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Introduction

Classroom Teachers Can Reach and Support All Readers

Recently, I taught reading to a group of seventh-grade English language learners who were reading at a third-grade instructional level. During 10 weeks, the students and I met daily for 50 minutes. I divided the time into 25 minutes for a teacher read-aloud and guided reading, and 25 minutes of independent reading. The students had never read an entire book. Instead, they had only read short texts and answered multiple-choice or fill-in-the-blank questions for each one. They were not purposefully talking or writing about what they read, nor was their ESOL teacher (English for Speakers of Other Languages) reading outstanding fiction and nonfiction to them. So, I changed the focus of their instruction.

For guided reading, I gave students three nonfiction books to choose from, and they agreed on a biography about Roberto Clemente. For independent reading, I started with graphic novels, brought about 20 to class, and had students choose. Gradually, independent reading choices included biography and informational texts. Over the 10 weeks, the students and I read and discussed two nonfiction books; students also wrote short responses in their readers' notebooks. Moreover, all but two of the students read from 10 to 15 books during independent reading, and that's when I had short five-minute scaffolding conferences with individuals or pairs.

Many of the schools I work in around the country have adopted reading intervention programs similar to the one those seventh-grade students used—programs that focus on skills. Why? Skills such as phonemic awareness, phonics, decoding, and fluency are easy to assess and enable teachers to collect measurable data. However, there are three key ingredients that are often missing in these intervention curricula: instruction using engaging books, discussion of self-selected books for independent reading, and listening to teachers read aloud every day. Educators such as Stephanie Harvey, Ann Goudvis, Harvey Daniels, Linda Dorn, Ellin Keene, and Regie Routman agree that students who listen to teachers read aloud and have meaningful conversations about these texts also build their listening capacity, background knowledge, and understanding of literary language. Actually, according to Richard Allington, Mary Howard, Linda Hoyt, Donalyn Miller, and Steve Krashen, students who practice skills daily without reading self-selected whole books don't improve their reading skill. Moreover, because students don't read books, they slide backwards, and this backward slide can result in low scores on state tests, frustrating teachers and administrators.

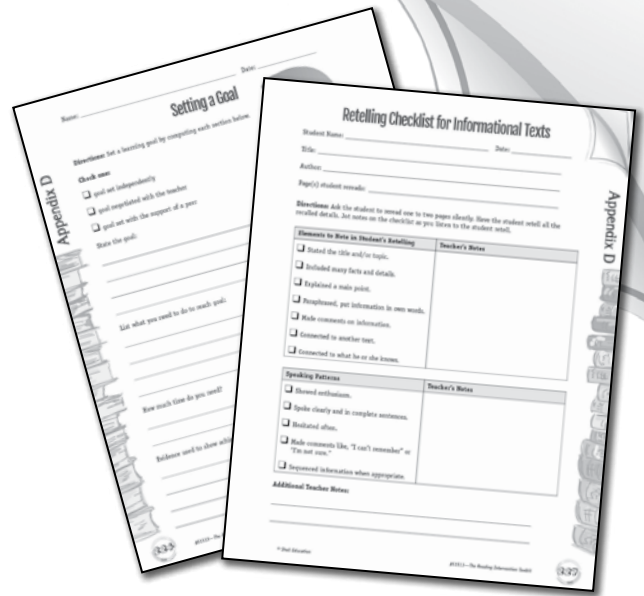
I wrote this book for fourth to eighth grade teachers to address the instructional challenges that they face. Educators agree that high quality core reading curricula can support about 80 percent of the student population, enabling them to show solid, annual growth. But, to move all students from a frustration zone into their learning zone and ultimately to independent reading learning, lessons need to respond to the needs of every student.

To assist teachers with strategies in this area, **Chapters 1 and 2** discuss responsive teaching and differentiation. The heart and soul of this book is introduced in Chapter 2 where I discuss, in great depth, four kinds of interventions that can support students' reading. The first three can be readily integrated in the core reading curriculum. The last type of intervention is meant for students reading significantly below grade level and often needs to be conducted in addition to regular classroom instruction.

- **2- to 3-Minute Interventions:** These occur while you “make the rounds” and continually circulate among students while they read and write about reading during guided practice and independent work. By providing short, on-the-spot scaffolds, you can support students and prevent small confusions from becoming large obstacles to learning. During this time, you'll also identify students who need more time to practice a strategy in their learning zone. To help them, you can schedule one or a series of 5-minute interventions while other students work on their own.
- **5-Minute Interventions:** Sometimes, as a result of what you learned during a 2- to 3-minute intervention, you need to schedule an investigatory 5-minute intervention to get a better handle on a student's needs. Then, with the student, you can estimate how many times you'll meet during a week. Other times, a 5-minute intervention might be all a student needs to correct a misconception or provide the necessary scaffold to get back to speed with grade-level expectations.
- **10- to 15-Minute Interventions:** There will be times when one student or a small group of students with a common problem will need more than five minutes of instruction that you scaffold. In the book, I suggest that you schedule longer interventions to help students make the necessary gains.
- **30- to 40-Minute Interventions:** This type of intervention is for students who are reading far below grade level and would benefit from 30 to 40 minutes of additional instruction at least three to five times a week. Usually, instruction for these students is scheduled outside of core reading classes. Frequently, a reading specialist or special education teacher teaches these classes. However, this book points out that extra classes should be a combination of teacher-led instruction, student practice, and independent reading of self-selected books. In the book, I offer schedules with suggestions that enable you to work with students who struggle because not all schools have the resources for scheduling separate classes. The intervention examples in this book feature different grade levels and include lessons that address the four kinds of interventions.

Chapter 3 shares intervention tools and strategies for teachers and students. It is important to have a variety of methods to use to support your students during intervention. Models for think-alouds, reteaching lessons, one-on-one conferences, and word study are included as well as supporting forms and checklists to help keep you organized. Additionally resources for students are included to help them track their own reading progress, self-monitor their comprehension, and set goals.

Chapters 4 and 5 use focus standards to discuss key reading strategies, such as inferring, finding main ideas and themes, and using context to determine a word's meaning. The texts for interventions in both chapters are available for you to use with your students. In both chapters, lessons for each type of intervention offer reasons for why I selected a specific intervention, my planning process, a list of several scaffolding possibilities, and often a classroom snapshot that shows the intervention in action. To help you respond to students who need more than the interventions you've offered, both chapters end with five reteaching lessons and the texts that go with each one.



Chapter 6 examines the importance of getting students to write about their reading. When students write about what they read, it provides a window into their understanding. Can they supply text evidence to support their ideas? Do they understand literary elements or the text structure? A variety of student resources are provided to support students' writing, such as graphic organizers and rubrics. Additionally, this chapter includes key interventions to use with students who struggle in writing about their reading.

Finally, **Chapter 7** concludes the book with key reminders and big ideas about reading intervention and the instructional practices that make the most impact with struggling readers.

In the **Appendices**, you'll also find conference forms for documenting interventions and student resource sheets that provide students with tips for reading literary and informational text deeply as well as guidelines for using context clues to figure out the meanings of unfamiliar words. I've shared the research on writing to improve reading and provided suggestions for you to try. Writing about reading is crucial as it's your ticket for getting into a student's head to observe his or her reading and thinking processes.

The **Digital Resource CD** is full of student and teacher resources, including templates, student reference pages, and engaging texts to use with the intervention lessons.

Each chapter closes with prompts and/or questions for discussing the information with a colleague or with a small group of teachers on your grade-level team or in your department. It's my hope that conversation will deepen your knowledge of the chapter's information and raise your comfort level with the information so that you will be able to try some lessons with your students or use the tools provided to create your own intervention lessons. In addition, I invite you to bring to a second meeting these intervention artifacts: students' assessments, goal-setting write-ups, and/or an intervention lesson that worked and one that didn't work so you can share ideas and offer feedback to support one another and your students.

As you read, reflect on, and discuss this book with colleagues, you will deepen your knowledge of the intervention tools and suggestions that can help you improve the reading of every student in your classroom.

—Laura Robb

Focus Standard 1

Determine what the text says explicitly and make logical inferences from the text using close reading; when writing or speaking, support conclusions drawn from the text by citing specific textual evidence.

The skills and strategies that follow are crucial for students to master in order to achieve proficiency with this standard.

Strategy	Intervention Timeframe	Resource Page(s)
Identifying Details (page 72)	5 minutes	<i>Bug Builders</i> (bug.pdf)
Retelling Text (pages 73–74)	30–40 minutes	<i>Rome</i> (rome.pdf)
Skimming to Locate Key Details (pages 75–76)	5 minutes	<i>Amazon Rainforest</i> (amazon.pdf) <i>Scaffolding Conference Form</i> (page 232)
Making Logical Inferences (pages 77–78)	15 minutes	<i>Unforgettable News Reports</i> (news.pdf)
Using Text Details to Support Discussion and Writing (pages 79–80)	5 minutes	<i>Roberto Clemente</i> (roberto.pdf)
Building Prior Knowledge (pages 81–82)	30–40 minutes	<i>Rome</i> (rome.pdf)



Identifying Details

Overview

In this intervention, students learn how text features can be used to identify details.

Materials

➔ *Bug Builders* (bug.pdf)

Procedure

1. Model how titles, headings, captions, and boldface words help determine important details.
 2. Make the rounds and observe students practice with a page from their informational books.
 3. If you observe that a student thinks that every detail is important, once again model how to use the text features to find important details.
- Show how you use the title and headings to find and cite details.
 - Have students use photographs, captions, charts, and diagrams to think of details these features highlight. Have them find more details in the text that relate to the features.
 - Explain that the title, headings, and boldface words can be used to find specific details. Then, model the process for students.
 - Have students reread paragraph by paragraph and cite details also showing how details link to the title and headings.
 - Ask students to read two to three paragraphs and tell the details, after you observe success when you offer support.
 - Show students details from the text and discuss what details are.
 - Have students read headings and predict the kind of details they will find in a section.
 - Ask students to read a paragraph and identify details in the text. Keep adding more text until they show they are comfortable identifying details.

Scaffolding Suggestions

- Model how you reread a paragraph and pinpoint key details.

Classroom Snapshot

"I think everything is an important detail," Mena says as I pause at her desk. She's reading *Bug Builders* by Timothy J. Bradley.

"Let me model again," I say. I read the heading *Underwater Living* and the caption: *This aquanaut lives and works in an underwater habitat.* Then I explain that I'll pull out details that relate to both.

"I get it," says Mena. "Aquanauts live underwater in a habitat that has oxygen. Scuba divers might not need oxygen in the future; we might be able to get it from the water like fish."

"You used the heading and caption to help you select key details. Now jot your ideas in your notebook," I say, and I move on.



Focus Standard 2

Determine central themes or ideas of a text and analyze their development across the text; summarize the key supporting ideas and details.

The skills and strategies that follow are crucial for students to master in order to achieve proficiency with this standard.

Strategy	Intervention Timeframe	Resource Page(s)
Using Details to Identify Main Idea (pages 84–85)	15 minutes	N/A
Using Details to Identify Central Idea (pages 86–87)	5 minutes	N/A
Summarizing the Text (pages 88–89)	30–40 minutes	<i>Nelson Mandela: Leading the Way</i> (mandela.pdf) <i>5 Ws Organizer for Summarizing</i> (pages 234–235)



Using Details to Identify Main Idea

Overview

This is a series of two 15-minute interventions to support students as they use details to help identify the main idea.

Materials

- Any informational instructional-level text

Procedures

Day 1

1. Model how the main idea can grow out of two or more paragraphs.
2. Discuss that the main idea is a key point or concept in the text.
3. Show how details and text features such as headings, photographs, and boxes can help you figure out the main idea. For example, break the thinking process into a few steps. Show how the image supports the text and the main idea or how the subheadings break the details into pieces to support the main idea.
4. Have the student explain what you did and how text features support your thinking.

Day 2

1. Ask the student to use photographs, text features, and text to figure out the main ideas in several other parts of the book.
2. By the end of the intervention session, the student can hopefully figure out main ideas without any prompting from you. If that is the case, schedule two five-minute conferences to have the student practice with different texts to ensure independence.

3. If he or she cannot work independently, return to modeling and find a different text to use, making sure that the student had enough background knowledge to learn from the new text and to identify main ideas.

Scaffolding Suggestions

- Review the meaning of the main idea: the central purpose or key concept that one or more paragraphs express.
- Show the student how you use details in a paragraph to determine the main idea. Explain that, often, the main idea of a paragraph is in the first or last sentence.
- Have the student practice finding the main idea paragraph by paragraph, always pointing to details that helped.
- Show the student details from the text and discuss what details are.
- Have the student read headings and predict the kind of details he or she will find in a section.
- Have the student use photographs and captions, charts, diagrams, etc. to think of the details these features highlight. Have him or her find more details in the text that relate to the features.



Using Details to Identify Main Idea *(cont.)*



Two 15-Minute Interventions

Classroom Snapshot: 15-Minute Intervention

While making the rounds, I discovered that a fifth-grade student found finding the main idea challenging. First, I conducted a five-minute investigative conference to determine the type of intervention I felt would benefit the student. I discovered that the student, Emma, expected the main idea to be the first sentence of each paragraph. My plan was to schedule two consecutive 15-minute conferences, assess where the student was with the process, and decide how to proceed.

In the first intervention, I showed how details and text features such as headings, photographs, and boxes can help you figure out the main idea. Then I had Emma repeat/explain what I did. She responded by saying, “The main idea is an important idea. You found it by looking at photos, captions, boxes, and headings. It looked easy for you. I’m not sure I can do this.”

To boost her self-confidence, I praised her for listening carefully and recalling what I did. Then, I broke the thinking process into a few steps. First, I asked her to study the photographs and illustration on pages 8–9 and think of a main idea: “She [Jane] loved all kinds of animals.” I tell her that if she can find a main idea with pictures, she can do it by reading page 8 and the box on page 9. “I got one about the mom—she respected Jane’s love of animals and encouraged Jane’s love of animals.”

I ask, “How did you figure that out?”

“Well, when her mom found that Jane had earthworms in bed with her, she (her mom) didn’t get angry. I think it’s because her mom loved animals.” I tell the student that I notice how well she used details to figure out a main idea.

By the end of the intervention session, Emma could figure out main ideas without any prompting from me.

Reteaching Lessons for Informational Texts

If the text and/or instructional approach used during your interventions is not helping students improve, then it's time to reteach using a different instructional approach and a more accessible text (Fisher and Frey 2013; Howard 2009). You can present these reteaching lessons to one student, a pair, or small group. It's possible that there will be times when the entire class or most of the class would benefit from a reteaching lesson. These lessons will support them, too. **Note:** Document each reteaching lesson with the *Reteaching Lesson Form* on page 239. Documenting each lesson will enable you to make decisions about future interventions.

When to Move On

- There will be students who don't absorb the process. Sometimes, it's helpful to move on to other skills and strategies and return to inferring after a few weeks have passed.
- Remember, some students might not become independent with a specific strategy during the year you have them. Keep practicing and planting seeds of understanding, because eventually the students will be able to move to independence.

Writing in Notebooks

Before students complete their notebook writing, have them plan by recording two to four points they want to include. Check these points *before* students write to make sure they are detailed. If their notes are too general, ask students to add specific details and let you see their plans again. Then, they can write using their plans as guides.

The following reteaching lessons are provided in this chapter.

Lesson Title	Resource Page(s)
Making Logical Inferences (pages 108–109)	<i>Nelson Mandela: Political Prisoner</i> (political.pdf)
Summarizing (pages 110–111)	<i>Amazon Rainforest</i> (amazon.pdf) <i>5 Ws Organizer for Summarizing</i> (pages 234–235)
Denotative and Connotative Meanings (pages 112–113)	<i>On the Scene: A CSI's Life</i> (scene.pdf)
Analyzing Structure (pages 114–115)	<i>Bug Builders</i> (bug.pdf) <i>Informational Text Features</i> (pages 236–237) <i>Informational Text Structures and Text Meanings</i> (page 238)
Author's Point of View (pages 116–117)	<i>Roberto Clemente</i> (roberto.pdf) <i>Rome</i> (rome.pdf)

Reteaching Lesson 1

Making Logical Inferences

Materials

- *Nelson Mandela: Political Prisoner* (political.pdf)

Goal

To help students understand that inferences are unstated or implied meanings and to model how to infer using details from an informational text.

Teaching the Lesson

1. Open the lesson by providing background information about Nelson Mandela and recap key information about inferring. If desired, read aloud the background information provided on page 109.
2. Distribute copies of *Nelson Mandela: Political Prisoner*.
3. Read the following think-aloud to students: “Today, we’re going to practice making inferences using an excerpt from a book about Nelson Mandela. Because an inference is not stated in the text, I have to use details to help me infer and find unstated meanings that grow out of the details. Listen as I read the first four sentences out loud.
4. Read the first four sentences of the text. Then continue the think-aloud: “The details that the government arrested Mandela, found him guilty, and put him in prison for five years help me infer that the government feared Mandela’s power among his people and those living outside of South Africa. The next set of details—that Mandela and his friends sabotaged or destroyed prison property and were sentenced to life in prison—resulted in me inferring that the government knew Mandela’s popularity and strength and wanted him isolated from others. I can also infer that these were fake charges because what was there to destroy in a prison cell.”
5. Have students discuss the think-aloud. Try to determine whether they understand how you used specific details to infer. If necessary, repeat your thinking and show them that your inferences were not in the text. Accept any inference that the details support.
6. Ask students to read the rest of the second paragraph. You select details and ask students to pair-share to use the details to infer.
 - Details: At first, Mandela refused to eat to protest the sentence. Eventually, he ate to live so he could end apartheid. Possible inferences: (1) Mandela was a clear thinker. When not eating didn’t work, he ate to stay healthy so he could eventually end apartheid. (2) Mandela had a dream of equality, and he ate to stay alive hoping he could help bring about his dream.
 - Details: Mandela became more passionate about his cause. He believed if he kept trying to change legal segregation, his people would live in a better place. Possible inferences: (1) Mandela was selfless because he put the welfare of his people above himself. (2) Mandela had perseverance and determination, and being in prison could not change that.
7. If students have difficulty using the details to infer, continue modeling for them.



8. Have students read the last two paragraphs on prison life. Ask them to pair-share to figure out key details and share these, and then use the details to infer.
9. Write the key details students offer on chart paper or display them on a whiteboard.
10. Invite partners to use the details to infer. Possible inferences: (1) Mandela's jailors were cruel; they withheld books and letters and made him work under "tough conditions." (2) Mandela must have been lonely because he only saw a family member once every six months and did not always receive their letters. (3) Mandela felt isolated from the world; he lived in a tiny cell, did not always receive letters and couldn't be sure his letters were delivered. (4) Mandela lived without comforts; his cell was 7 x 7 feet, and he had a uniform, a mat for sleeping and 2 blankets—there was no mention of a toilet or a sink with water.

Journal Response

Explain why Nelson Mandela was able to survive his harsh prison conditions and continue to think of helping his people. **Tip:** Use some of the inferences you made about Mandela to support your explanation.

Assessment Tips

- Determine who can infer and who requires scaffolding or another reteaching lesson.
- Use a text the student is reading to scaffold the process and move to a gradual release to the student.
- Use this selection to model using details to infer and focus on the parts that created difficulties for students.
- Prepare another reteaching lesson using a different text.

Nelson Mandela Background Information

Nelson Mandela, son of a tribal chief, worked hard to end apartheid in South Africa. Apartheid, legalized segregation, resulted in Africans living in certain parts of cities. Apartheid controlled the kind of jobs Africans could obtain, where they went to school, and even who they could marry. In South Africa, during apartheid, whites had freedom to choose where they lived, went to school, and their ability to earn money was greater.

After becoming a lawyer, Nelson Mandela worked with others to end apartheid and bring equality to all people in South Africa. With others, Mandela planned strikes, boycotts, and peaceful protests. The South African government threatened Mandela, but he continued to protest with others. In 1962, Nelson Mandela made a decision that was illegal for him; he traveled outside of South Africa to speak about freedom and against apartheid. After Mandela returned to South Africa, the government arrested him and sentenced Mandela to five years in prison.



Writing Short Responses

Overview

In this intervention, students use a T-chart to examine a character's personality traits and provide supporting text evidence. Then, they write a short response.

Materials

- ➔ *Adjectives That Describe Personality Traits* (page 223)
- ➔ any instructional-level text

Procedures

1. Distribute copies of *Adjectives That Describe Personality Traits*. Instruct students to review the chart and then discuss what a personality trait is.
2. Have students give you examples of personality traits for a family member or a friend.
3. Using the selected instructional text, review and discuss any features found in the text and the information that they provide.
4. Select a character (or the narrator) from the text. Ask students to use what the character/narrator says and does, as well as any text features to determine one personality trait.

5. Help students set up the T-chart. Have the students write the personality trait on the left side and offer text evidence on the right side.
6. Have students add to their T-charts based on other events, actions, or information from the text. Once they have completed this, have students write a short response to summarize the character/narrator's personality.
7. Based on what students do, decide whether they can work alone or if you need to set up any additional interventions.

Teacher

TIP

When students have difficulty writing about their reading, check to make sure that they can explain orally how they infer or analyze an event or information. Expressing orally an understanding of applying higher-level thinking to a text precedes writing. However, when students understand but avoid writing, show them that their ideas are valid by starting the writing for them and then asking them to complete the task. This strategy permits the student to observe you writing their words and is an effective way to build self-confidence and the ability to risk putting their thoughts on paper.

Writing Short Responses *(cont.)*




2- to 3-Minute
Intervention

Scaffolding Suggestions

- Make sure each student understands the directions.
- Model by writing a response and thinking aloud to reveal your process.
- Make sure that the student can infer and analyze.
- Ask students to tell you what they discussed with their partner. Take the student's pencil and write in his or her notebook as he or she speaks.
- Compliment the student's recall and thinking, and return the writing responsibility back to the student: "What you said showed me you can infer and analyze this character (or whatever the response is). I know you can make one more inference and show your support. Raise your hand when you're done, and I'll come back and read it."

Classroom Snapshot: Jane Goodall



A group of sixth-grade students has completed reading pages 20 and 21 in *Jane Goodall: The Early Years* by William B. Rice. Students set up a T-chart and write *Jane's Personality Traits* at the top of the left column and *Text Evidence* at the top of the right column. I ask students to discuss two things they learned about Jane's personality by using the text and text features and then completing the T-chart on their own.

While circulating, I hear a pair saying that they learned chimps like bananas, and I pause to redirect their thinking with a question: What can you learn about Jane's personality from the fact that chimps like bananas? Students giggle, but one says that she's a good observer because she noticed the chimp wanted the banana inside the tent. "Good use of inferring," I say. "Write that on your T-chart and find a second trait."

As I continue to make the rounds I notice a pair of students who aren't talking or writing. Both admit they are unsure about what I mean by personality traits. They say that they learned that Jane likes chimps. I schedule a 5-minute intervention with students that day, during independent reading and discover that to help these students understand personality traits they would benefit from a 15-minute intervention followed by a few 5-minute interventions.



Name: _____ Date: _____



List of data I reviewed:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

Learning Goal:

List of the specific things I will do to reach my learning goal:

Date I believe I can reach my goal: _____

Six Kinds of Context Clues

1. **Definitions and Synonyms.** A definition is given or a similar word is used immediately after or close to the unfamiliar word. A definition or synonym follows a comma, a dash, or words, such as *or*, *is called*, *that is*, and *in other words*.

Example: Amazon water is **fresh water**. That means it does not have much salt in it.

2. **Concrete Examples.** An example is provided that helps you figure out the word's meaning. Examples can be found in the sentence, in a new sentence, or following these words/phrases: *for example*, *such as*, and *especially*.

Example: While Roberto was one of the best players, he was never asked by any company to **endorse** its products in commercials or advertisements.

3. **Restated Meanings:** The word is defined by restating its meaning in simpler terms. Often commas set off the word from the meaning. You'll also find the meaning of a word stated after words and phrases such as: *or*, *that is*, and *in other words*.

Example: **Sericulture** is the practice of raising silkworms to make silk.

4. **Comparison:** The author uses a comparison to help you understand a tough word.

Example: Her dress was as **flamboyant** as a peacock's feathers.

5. **Words or phrases that modify.** Modifiers such as adjectives, adverbs, or relative clauses can have clues to a word's meaning. A relative clause begins with *who*, *which*, *that*, *whose*, or *whom* and often explains or extends an idea or word in the main part of the sentence.

Example: It [the Amazon River] is so big (adverb, adjective) that it breaks into many **stems**.

6. **Conjunctions that show relationships and link ideas.** Coordinating and subordinating conjunctions show relationships and help you link unknown words and ideas to known words and ideas. *And*, *but*, *or*, *not*, *for*, and *yet* are coordinating conjunctions. Common subordinating conjunctions are *when*, *if*, *since*, *whenever*, and *because*.

Example: An **epidemic** occurs when a disease spreads through a wide area.