



# Writing Skills

## Clarity and Simplification

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## **Clarity and Simplification**

So many middle school and high school students struggle to express their thoughts and ideas clearly and concisely. These three worksheet pages allow students to work on simplifying sentences, thereby improving the clarity and precision of their writing. Students learn that extra words do not always add meaning. These tasks also help students improve their comprehension, since simplifying requires an analysis of meanings. Answer keys are included.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Say It Simply, Clearly, and Directly

**Simplify the following sentences:**

- 1) School is the place where I met Sally who is my girlfriend.

\_\_\_\_\_

- 2) Last week and the week before and the week before that I went surfing.

\_\_\_\_\_

- 3) On the day after tomorrow I'll visit him.

\_\_\_\_\_

- 4) On the top of the page, but not in the middle, on the right side, up in the corner draw a circle.

\_\_\_\_\_

- 5) She hit him in the head and the blow was so hard that he fell down and she didn't mean to do it, it was just an accident.

\_\_\_\_\_

- 6) My math teacher gave me a grade that was so low it was a fail.

\_\_\_\_\_

- 7) My oldest brother and my second-oldest brother took me to the park.

\_\_\_\_\_

- 8) I ran into the woman who babysits my little sister named Caroline.

\_\_\_\_\_

- 9) Every time I always arrive on time for my job where I work.

\_\_\_\_\_

- 10) Draw a small circle, very small, it's the same size as a fruit, like a cherry.

\_\_\_\_\_



**11)** Along the side of the street, look to the left, that's where you will see the International House of Pancakes.

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**12)** Meet me where Main Street and Maple Drive cross each other.

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**13)** Go down to the end of the block and at the corner that's where you need to make a right turn.

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**14)** After you finish that sandwich you are eating let's you and me go for a walk because it is spring and it is such a beautiful day.

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**15)** Right in the middle, not the end or the beginning, of this week I want you to call me on my phone.

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## Say It Simply, Clearly, and Directly—Answer Key

**Simplify the following phrases and sentences:**

- 1) I met my girlfriend Sally at school.
- 2) For the past three weeks I went surfing.
- 3) (Name the day, i.e., Wednesday) I'll visit him.
- 4) In the top right corner draw a circle.
- 5) She accidentally hit him in the head so hard that he fell down.
- 6) My math teacher gave me a failing grade.
- 7) My two oldest brothers took me to the park.
- 8) I ran into Caroline, my little sister's babysitter.
- 9) I always arrive on time for my job.
- 10) Draw a small circle the size of a cherry.
- 11) On the left side of the street you will see the International House of Pancakes.
- 12) Meet me at the corner of Main Street and Maple Drive.
- 13) Go down to the end of the block and turn right.
- 14) After you finish that sandwich let's go for a walk because it is such a beautiful spring day.
- 15) Call me in the middle of the week.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Say It Simply, Clearly, and Directly—2

**Simplify the following sentences:**

- 1) That baby kitten isn't able to find the place where his food bowl is.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2) At the time that you will be in Alaska you will then notice that there is ice that is blue.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3) When it is Monday morning, every Monday, I open my jar and fill it to the top with chocolates to give to my students.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 4) I've tried and tried, but I can't figure out how to solve that puzzle.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 5) The school where I was in high school at is in Alabama.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 6) The character who is my favorite one is named Charlie.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 7) The subject in school that I was the worst at was the history of the world.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 8) I used to have a dog, but then he died, and ever since his death I'm heartbroken.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 9) I've tried carrots cooked but I only like them when they're raw.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 10) The teacher I have who teaches us about psychology is fantastic.  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Say It Simply, Clearly, and Directly—2

## Answer Key

**Simplify the following sentences:**

- 1) That kitten can't find his food bowl.
- 2) When you're in Alaska you'll see blue ice.
- 3) Every Monday morning I fill my jar with chocolates for my students.
- 4) I just can't solve that puzzle.
- 5) I went to high school in Alabama.
- 6) Charlie is my favorite character.
- 7) Global history was my worst subject.
- 8) Ever since my dog's death I'm heartbroken.
- 9) I like raw carrots, not cooked.
- 10) My psychology teacher is fantastic.

