth graders, but that idea seemed too **radical**. Instead, he created an **initiative** for his incoming students called "Rock Solid."

For the Rock Solid program, Principal Tim Wernentin decided to offer students moving up from middle school an option to get started at Rock Island High before all the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth graders arrive. Ninth graders get the whole school to themselves during the last few weeks of summer. So instead of **extending** the school day, he **extended** a special welcome! During the Rock Solid session, ninth graders get tours of the school, meet with the teachers they will have, and receive free tutoring sessions for any academic area they need.

→ Mr. Seemy's class thought that this was a brilliant idea. In fact, they thought the middle school should offer a Rock Solid program for elementary students moving up to middle school.

In order to plan a program like Rock Solid effectively, you must identify the problems and think about solutions in a detailed way.

Step One: Think silently for a minute about what was difficult for you when you moved up to middle school from elementary school.

Write it down here: _____

Step Two: Get into groups of four. Share what you wrote. Ask other students in your group if you need to clarify anything for them.

Step Three: As a group, select one problem that you think might be solved by a program like Rock Solid.

Write it down here: _____

Discuss these questions as a group, and then write down your responses individually.

✍ What will be your approach for addressing the problem? _____

✍ Do you think that elementary students entering middle school would like your idea?

✍ How would you be able to tell if your approach was effective?



Is an extended school day the right choice for middle school students?

DEBATING THE ISSUE

Get ready...

Pick one of these positions (or create your own).

A Schools are fine as they are now. We do not need a radical change.

B Schools need to be improved, but extending the school day is not the answer. First, schools should find a way to make improvements with the amount of time they already have.

C Schools in the United States should have an extended day and classes on Saturdays, if that is what is necessary for students to attain the skills necessary to compete in our global economy.

D Schools should have an extended day so students can either attain grade-level skills or start working on higher level skills. Most students just hang out after school. Extending the school day would help kids make better use of their time.

Get set...

Be ready to provide evidence to back up your position during your class discussion or debate. Jot down a few quick notes:

Education Issues Unit: Week 2, Thursday

Objectives <i>Learners will be able to...</i>	Materials
<p>Literacy: write Focus Words in appropriate sentences</p> <p>Literacy: write an essay on the topic of extending the school day using evidence and Focus Words.</p> <p>Listening/speaking: listen and take notes on criteria for exemplary writing. Ask clarification questions as they arise.</p> <p>Transitions & Critical Thinking: consider counterarguments as they write their essays.</p> <p>Grammar: use the present perfect continuous if the opportunity arises in their essays.</p>	<p>Make Student Copies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handout: SERP: Word Generation, Unit 3.11, p. 66 • Handout: Focus Words Practice • Handout: Suggestions for Exemplary Criteria Improvements (can be copied back of SERP, p. 66) <p>Make Single Copies or Reference</p> <p>Props, Technology, or Other Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computers with word processing (optional)

Lesson Plan

Warm up for today's Lesson (Review of vocabulary)

Description: Use Focus Words in correct sentences

Materials/Prep: Handout: **Focus Words Practice**

Activity 1: Listening/speaking & Critical Thinking

Description: Discuss criteria for exemplary writing.

Materials/Prep: Handout: **Suggestions for Exemplary Criteria Improvements**

Activity 2: Literacy

Description: Write an essay on extending the school day following criteria for exemplary writing.

Materials/Prep: Handout: **SERP: Word Generation, Unit 3.11, p. 66**

Activity 3: Checking for Understanding

Description: Volunteers read their essays aloud. Listeners listen for position taken, which Focus Words were used, and whether or not a counterargument was addressed.

Materials/Prep: None

Teacher Directions: Warm up: Focus Word Practice-Materials: Handout: Focus Words Practice

Focus Words Practice

INSTRUCTIONS: Choose the best Focus Word listed below to complete each sentence. Be sure to use the correct form of the word. Words may be used more than once.

extend	crucial
radical	ascertain
	initiative

1. We would like to _____ the application deadline, because the process is taking more time than we anticipated.
2. Once you have _____ a diploma or GED, there are more job opportunities.
3. Air, food and water are _____ to human life.
4. The cellular phone was a(n) _____ invention in the 1970s.
5. His boss gave him a raise for showing _____ and starting new programs.
6. In Pennsylvania, many schools _____ the school day to eight-hour days.

Demonstrate the first response for the whole class at a projector, so all learners understand that they must use the appropriate form of one of the Focus Words in order to complete the exercise.

Correct together as a class by having volunteers come up to the projector and fill in the correct answers.

Teacher Directions: Activity 1: Listening/Speaking & Critical Thinking-Materials: Handout: Suggestions for Exemplary Writing Criteria Improvements

Suggestions for Exemplary Writing Criteria

INSTRUCTIONS: Read aloud. Check off each criterion you meet after you write to know your level of essay development. The criteria do not include sentence-level considerations, such as grammar and punctuation. This does not mean that grammar and mechanics are not important. They are still highly considered when grading essays.

Good Start

- Stated position
- Included one Focus Word

Pretty Good

- Stated position clearly
- Included 1-2 supportive arguments
- Included 2 Focus Words

Exemplary

- Stated position clearly
- Included 3 supportive arguments
- Refuted a likely counterargument
- Included 3-5 Focus Words

Step 1: Context

Explain to learners what a rubric is and how it is used to grade objectively. The GED, college entrance, and licensure writing tests usually use some form of rubric. The Word Generation curriculum uses a very interesting writing rubric and the suggestions made can help learners as they prepare for the GED, college entrance, or those tricky open-ended job application questions. Unfortunately, there is some overlap between the number of Focus Words required and the number of supportive arguments (examples, etc.) Therefore, a more straightforward rubric has been provided here with the handout **Suggestions for Exemplary Writing Criteria**.

Step 2: Read and Discuss

Learner volunteers read each grading criterion aloud. Discuss as a whole class. Especially provide examples of what counterarguments are and how one might refute them. It is more likely learners will be able to do this if it is modeled for them first.

**Teacher Directions: Activity 2: Literacy & Critical Thinking-Materials: Handout: SERP:
*Word Generation, p. 66, "Write about It"; computers with word processing (optional)***

Unit 3.11
Is an extended school day the right choice for middle school students?
WRITE ABOUT IT
Support your position with clear reasons and specific examples.
Try to use relevant words from the Word Generation list in your response.
Focus Words
extend | radical | crucial | attain | initiative

Step 1: Prewrite

Learners brainstorm on scratch paper or in their notebooks before writing on the **Write about It** handout. Learners should brainstorm a thesis statement and ideas to support it (e.g. something relevant to extending the school day). They may choose to list or to draw a word web/diagram, but some pre-writing should be encouraged. If learners try to organize their ideas as they develop them, it will be more difficult to incorporate the Focus Words and concentrate on staying on topic (avoiding irrelevant comments).

Step 2: Write

Learners write a short essay on the prompt **“Is an Extended School Day the Right Choice for Middle School Students?”** striving for exemplary writing. Remind learners that the criteria on the **Writing Prompt** handout have some overlap between grading categories and that it is best to refer to the **Suggestions for Exemplary Writing Criteria** handout. A short essay may be 1-5 paragraphs depending on the learner’s ability and the amount of class time remaining.

After hand-writing a rough draft, learners may word process and print their paragraphs/essays if computers are accessible.

Note: Ideally, a teacher or coordinator will read learner essays and check off criteria met, so learners get an idea of what they should work on concerning development of their writing.

Teacher Directions: Activity 4: Checking for Understanding-Materials: Handout: None

Volunteers read their essays aloud. Listeners listen for position taken, which Focus Words were used, and whether or not a counterargument was addressed.

Focus Words Practice

INSTRUCTIONS: Choose the best Focus Word listed below to complete each sentence. Be sure to use the correct form of the word. Words may be used more than once.

extend

attain

radical

initiative

crucial

- 1. We would like to _____ the application deadline, because the process is taking more time than we anticipated.**
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- 6. In Pennsylvania, many schools _____ the school day to eight-hour days.**

Suggestions for Exemplary Writing Criteria

INSTRUCTIONS: Read aloud. Check off each criterion you meet after you write to know your level of essay development. The criteria do not include sentence-level considerations, such as grammar and punctuation. This does not mean that grammar and mechanics are not important. They are still highly considered when grading essays.

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