What to do when students can't write complete sentences - with Dr. Shawn Datchuk

Reach All Readers Podcast #249

Anna Geiger: Welcome back, Dr. Datchuk!

Shawn Datchuk: Hi, Anna. Thanks for having me.

Anna Geiger: Thanks for being here to talk about sentence writing, but before we get into that, could you briefly remind us who you are and what you do?

Shawn Datchuk: Yeah. My name is Shawn Datchuk. I'm a professor of special education at the University of Iowa. I've been here over about a decade now. I'm a former K-12 special educator, elementary educator, and district administrator. I'm also the former director of the Iowa Reading Research Center.

Anna Geiger: Thank you.

We're going to get right into the sentence topic, and I've seen you present on this, I think online and in person, and you've talked about the need for interventions to help students learn to write sentences. Can you first talk to us about the skills that are required for students to write a sentence?

Shawn Datchuk: So I became very involved in sentence writing because, to be blunt, I struggled to teach it. I had so many students write one long run-on sentence or several short, choppy, incomplete sentences.

When I think about helping students learn this critical skill, I tend to think about two larger buckets, so to speak. One would be text writing. The second would be sentence structure.

Text writing refers to the skill of writing multiple words that follow conventions of semantics, or they express meaning and also syntax or grammar. So wrapped into that obviously is handwriting and spelling, but basically students need to be able to write two or more words strung together that make sense to a reader or to a listener. So that's text writing.

And then the second would be sentence structure. That's the ability to write multiple words. It's engaging in text writing: here's a simple sentence, here's a complex sentence, here's a compound sentence. So I tend to view those two skills as closely related, and we can get students to generate more texts, to engage in text writing.

But unfortunately, and, you know, I'm a former K-12 special educator, elementary educator, I would see one long run-on sentence. So it would be great text writing, but maybe a student would go in and just kind of dot some i's, so to speak, by putting in some floating periods at the end. But I tend to think about sentence writing as those two skills.

Anna Geiger: Okay. So you talk about sentence writing as a bridge. What do you mean by that?

Shawn Datchuk: So sentence writing can be a bridge that takes students from those early literacy skills, so identifying letters, writing individual letters, to now using that to spell words. That is so critically important for overall literacy, writing and reading.

Now, the next step or the bridge to writing connected text is really going to be at the sentence level. So when we think about students starting to write very simple stories or read very simple stories...

So my four-year-old, we do quick little reading lessons in the morning - he's at the very exciting stage to where he's reading these one sentence stories. They typically involve maybe a cat who's hungry or a cat who's mad. I think there was a frog who was getting wet. Very simple.

But that is, I think, a crystal clear example about how sentences are a bridge to overall composition. Because now he's learning, "Oh, hey, there's these individual letters and these sounds attached. Oh, and then there's also these letters that make up words, and that has a meaning, so each word has a meaning."

And then now, if you write multiple words together, it's that bridge. Sentence writing serves as that bridge to, "Oh, hey, there's this whole world out there of stories, paragraphs, essays, et cetera."

So that's what I mean by when I usually say sentence writing is a bridge.

Anna Geiger: So back in the day when I was very much a balanced literacy teacher and teacher educator and I taught teachers about teaching writing, I remember a few teachers asked me, "Well, how do I teach students to write a sentence?"

And I had honestly never broken it down that way because I was very much of this idea that if you just write, you'll learn to write. I didn't break things down, and I honestly didn't know what to say.

You said that this was hard for you too. So why is sentence writing difficult for kids sometimes?

Shawn Datchuk: I think there are multiple factors there. I think you're speaking to something that I certainly thought of as well as a teacher to where I kind of thought that writing was something that a student could catch. So that if we just kind of engage them in writing, maybe some workshops, that they would kind of catch it almost like they just kind of caught a ball.

But I think what the research suggests is crystal clear, similar to reading, is that writing is a skill that needs to be taught and not caught. And I think that that lack of explicit instruction, I think, can result in kind of why students have difficulty sentence writing.

I think two, there are lots of different avenues on how sentence writing is ordered or sequenced. For instance, simple sentences tend to be certainly the base of sentence writing. So if a simple sentence has one noun, one verb, expresses a complete thought, has capital letter at the beginning, and an end mark, I think people are kind of on board with that.

Where it starts to splinter is, well, what sentence type do we move to next? What sentence level skill do we address? Do we address subject/verb agreement right away? Do we address pronouns, the fact that there needs to be a clear reference and a pronoun on what, let's say a person's name is? Or perhaps we go with, oh, maybe we should just jump into complex sentences because *because* is used so much. Or, you know, maybe complex sentences are too advanced, maybe we need to stay with something easier. So there are lots of these splinter points.

So in other words, there is less agreed upon sequencing of different types of sentences that are very different than let's say the crystal-clear nature of early reading curricula.

Then three is that what we tend to see in different studies is that students actually generate more sentences. So across elementary grades, students can generate more. Unfortunately, their accuracy tends to stay about the same. So in other words, students can certainly generate more output, but let's say if only 50% of the sentences are complete, it tends to kind of stay stagnant for a lot of students.

And I think that's because once we kind of get the early building blocks of sentences down, we perhaps progress so much of our limited attention to writing to just focusing in on the writing process without explicit attention to the different types of sentence structures.

Anna Geiger: Yes, you're saying, for example, if a teacher were doing like a writing workshop model and they taught the basic sentence and then they give their kids lots and lots of time to write. The students might be producing a lot of content, but they shouldn't expect to see a difference in the quality, or the accuracy of how a sentence is structured, unless there's explicit instruction given.

Shawn Datchuk: Exactly. Yep.

Anna Geiger: I think the tricky part with that is, we want to encourage a lot of writing, but then, at what point do you say we're not going to encourage a volume of writing until we've got this down or we do both at the same time? How does that work?

Shawn Datchuk: Oh, yeah. That's a great question. And I think that one of the unique things about writing instruction is we need to think about it as concurrent growth.

So for reading, you can really think about it as sequential growth in a lot of ways, because you can sequence things to a degree to where we have the specific letters that we teach, the sounds and how to blend them, we can tightly control the words because students are decoding that. They're taking something that they see in the environment, so you can scope and sequence that very explicitly into a sequential growth model.

For writing, since students are pulling from memory the different things that they'll be writing about, it's more difficult to sequence things.

So in other words, let's say if we agree upon a general topic of summertime, students could be writing about... Probably my sons would write about the frozen popsicles, there could be students writing about pools, et cetera. Since we're pulling those different things, the sequence of what skills we're specifically addressing can be more difficult to kind of pinpoint. So that's one.

Two would be that students are engaging in lots of different types of writing skills orally. For instance, with my four year old, he... I think probably about two Halloweens ago, he became so fixated on zombies that that's just kind of his thing. He's going to be, I think, one of these kind of really dark emo kids, maybe during high school, but a lot of his stories talk about zombies. So his storytelling orally, he's working on it to a degree that has surpassed where his writing skills are, and that's what we want.

I think that that's an example of where we can have students work on these different types of skills concurrently, and as students start to pick up more sentence structure skills, while we're addressing that, we can intertwine it with their overall writing.

And that can be a difficult thing to pinpoint for teachers. I know I still have difficulty with it in terms of, well, how much should we have students engage in extending composition if it's going to be filled with

lots of errors? Are we kind of running the risk, are students going to be practicing errors and then they're going to memorize those?

There is no one right sort of magic number that I can provide or that research provides, but what research does suggest overall is that we do need to provide pockets of time to address the multiple levels of language. We need to engage students in extended composition and focus in on those parts that they can do well, such as story elements, let's say.

So in my son, it could be zombies and then what the problem is, how do people feel? So we can certainly engage them in that. And then we can also have pockets of time to where we explicitly address sentence structure or text writing or spelling or handwriting.

Anna Geiger: Yeah. I've heard different opinions about this. Some people would say we don't want them to practice errors. We don't want them to misspell words. We're just going to do writing dictation with sentence dictation, with spellings that they've been taught, and we're going to wait to teach them to do other kinds of writing until they have their phonics patterns down and until they learned about sentence structure.

What is your opinion on that or view on that?

Shawn Datchuk: I definitely have had that conversation with teachers and I'm not aware of solid research that would suggest that we would want to restrict student writing to that degree. The reason why I say that is because it's going to be fairly difficult for students' oral vocabulary to catch up precisely with what they're able to spell.

And then it's kind of… Sure, we could perhaps create a tighter link to their writing and spelling, which is good. However, in that case, I think we would also then kind of be robbing Peter to pay Paul, and then so we would decrease their vocabulary knowledge to a degree, to then strengthen up their spelling. So there would be some kind of pros and cons behind that.

I think having students engage in extended composition and writing about things that they might not be prepared adequately yet to specifically spell and engage in really complete sentence structure, I think that only becomes a problem if we just completely leave those other skills to chance and we aren't providing any explicit instruction and spelling or sentence structure, et cetera.

Because then, in other words, you just kind of have a writing is caught model there to where we're just engaging you in extended composition and storytelling, and then we're like, "Oh, these skills are going to, kind of, catch up." What we know is that, unfortunately, that's not going to be the case for the vast majority of students.

So I think what needs to happen is that we have explicit instruction, and certainly we can front-load different things that students write about.

Let's say, for instance, if they're writing about the water cycle, we can certainly front-load important terms and vocab. I'm not saying to just completely leave it to chance what students will write about. There are certainly structures and supports we can put into place for that.

Anna Geiger: Yeah. So in general, these sentence fluency things we're going to talk about could be used with the whole class or they could be used in intervention. I remember when I taught Writing Workshop, and I think there are elements of Writing Workshop that are positive, but I do know that the way I taught

it was very, like you said, writing is caught. I had very brief lessons, and my goal was that they would just write and write and write for a long period of time.

I had one student who loved to write, he would just go and go and go. He was so proud of what he did, but honestly, I couldn't make any sense of it.

Shawn Datchuk: Right, yep.

Anna Geiger: It was illegible. But also he just didn't have any barriers around sentences, and I didn't have any tools to fix that for him. So he would just keep writing, and that was great, but like you said, his writing really wasn't getting better.

I look back, and the things I've seen you talk about with sentence fluency would've been really good to do.

Before we get into those specifically, could you briefly talk about like how a teacher can tell specifically that a child has trouble with sentence writing? I mean, for some kids they just won't do it, and it can feel like a behavior issue. But it may just be they just don't know what to do. What are some things that teachers would see as a clue?

Shawn Datchuk: For sentence writing, it can be to everyone's benefit to try to isolate that skill as much as possible. What I mean by that is we can certainly give students, let's say, a story starter or an essay prompt, give them some think time, and have them write kind of an extended composition.

One of the difficulties with relying on that specific measure for sentence writing is that perhaps students don't have much to say about a given topic or perhaps that is outside of their background knowledge. They could also be spending so much time thinking about ideas about what to write, that that kind of slows down perhaps the sentences they would produce, et cetera. Those are all important considerations.

So overall, I would look at anything students are writing in your classroom. A lot of it will be kind of prompt-based, et cetera. Even if it's a spelling list, you can kind of take a look and kind of see, are students generating text? Do they have some spelling under their belt? Do they have some handwriting under their belt? And when they go to write connected words, what does it typically look like? So that's one. That'll give you kind of a general impression.

Second would be, you would want to look at specific sentence writing measures. If you go to, let's say my website, which is not the most creative title I've ever come up with, but it's just my name, so this is shawndatchuk.com, then there are different types of sentence materials on there that would probably be better suited to isolating sentence writing.

There are a couple key features here. One is that they use pictures, so they have students describe pictures in their sentences. For writing, what pictures allow us to do is it allows you and the student to describe something that's in the environment. That helps isolate sentence writing to where it's like, okay, if you don't know what this is, just try to describe this picture. If you know what that picture is, just try to describe that. It allows you as an instructor to kind of see what words, what sentences, are they bringing to the table to describe that.

If a student struggles with that task, if your student would struggle to write sentences to things they're describing in the environment, pictures, et cetera, then that's when it would be kind of a crystal clear

signal, most likely, that, "Oh, okay, this student would benefit from some sort of sentence writing instruction."

Anna Geiger: What if they do produce something? What are the things we would look at it and say, "Oh, this specific thing tells me you need some extra work on this."

Shawn Datchuk: Mm, great. Yeah. So, there are kind of basic elements that we're looking for in a complete sentence. It starts with a capital letter, has an end mark for punctuation, and we're looking for these basic building blocks of a sentence. You can think about that as being a noun, a subject, someone or something, and then you want the student to tell you more about that. That's usually a predicate/verb; some sort of action is being described.

We want to see if they have those basic building blocks: capital letter, end mark, they name someone or something, so there's some sort of subject and verb, and then they're telling you more about that, so there's some sort of verb there. We're looking for those basic building blocks.

In addition, when writing about the pictures, we're looking for their response having some structure there that suggests that they are aware of text writing, so they're writing multiple words to express meaning, and that their sentences have these basic blocks.

Anna Geiger: So tell us about the framework that you teach for building sentence fluency.

Shawn Datchuk: Yeah. So I've done, I think now it's upwards of 15 different studies. I'm extending research that largely stemmed from big Direct Instruction, big DI, Zig Engelmann's work, that looked at what are different explicit instruction techniques that we can do to teach complete sentences?

There are really five steps that I continually kind of use in my studies and they have been used successfully in different commercially available curricula that Zig Engelmann co-authored as well.

One would be that we design materials so they follow an identify/complete/generate format.

Identify would be where students are identifying examples and non-examples of whatever the target skill is.

So let's say inside a complete sentence, they're identifying the subject, or let's say they're identifying the verb. We are just engaging students in identifying them. It could be underlining; it could be copying. Basically, we want students to build up that vocabulary that, "Hey, this is what this looks like, and this is what it doesn't look like. " So there are examples and not examples, so that's identify.

Notice in that, there's not much writing involved there. Students could vocally respond, they could underline, they could highlight, or they could circle. You're just building up vocabulary. That's identify.

Then there would be complete. The complete format is where now students need to write at least part of the expected response.

Let's go back to kind of the noun/verb thing. Let's say here there's an entire sentence frame there, but now the verb is missing, and now they need to fill in that missing part.

Notice the response is starting to inch more towards writing. So at first, they were just identifying the parts. Next, now they actually have to produce one of the parts.

Then finally would be generate. Generate is where most of that response is pulled from memory.

Let's say if it's that noun/verb scenario, now in addition to the verb, they now need to generate the noun. More and more of the expected writing response is produced by the student.

So when we think about designing a lesson, we think about how initial skills are introduced to where students just identify it, and then they progress into completing part of it, and then they progress into generating part of it.

When we think about how engaging students in writing is taught and not caught, many times when we think about writing is just caught is we just have students generate. They don't go through the identify or the complete. It's just, "Hey, let's just generate," and then maybe the things will trickle down.

Here it starts with the identify, complete, and generate. So that's one.

Two is it uses, I know I'm preaching to the choir on your podcast, it uses explicit instruction for I Do, We Do, You Do. We actually show and tell for students, "Hey, this is what's expected in the identify part." We go through guided practice, independent practice, et cetera.

The third thing is that it would use an instructional language that is centered on clear, consistent, and concise verbiage that is student-friendly.

This is kind of one of the hot takes from my research, that if you look at the different studies that I've done and then also some that other people have replicated, is that there is some logic in staying away from parts of speech as much as you can initially.

What I mean by that is when we think about the technical definition of a complete sentence, we can think about it as a noun, a verb, a complete thought.

One of the difficult things behind sticking with the parts of speech initially is that that's its own separate vocabulary outside of what a simple sentence is. You could say, "Oh, you, you're missing a noun." Well, what's a noun? Well, a noun is a subject. Well, what's a subject? Well, it's a person, place, thing, or idea. It could also be a state of being.

You could say, “You're missing a predicate.” Well, what's a predicate? Well, what's a verb? Well, there's action verbs, there's linking verbs. There's also these things called gerunds that are really verbs that could be subjects.

And then pretty soon to help a student understand a "simple sentence," you kind of hear the beep, beep, beep of the vocab truck backing up and you just kind of dump out a lot of different parts of speech.

Now, it's critical that we do want students to understand parts of speech. I'm not saying to shy away from those completely. We want to help students understand that. But what my research suggests, and research of my colleagues suggests, is that if a student is having difficulty or if a student's in early elementary, we actually want to use much more direct student-friendly language to describe what a complete simple sentence is.

The language that we use is unconventional, but it basically says a simple sentence has two parts, a part that names and a part that tells more. Then there's a capital at the beginning and an end mark.

Then we use that along with the identify, complete, and generate format to describe pictures. And this is where the pictures become such a huge part because students are all describing what's in the environment.

So when we say to name someone or something, let's say looking at a picture or something that's in there, "Oh, that's a dog." Okay. So “a dog” is going to name someone or something, now tell me more about that. Tell me one thing.

In this case, it could be chewing a bone. “The dog chewed a bone.”

Then we use that language to build up student proficiency in generating connected text, describing pictures, going through the identify, complete, generate format. We're also using the scripted language that focuses in on student-friendly terms.

Then from there we kind of deliver that. We engage students in lots of opportunities to respond, where students can respond vocally, so they can talk out loud, sometimes in unison on what part's missing, let's say, or what's the part that names, what's the part that tells more.

Again, importantly, since students are describing pictures, there are things that they can look at. So when students are describing a part of a sentence, everybody's looking at the same picture, so you can engage in lots of opportunities to respond.

That's different than say if I gave students a prompt like, let's think about what you did for your summer vacation. We want students to do that. We want students to make important connections, but if we're teaching the basics of a simple sentence, that kind of exercise could be fairly chaotic.

Then finally there would be fluency practice that comes after. I think the earliest we've done it is grade two, and then students throughout high school. What we've seen is that if they can handwrite some, it doesn't need to be perfect, if they can spell some, it doesn't need to be perfect… But if they struggle with complete sentences, we're able to help those students, a large part of them, generate sentences that have those foundational blocks. It's that capital at the beginning, end mark, that it's naming someone or something, and that they're just telling one thing more about that. I think that's a win across all those grades.

Anna Geiger: Now the fluency practice you talk about, am I correct that that's like a worksheet with different pictures and they practice writing as many complete sentences as they can once they know how to do it?

Shawn Datchuk: Yeah. So the idea there is that we're giving students a large dose of practice in a short amount of time. It follows similar procedures to repeated reading or repeated math timing that some of your listeners might be familiar with.

For writing, we would give students usually 10 small picture word prompts. The picture word prompts are about three inches by five inches each. There are over 100 different ones on my website for free. And so students quickly have to generate complete, simple sentences to as many of those pictures as they can, usually in one minute to two minutes.

You could be thinking, if you're listening to this, that that's way too many sentences to do in a minute to two minutes. And you're right. Students won't be able to generate all those sentences to all those pictures within that short amount of time. The idea here is to engage in sprints or kind of marathon training. It's where they're writing more, and then after the timing, after a minute or two minutes, we give them feedback.

So we go, "Oh, great job, capital letter, oh, end mark. Oh, here's a part that names." And then we catch different things on the fly. It could be that a student had a subject verb agreement error, so we go, "Oops, actually that should be *is* or that should be *are."* And then we turn that page over and they get a brand new shot with using the same picture words to write sentences again.

So what we typically see is that students can do about three timings in a sitting. So let's say one minute, they get feedback, one minute, they get feedback, one minute, and they get feedback. During that time, students can generate anywhere from three to let's say eight sentences in about three minutes.

Anna Geiger: So in your research, has this been done only in intervention? Has it been done with the whole class? If a regular classroom teacher wants to try this, what would you recommend?

Shawn Datchuk: Most of it has been done in interventions in small groups. We just completed a randomized control trial where it was a whole class intervention or instruction. The short answer is that this can be done across one-on-one, small group, and whole group, fairly easily. The longer answer is that the more students you deliver this to, or the larger the group size gets, you'll have to make some alterations to particularly the fluency practice session.

For fluency practice, in small groups or one-on-one, what the teacher has typically done is they can just go through and talk out loud on each student writing sample and then give individualized feedback pretty quickly. Again, the students aren't writing for very long, so there's not that much there to give feedback to and you're just focused.

For a whole group, what tends to happen is, again, since everybody's writing to the same picture, is that the sentences all tend to be roughly the same. There can be some variations, but since everybody's writing to the same picture, as an instructor, you go around and you pick one of the student writing samples to then score in front of everybody.

Now, as a teacher, you need to obviously put your teacher hat on because for some students, that would not be a good idea. But you will have some students to where they certainly would not mind that to where you go and then you highlight for everyone, "Oh, what are the great things that happened?"

So you actually score it and you have students look at their own while you're scoring like, "Oh, capital letter, oh, okay, this is a part that names." Students are looking, they ask questions, and then so you could do it from that.

Then the very last timing, let's say if you do one, two, three timings, that ast timing you would actually collect as an instructor. So that kind of gives you your temperature check.

Anna Geiger: So in your study with the whole class, how often did the teachers do this?

Shawn Datchuk: It can be as short as three times a week. If you can do it every day, that's great. It can be as short as three times a week. The direct instruction lessons that we've done, those tend to be 25 minutes each. There are three to six lessons, and then the fluency practice sessions, those tend to be 10 to 15 minutes.

So as a teacher, if you're listening to this, or a homeschooler, it can fit into a variety of different pockets of time. But most of the time would, again, be 10 to 15 minutes, three times a week. If you did it Monday, Wednesday, Friday, you're good to go.

Anna Geiger: So when do students get to apply this? How would they actually have the chance to do this on their own in their own writing?

Shawn Datchuk: Yeah, that's a great question. We've only done a couple studies to where we've extended it to paragraph writing, and those are exciting. We've only done a handful of those just because as researchers, we're taking up class time, and we want to be mindful of that. But for when I work with schools that have actually done this, what I typically see is that students are engaged in

sentence writing during that time, and then there are already pockets of where students are writing extended compositions.

Let's say a teacher is working on fictional narratives, persuasive arguments, or descriptive expository texts, and students are engaged in the sentence writing instruction. Then during the times where they're doing extended composition, the teacher specifically highlights, "Oh, remember, I'm looking for parts of a complete sentence. You need a capital letter, an end mark, a part that names, and a part that tells more."

I've also had some teachers kind of really latch onto the idea of the picture word prompts being a natural support for students. I've worked even with some middle school history teachers to where they've brought up different pictures or videos of what they're reading about and then the students write sentences describing what's shown in those pictures and videos.

Anna Geiger: Yeah. So you're saying that this explicit instruction teaches students the structure and then when they're doing other writing activities, the teacher calls to mind the things that they've taught in practice during that time.

Shawn Datchuk: That's right. Yep.

Anna Geiger: I love your analogy about a dump truck backing up and dumping vocabulary on kids while they're doing their writing. That's super interesting.

I think there's a lot of maybe confusion or misunderstanding about what kids need to know when it comes to syntax and grammar, because I think sometimes we're hearing, "Don't teach it." I know that's not what people mean, but I think we're kind of getting that impression sometimes. I know that what you're doing is teaching syntax with the sentence structure and how things come together. When do we start putting those words in so we have this common vocabulary?

Shawn Datchuk: Yeah, that's a great question. I think if you take a look at national academic standards, students by the end of second grade are expected to write not only simple sentences, but compound complex sentences in second and third grade.

So the answer is that those parts of speech lessons would have to happen early on. We do want students to understand that, okay, here's a noun, here's a verb, et cetera. I think that it is much easier to focus in on those once the student's already doing the skill.

In other words, those are not prerequisites to writing. You can help students understand that you're naming something and then you're telling more about that thing.

To me, that only lessens the burden of how dense those vocabulary lessons need to be, because students will now have an understanding that, okay, here's the noun. Oh, that's actually the part that named someone or something, then you can keep expanding it to these other different types of perhaps more difficult to comprehend parts such as state of being or things like that.

Anna Geiger: So when students can verbalize, this is the namer, this is the doer or whatever - before you layer on the parts of speech, but don't forget about the labels.

Shawn Datchuk: Yeah.

Anna Geiger: I think we've kind of covered the main questions that I have. Are there any further recommendations you have for teachers or final thoughts about sentence writing?

Shawn Datchuk: I'm very excited that teachers are looking at sentence structure. Again, I think that it's kind of one of those skills that when company's over, we kind of sweep it up and then just put it in this closet that kind of overflows. It's just one of these things that so many students struggle with.

But I think what is clear in whether it's short writing activities, such as writing and learn activities that students might do when they're trying to understand new science content, or these exciting kind of sentence frameworks where perhaps you add in like one different conjunction of but, and, or so, or something like that. It's very clear from those short ones or extended composition that sentence structure is needed to express a complete thought that's understandable to a reader or to your audience or even yourself trying to look back at your notes.

I think that I am very excited and heartened that teachers are interested in how to best teach sentence structure and those related skills. Because I think that when you look at the hard earned and hard won gains that have happened because of different science of reading elements, writing is still, I think, largely ignored from the science of reading conversation.

I think that the way that we can help keep making gains for students and their reading is actually through writing. It's actually through helping students better understand what they're trying to express, or what's going on in a passage, and I think sentence structure is a perfect way of doing that.

Anna Geiger: Well, thank you very much. I know you've got a presentation of this available publicly, right? So I can link to that as well as the free resources on your website.

Shawn Datchuk: Yeah.

Anna Geiger: Thank you again.

Shawn Datchuk: Sounds good. Thanks, Anna. I appreciate it.