Command Sentences

1. Focus

Explain Command Sentences

Say: We know that there are different types of sentences. One type of sentence is a command sentence. A command sentence is a sentence that tells readers to do something (or tells a character in a story what to do). These are very important in persuasive essays, because writers are trying to persuade readers to do things in these texts. The subject of a command is always the word you, even if the word you doesn’t actually appear in the sentence. Listen to the following sentence: “Compare U.S. students with students from other countries.” This is a command because it tells the reader to do something. In this sentence, the subject is you, even though the word you is not included. This is called the implied or understood subject. Commands begin with a verb and leave out the subject.

Model Using Commands

Display the modeling text on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources. Read the text aloud to students.

1. Look at the data in the chart.
2. Examine the table on page 14.
3. Compare U.S. students with those from other countries and you will see how dire the situation is.

Modeling Text

Say: I can tell that all three of these sentences are commands. They all tell the reader to do something. The first sentence tells the reader to look at the data in a chart. The second sentence tells the reader to examine a table. The third sentence tells the reader to make a comparison. Even though I don’t see a word in any sentence telling the subject, this is implied. The subject of all three sentences is you. Writers use commands in their persuasive essays to help readers locate information in the text, and also to tell readers how to take action once they are persuaded of a point.
2. Rehearse

Practice Using Commands

Ask students to work with partners to write three commands that tell their partner to do something.

If your class includes English language learners or other students who need support, use “Strategies to Support ELs.”

Share Commands

Invite volunteers to share their commands with the class. Record their commands on a chart or using the interactive whiteboard. Ask the following questions:

- What is the subject in your command?
- What does your command tell the subject to do?

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: We learned that commands are sentences that tell a reader to do something. Commands begin with a verb and do not include the subject. The subject of a command is always the word you, even though it is not included. We use commands in our persuasive writing when we want to tell readers to do something or to feel a certain way about a topic.

If you would like to give students additional practice writing command sentences, have them complete BLM 9.

4. Share

Review and provide corrective feedback based on students’ answers to BLM 9. Ask students to share what they learned about command sentences.

Strategies to Support ELs

Beginning

Provide simple commands with gestures for students to follow in order for them to gain a better understanding of the concept. For example:

Sit in your chair.
Stand next to your desk.
Hand me the pencil.

Intermediate and Advanced

Pair students with fluent English speakers to complete the practice sentences and BLM 9.