**JUICE language and style summary  
Last updated 1/3/18**

**General**

JUICE is about helping adults become better functioning in the area of basic math and communication (writing). We are not covering any traditional curriculum, but focusing instead on areas of weaknesses in the CfA population and on skills that they need in their daily lives.

For math, we are assuming they are using a calculator, and have some basic whole number skills. We are not worrying about the conceptual underpinnings needed for future math courses.

JUICE is intended to be informal, friendly, and sometimes fun, but clear and accurate. We use humor in some of the contexts, the names, and the mini-games to keep things light.

Language in any UI element requiring a student action should be crystal clear, and not require inferential reasoning to understand.

**Contexts**

The contexts should be lightly drawn –mental bandwidth should not be used up by trying to understand the context.

The context should not have the potential to disturb anyone.

NO: Presentation of “norms” that are not everyone’s norm.

Relationship

Traditional family

Violence

Religion

Man’s humanity to man in any form including making fun of someone and references to unkind behavior

Should be suitable for adult learners, and accessible across the country and across a range of socio economic levels

**Language**

The language should be clear, direct, natural, simple—the voice of a supportive coach. Some key points:

1. Clear, direct, natural, simple—the voice of a supportive coach
2. Not wordy
3. Use “You” to engage the reader in the context.
4. But avoid “You should do this.” Instead be direct: “Do this”
5. No parentheses except as math grouping symbols.
6. Avoid passive except when there is no other simple way to say it
7. Not technical
8. We are teaching terminology only when no other words will do
9. 8th grade
10. Avoid the “ghostly we:” No “Let’s”
11. Iffy on “consider” If there is a better way to say “Consider this or that” we should use it.
12. No “determine.” Instead, use “find.” “Identify” is ok as long as it’s not being used for “find”
13. In Math, we are NOT calling the things they are working on “problems” or “examples” or “questions.” In fact, we have no word for the things they are working on (ugh). Instead we reference “information” as in “the information above” or “the table to the right.”
14. It’s OK to use “write” in Math. “Write a fraction”
15. Students are easily confused by input instructions requiring symbols from the keyboard. The convention is to show the character followed by the word “symbol” and what it is used for.

Use the / symbol as the fraction bar

Use the \* symbol for multiplication

**Part headers**

1. In Writing and Reading, the part headers should use gerunds as much as possible, and address the learning challenge that the skill being covered is addressing. Should avoid using only a technical name
2. In Math, there is a set of conventions for the problem solving method. See Basic Math or the problem solving mini-lessons.

**Layout**

1. Overviews use the left / right style as much as possible. Sometimes a section will start or end with a full width step if there is no reasonable illustration or example.

We try to think of the whiteboard on the right as what the instructor would be putting on the board or the overhead, and the left as what they are saying.

As often as possible, it should be an example of what is being said on the left, and should connect to the context.

If there is example, think of it instead as what goes in the PowerPoint, and what is on the left is what the presenter is saying.

1. Try its use this format also. In this case, the right is reserved for the interactions unless they have too much text to fit.

Generally speaking, we don’t have examples in the Try its—the interactions are supposed to be the examples, and the feedback is supposed to help the student get it right if they aren’t seeing it on their own.

Try its should always use full width steps for exposition that doesn’t have an interaction UNLESS there is an illustration that accompanies the exposition. The illustration can go on the right if necessary, but we usually put that on the left as well.

When the interaction is on the right, the prompt or question is usually on the left, unless the interaction is completing a sentence.

>>Students will not read the text on the left unless they don’t understand the interaction. They treat the text on the left as resource material. Any text that you want them to read should span both columns.

1. Floating boxes in Try its should only appear where they are relevant. It confuses students to have text floating in the right column that is not relevant to what they are doing.
2. Avoid dense text. Break paragraphs up into single sentence paragraphs if necessary.

* Single column steps should have no more than 4 lines of text MAX unless it is presenting a reading.
* Double column steps should only have 2 or 3 lines of text.
* For spacing, it is possible to combine two steps—start with a single column step followed by a double column step.

JUICE is not a book. It needs to be easy to read with plenty of white space.

**Formatting highlights.**

The Authoring\_Refresher and Guided Practice spreadsheet includes many formatting details. Here are a few:

1. Headlines, titles, part headers etc are deliberately initial cap:

Home office New carpet Car repairs Understanding sentence clauses

1. Important words should be **bold** the first time they are used.

But! Avoid using **bold** to make words stand out. This becomes very tiring to read and also encourages readers to only look at the bold words. If there are so many words that you feel you need to do this to focus the student, you have too many words. Exception: Citations formatting mini-lessons

1. Anything that would normally use quotes should be *italic,* including in the feedback. The only exception is the part headers, where we don’t have access to italics.
2. We do not use all CAPS for emphasis. Instead, use bold, especially in the feedback. All caps looks like yelling.
3. Labels should be grey bold in the Overviews. In the Try its, they should be bold black.
4. Examples should be purple
   1. The Overview white board has purple text by default. If there is exposition text annotating an example in the Overview, it should be black.
   2. The left column of the Overview is black by default. If there is an example there (happens in Writing, but not so much in math), it should be purple.
5. Yellow highlighting should be used on the right to call out words we want them to pay attention to. It should not be used on the left. Not used in Math at all, really. A presentation that relies too much on yellow highlighting is an accessibility problem.
6. Generally speaking we are not using indented formatting in the Overviews. Numbered lists should have two character spaces after the number and a line break between. If you want to use a bulleted list, you should insert padding-left html in the <ul> tag in the source to un-indent it:

<ul style="padding-left: 15px;">

1. Avoid the temptation to decorate the text presentation by using styles, tables, and decorative illustrations. When the mini-lessons are viewed in the site, there is more visual interest added by the site frame and decoration in the mini-lessons detracts from the “clean, clear, and understandable” presentation. Especially do not use Architect’s Daughter for primary exposition that is coming from JUICE. It should be reserved for text we want to present as something the student would think or write
2. In the whiteboard, if there are groupings under labels, each group should have an extra half line space between it and previous group.
3. Steps with no whiteboard or interactions should have a line space of padding before the next step.
4. We should not use Caution! Students think we are yelling at them. Instead use Careful!
5. The Ask yourself and Did you know boxes are supposed to use all caps when followed by additional text
   1. ASK YOURSELF: Deciding if a sentence is a run-on
   2. DID YOU KNOW: Rounding to 4 decimal places

A Did you know with no additional title is Did you know? (not all caps)

See Authoring\_Refresher and Guided Practice spreadsheet for more details