

**TEMPLATE 11.** Personal Sequence Narrative Expanded with Relevant Facts (*Appendix 3, page 224*)

Name: _____
 Date: _____
 Day: _____

Personal Sequence Narrative Expanded with Relevant Facts

TITLE:	<u>A Fire Drill at School: Learning the Rules</u>
TOPIC SENTENCE:	<u>Last week, we participated in a fire drill at school. It happened during second period language arts class.</u>
FIRST, Relevant Fact(s):	<u>First, the fire alarm rang.</u> <u>The ringing came from the hallway.</u>
THEN,	<u>Then, we walked quickly to the door.</u>

DEVELOPMENT OF FLOW WHEN ADDING DETAILS: A MICRO-DISOURSE STRATEGY As noted earlier, elaboration of text places heavy demands on verbal working memory. Many students struggle to supply factual details that are relevant, and they may lack the mental energy and strategies to analyze their narratives. They need to learn how to

1. determine what kind of facts to add,
2. examine their detail sentences to make sure they flow smoothly, and
3. evaluate whether each sentence links logically with the preceding sentence.

These learners may benefit from isolated micro-discourse practice starting with units of text comprising two sentences.

A helpful strategy is to supply a theme-centered sentence and then model and guide students in adding a detail sentence. Teachers can show students a two-sentence sequence that flows logically and then contrast it with a sequence that is tangential. The examples below use “relevant fact” sentences to help students recognize when a fact is relevant or tangential. In the teacher sentence, the noun to be elaborated is underlined in order to remind students that their “relevant fact detail” needs to expand on this noun’s key features.



SMOOTH AND RELEVANT FLOW

TEACHER SENTENCE: After that, the fire truck arrived.

“RELEVANT FACT DETAIL”: The fire truck was equipped with a long ladder and huge hose.

TANGENTIAL FLOW

TEACHER SENTENCE: After that, the fire truck arrived.

“TANGENTIAL FACT DETAIL”: My five-year-old nephew played with a red fire truck.

Students examine these examples and discuss why one “relevant fact detail” is more semantically appropriate than the other. After analyzing the teacher’s models, learners then practice oral and written production of their own “relevant fact detail,” as modeled in the example of smooth and relevant flow above.

By helping students to identify semantic features of key nouns, teachers guide them to select characteristics that they wish to address in their “relevant fact details.” Consider the following piece of micro-discourse:

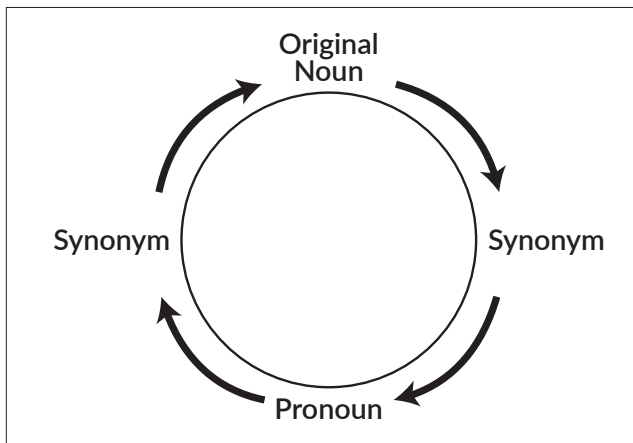
After that, the fire truck arrived.

The vehicle was equipped with a ladder and several hoses.

It had come from another fire across town.

The starter sentence, *After that, the fire truck arrived*, could be followed by additional “relevant fact details” that elaborate on different aspects of the vehicle. *The vehicle was equipped with a ladder and several hoses* elaborates the components of the truck. The sentence *It had come from another fire across town* expands on the location. In order to engage in this kind of analysis and elaboration, learners must already have prior knowledge and strategies for identifying semantic features of key nouns. (See chapters 2 and 3 for discussions of thematic instruction and semantic features.)

COHESIVE TIE EXERCISE In the first phase of learning to formulate detail sentences for elaboration, students repeat the key noun in the preceding sentence. While this results in redundant use of the key noun, it allows the student to focus exclusively on semantic analysis and elaboration of that noun. Once students show mastery of elaborating with a single “relevant fact detail,” they are ready for the Cohesive Tie Strategy: they use a pronoun or synonym to replace redundant nouns, as illustrated in figure 16. After using the original noun, students should practice using a synonym and pronoun before they restate the original noun. These synonyms and pronouns are referred to as “cohesive ties.”

**FIGURE 16.** Cohesive Tie Strategy

The following are examples of two-sentence sequences that show different cohesive ties.

REPLACEMENT WITH SYNONYM

TEACHER SENTENCE: After that, the fire truck arrived.

STUDENT'S "RELEVANT FACT DETAIL": The vehicle was equipped with a long ladder and a huge hose.

REPLACEMENT WITH PRONOUN

TEACHER SENTENCE: After that, the fire truck arrived.

STUDENT'S "RELEVANT FACT DETAIL": It was equipped with a ladder and a huge hose.

Here is a three-sentence sequence in which the student employs both cohesive ties:

After that, the fire truck arrived.

The vehicle was equipped with a ladder and several hoses.

It pulled up right in front of the main building.

Students can be encouraged to memorize the phrase *noun-synonym-pronoun* as a mnemonic device to cue their use of the Cohesive Tie Strategy. Learners need oral and written review and practice producing “relevant fact details” with cohesive ties in order to gain a basic sense of how ideas can flow logically and smoothly in text. Once learners show that they have internalized and can apply the Cohesive Tie Strategy, they can be allowed to use it flexibly, varying the order of the ties based on their awareness of how the text sounds or flows. Students’ skills in producing “relevant fact details” and cohesive ties support their learning a wider array of detail sentences for elaborating their narratives.