

RE-IMAGINING THE CURRICULUM: Meeting the Grammar Needs of Today's Students



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Dr. Folse is Professor of TESOL at the University of Central Florida, where he has taught in the undergraduate TEFL program, the master's in TESOL program, and the PhD in TESOL program. He has taught English in the U.S., Japan, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait. His research has appeared in TESOL Quarterly, TESL Reporter, Language Teacher (JALT), Perspectives (TESOL Arabia), among others. His main research interests are best research-based teaching practices in teaching grammar and vocabulary in ESL. He has done teacher training all over the world and is the author of 67 textbooks, including six books in National Geographic Learning's *Great Writing* series as well as three books in the *Grammar for Great Writing* Series.

About the audience

Where are you located today?

- A. North America
- B. Central America
- C. South America
- D. Europe
- E. Middle East
- F. Africa
- G. Asia

- Which area are you in?
- Which country?



About the audience

How many years have you taught ESL or EFL?

- A. 0-3
- B. 4-7
- C. 8-10
- D. 11-15
- E. 16-20
- F. 20+

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Consider these 2 questions:

1. What grammar do students need?

NOT:

2. What grammar do teachers think students need?

My Experiences with Grammar:

Teaching English:

- ESL in the US in intensive English programs
- EFL in Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Japan, Kuwait

Studying Foreign Languages:

- French in high school and university
- Spanish in high school and on my own
- Arabic with a tutor in Saudi Arabia
- Malay by watching TV with subtitles in Malaysia
- Japanese in an intensive Japanese program
- German in the US and in an intensive course in Malaysia
- Lots of self study

Approaches:

Direct grammar, Indirect Grammar, Speaking, Writing

We know that grammar is important in mastering a new language. <u>Teachers agree</u>. Learners agree. As a result, the curriculum of most programs talks specifically about grammar that their students will study in their courses.

How does your program teach grammar? Perhaps you use a book specifically for grammar, or maybe you use a book with grammar integrated throughout. However, a very important question for teachers to consider in 2017 is which grammar we are teaching. Are we teaching grammar that our students need? Or are we teaching grammar because it is what we learned many years ago.

In today's talk, we will look at the grammar needs of today's students as we consider: (1) verb tenses in academic writing, (2) verb tenses in conversational English, and (3) vocabulary + grammar (the specific vocabulary connected with one grammar focus, modals). We will look at actual examples from student writing and spoken English as well as teaching materials that reflect this new information. In 2017, it is time for all of us TESOL educators to really put our learners' true English needs at the forefront.

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In today's talk, we will look at the grammar needs of today's students as we consider:

- (1) verb tenses in academic writing,
- (2) verb tenses in conversational English, and
- (3) vocabulary + grammar (the specific vocabulary connected with one grammar focus, MODALS).

We will look at actual examples from student writing and spoken English as well as teaching materials that reflect this new information. In 2017, it is time for all of us TESOL educators to really put our learners' true English needs at the forefront.

POLL: If you can teach and practice only 5, WHICH 5 would YOU choose?

	Verb Tenses in	Academic Writing	
simple present		present progressive	
simple past		past progressive	
simple future		future progressive	
present perfec	t	pres perf prog	
past perfect		past perf prog	
future perfect		future perf prog	
modals		imperative	
past modals			1

A **REAL** Needs Analysis

In your program, which came first? a. The curriculum b. Your textbook Which SHOULD come first? WHY?

Which of these do we need?	Which are not needed?
simple present	present progressive
simple past	past progressive
simple future	future progressive
present perfect	pres perf prog
past perfect	past perf prog
future perfect	future perf prog
modals	imperative
past modals	1

Uthman Al-Zuhairy, THESIS Univ of Central Florida 2016	Frequency of Verb Tenses in College NW (English Comp)
an original corpus of UNIV STUDENT WRITING	31 research papers written by undergraduate students
ENGLISH	size: 103,181 words
	papers varied in length from 1,964 words to 6,676 words
	15

Uthman Al-Zuhairy, THESIS Univ of Central Florida 2016	Frequency of Verb Tenses in College NW (English Comp)
simple present %	present progressive %
simple past %	past progressive%
simple future%	future progressive%
present perfect%	pres perf prog%
past perfect%	past perf prog%
future perfect%	future perf prog%
modals %	imperative%
past modals%	

Uthman Al-Zuhairy, THESIS Univ of Central Florida 2016	Frequency of Verb Tenses in College NW (English Comp)
simple present 50%	present progressive 2%
simple past 29%	past progressive 1%
simple future 2%	future progressive
present perfect 5%	pres perf prog
past perfect 1%	past perf prog
future perfect	future perf prog
modals 10%	imperative
past modals	17

Uthman Al-Zuhairy, THESIS Univ of Central Florida 2016	Frequency of Verb Tenses in College NW (English Comp)
simple present 50%	present progressive 2%
simple past 29%	past progressive 1%
simple future 2%	future progressive
present perfect 5%	pres perf prog
past perfect 1%	past perf prog
future perfect	future perf prog
modals 10%	imperative
past modals	18

Uthman Al-Zuhairy, THESIS Univ of Central Florida 2016	Frequency of Verb Tenses in College NW (English Comp)
simple present 50%	present progressive 2%
simple past 29%	
simple future 2%	
present perfect 5%	
modals 10%	

Uthman Al-Zuhairy Univ of Central Flo		Frequency of Verb Tenses in College NW (English Comp)
simple present	50%	
simple past	29%	
modals	10%	
present perfect	5%	
simple future	2%	
present progressive	e 2 %	
		20

Bushra Qahtani, THESIS Univ of Central Florida 2017	Frequency of Verb Tenses in College NW (HISTORY)
an original corpus of UNIV STUDENT WRITING	130 assignments written by undergraduate students
HISTORY	size: 101,713 words
	(Included two papers from each of the 65 students)
	21

Bushra Qahtani, THESIS Univ of Central Florida 2017	Frequency of Verb Tenses in College NW (HISTORY)
simple present %	present progressive %
simple past %	past progressive%
simple future%	future progressive%
present perfect %	pres perf prog%
past perfect %	past perf prog %
future perfect%	future perf prog%
modals %	imperative %
past modals %	22

POLL:

What are the top 3 tenses for HISTORY?

Bushra Qahtani, THESIS Univ of Central Florida 2017	Uthman Al-Zuhairy, THESIS Univ of Central Florida 2016	
1. ???	simple present 50%	
2. ???	simple past 29%	
3. ???	modals 10%	
	89%	
	present perfect 5%	
	simple future 2%	
	present progressive 2%	
	2	!3

Bushra Qahtani, THESIS Univ of Central Florida 2017	Frequency of Verb Tenses in College NW (HISTORY)
simple present %	present progressive %
simple past %	past progressive%
simple future%	future progressive%
present perfect %	pres perf prog %
past perfect %	past perf prog %
future perfect%	future perf prog%
modals %	imperative %
past modals %	24

Bushra Qahtani, THESIS Univ of Central Florida 2017	Frequency of Verb Tenses in College NW (HISTORY)	
simple present 39%	present progressive 1%	
simple past 44%	past progressive 1%	
simple future 1%	future progressive	
present perfect 1%	pres perf prog	
past perfect 2%	past perf prog	
future perfect	future perf prog	
modals 9%	imperative	
past modals 2%*	25	

Bushra Qahtani, THESIS Univ of Central Florida 2017	Frequency of Verb Tenses in College NW (HISTORY)		
simple present 39%	present progressive 1%		
simple past 44%	past progressive 1%		
simple future 1%	future progressive		
present perfect 1%	pres perf prog		
past perfect 2%	past perf prog		
future perfect	future perf prog		
modals 9%	imperative		
past modals 2%*			

Bushra Qahtani, THESIS Univ of Central Florida 2017		Frequency of Verb Tenses in College NW (HISTORY)
simple present	39%	
simple past	44%	
past perfect	2%	
modals	9%	
past modals	2%*	27

Bushra Qahtani, THESIS Univ of Central Florida 2017		Frequency of Verb Tenses in College NW (HISTORY)
simple past	44%	
simple present	39%	
modals	9%	
past perfect	2%	
past modals	2%*	
		28

Bushra Qahtani, THESIS Univ of Central Florida 2017 HISTORY		Uthman Al-Zuhairy, THESIS Univ of Central Florida 2016 ENGLISH		
simple past	44%	simple present	50%	
simple present	39%	simple past	29%	
modals	9%	modals	10%	
92%		89%		
past perfect	2%	present perfect	5%	
past modals	2%*	simple future	2 %	
		present progressive	2%	
				29

#2. Verb Tenses in Spoken English

- Now we move to SPOKEN ENGLISH.
- Are verb tenses DIFFERENT? Or SIMILAR? HOW?
- Finding a suitable corpus is difficult.
- So what do you predict we will discover about verb tenses in spoken English (compared to the essay writing we just looked at)?
- Let's consider the TV show "Friends" as our corpus

POLL: Predict the top 5 tenses for "Friends"	Frequency of Verb Tenses in Conversation (FRIENDS)		
simple present %	present progressive %		
simple past %	past progressive %		
simple future%	future progressive%		
present perfect%	pres perf prog%		
past perfect %	past perf prog%		
future perfect%	future perf prog%		
modals %	imperative %		
past modals %	31		

POLL: ANSWERS for the top 5 tenses for "Friends"		Frequency of Verb Tenses in Conversation (FRIENDS)		
simple present	50 %	present progressive	6 %	
simple past	13 %	past progressive	2 %	
simple future	6 %	future progressive	%	
present perfect	2 %	pres perf prog	%	
past perfect	%	past perf prog	%	
future perfect	%	future perf prog	%	
modals	11 %	imperative	9 %	
past modals	%		32	

POLL: ANSWERS for the top 5 tenses for "Friends"		Frequency of Verb Tenses in Conversation (FRIENDS)		
simple present	50 %	present progressive	6 %	
simple past	13 %	past progressive	2 %	
simple future	6 %	future progressive	 %	
present perfect	2 %	pres perf prog	%	
past perfect	%	past perf prog	 %	
future perfect	%	future perf prog	%	
modals	11 %	imperative	9 %	
p ast modals	<u></u> %		33	

POLL: ANSWERS for the top 5 tenses for "Friends"		Frequency of Verb Tenses in Conversation (FRIENDS)	
simple present	50 %	present progressive	6 %
simple past	13 %	past progressive	2 %
simple future	6 %		
present perfect 2 %			
modals	11 %	imperative	9 %
			34

POLL: ANSWERS for the top 5 tenses for "Friends"		Frequency of Verb Tenses in Conversation (FRIENDS)
simple present	50 %	
simple past	13 %	
modals	11 %	
imperative	9 %	
simple future	6 %	
present progressive	6 %	
present perfect	2 %	
past progressive	2 %	35

ENGLISH (written)		HISTORY (written)		<i>Friends</i> (spoken)	
simple present	50 %	simple past	44 %	simple present	50 %
simple past	29 %	simple present	39 %	simple past	13 %
modals	10 %	modals	9 %	modals	11 %
present perfect	5 %	past perfect	2 %	imperative	9 %
simple future	2 %	past modals	2 %*	simple future	6 %
present progressive	e 2 %			present progressiv	re 6%
				present perfect	2 %
				past progressive	2 %

#3. Grammar + Vocabulary

Traditional View:

Grammar and vocabulary are separate linguistic creatures

More Recent Findings

Certain lexical/vocabulary items tend to co-occur with certain grammar points

#3. Grammar + Vocabulary

Example of Connection between Grammar and Vocabulary

Grammar:

HOW MANY is used with COUNT NOUNS

Vocabulary:

What do YOU think are 8 nouns that are common collocations for "HOW MANY"?

1	5.
2	6.
3	7.
4	8

#3. Grammar + Vocabulary

Example of Connection between Grammar and Vocabulary

Grammar:

HOW MANY is used with COUNT NOUNS

Vocabulary:

1. people

2. times

3. years

4. hours

5. children

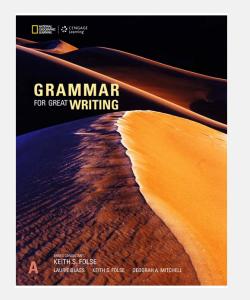
6. kids

7. women

8. days

What can you tell me about ...

MODALS



Today we learned that modals are very important:

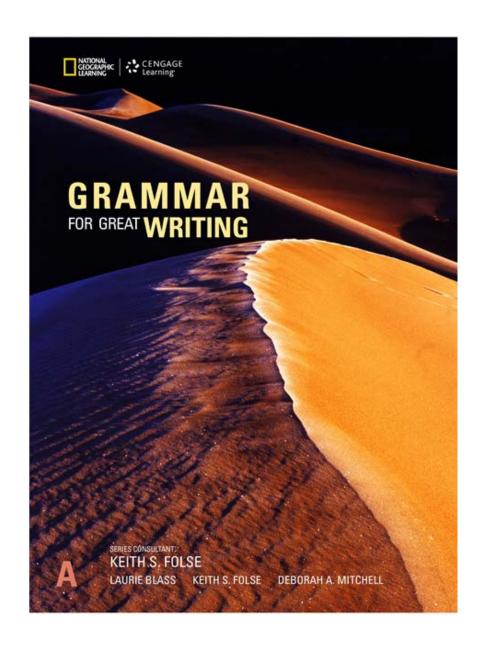
- 10% of written academic
- 11% of spoken conversation
- 3rd behind present and past tenses
- More common than 10 of the 12 tenses

3 TASKS from *Grammar for Great Writing*

BOOK A

Unit 10:

"WRITING with MODALS"



Task 1: Common Uses of Grammar

Look at p. 125: Common Uses

#8

#9

10

Not the usual way to talk about MODALS

10.3 Using Modals (continued)	
7. The negative forms of must and have to change the meanings:	
a. Must not means something is prohibited.	Audience members must not cheer or yell during the televised debate.
 b. Do/Does/Did not have to means something is not necessary. 	Florence Nightingale did not have to work , yet she wanted to be a nurse.
8. Modals are useful in a conclusion to make a suggestion or give advice.	Since we need more schools, we should vote for the new bond. (<i>suggestion, recommendation</i>) Since we need more schools, we must vote for the new bond. (<i>necessity, very strong advice</i>)
Modals are useful at the end of a survey or scientific research to show a future possibility.	The results of this survey could be very useful for planning future activities.
10. The modals can, could, may, and should are useful in opinion writing. They can help to make the writer sound more believable.	Eating fresh fruit for breakfast results in weight loss. (not always true; not believable) Eating fresh fruit for breakfast may result in weight loss. (more believable)

Notes

- Can is the most frequently used modal in academic writing. May occurs more frequently than could. (Corpus of Contemporary American English (Davies 2008–)
- May and could are both used to indicate future possibility. In most contexts, may is more certain than could.
 However, in the negative, could not means a past or present impossibility, but may not indicates it is uncertain.

They could not complete the report. (past impossibility)

They may not complete the report. (uncertainty)

Modals are useful in a conclusion to make a suggestion or give advice. Since we need more schools, we **should vote** for the new bond. (*suggestion, recommendation*)
Since we need more schools, we **must vote** for the new bond. (*necessity, very strong advice*)

Modals are useful at the end of a survey or scientific research to show a future possibility. The results of this survey **could be** very useful for planning future activities.

10. The modals can, could, may, and should are useful in opinion writing. They can help to make the writer sound more believable. Eating fresh fruit for breakfast results in weight loss. (not always true; not believable)

Eating fresh fruit for breakfast **may result** in weight loss. (*more believable*)

Task 2a: Language / Vocabulary

Look at p. 123: Activity 1

How is the language in this exercise different from what is in your (usual) grammar books?

Task 2a: Language/Vocabulary, p. 123

ACTIVITY 1

Read each sentence. Find the modal and verb combinations, Write M above the modal and V above the verb.

- Most vegetables need full sun to grow well, but lettuce can grow in part shade.
- 2. Because water is important for life, we should not pollute our rivers and lakes.
- A child with a peanut allergy could have a serious reaction after eating a peanut butter cookle.
- For food safety reasons, refrigerator temperatures must be at or below 41 degrees.
 Fahrenheit.
- 5. Although penguins are classified as birds, they cannot fly.
- 6. In order to find ancient jewelry, archaeologists have to look through the dirt very carefully.
- 7. Recent studies show that young adults should get seven to nine hours of sleep per night.
- 8. A glider pilot has to use air currents to keep the glider in the air.



Task 2a: Language/Vocabulary, p. 123

ACTIVITY 1

Read each sentence. Find the modal and verb combinations. Write *M* above the modal and *V* above the verb.

- 1. Most vegetables need full sun to grow well, but lettuce can grow in part shade.
- 2. Because water is important for life, we should not pollute our rivers and lakes.

Task 2a: Language/Vocabulary, p. 123

ACTIVITY 1

Read each sentence. Find the modal and verb combinations. Write *M* above the modal and *V* above the verb.

A child with a peanut allergy could have a serious reaction after eating a peanut butter cookie.

4. For food safety reasons, refrigerator temperatures must be at or below 41 degrees Fahrenheit.

Look at p. 129: Activity 5:

Can you think of how to connect grammar and vocabulary?

Lexico-grammar:

Grammar that occurs with certain vocabulary.
These combinations are NOT ACCIDENTAL!

COCA: Corpus of Contemporary American English

		abulary				
Verbs Freque	ntly Used v	vith <i>Can</i> in Academic	Writing			
roibs rieque	may obca i	THE CONTENT ACCOUNTS	····			
be do	have help	lead make	provide see	take use		
Source: Corpus of C	ontemporary Am	nerican English (Davies 2008-)				
ACTIVITY 5	Vocabulary	in Academic Writing				
Use the academic	vocabulary w	ith can to complete the se	entences.			
Subject Area	Exc	ample from Academic W	riting			
Sociology	1.	By doing volunteer work, we				
Biology	2.	Some birds, such as the crow,sticks and rocks to acquire food in nature.				
Nursing	3.	Studies show that being overweightto diabetes and heart problems.				
Communication	4.	Certainly, most global corporationsthings to improve their image.				
Linguistics	5.	Acquiring correct pronunciation difficult for adult second language learners.				
Ecology	6.	After a forest fire, it				
Earth Science	7.	The waves and tides of trenergy.	ne ocean			
Astronomy	8.	With more powerful telescopes, astronomers				
Education	9.	Small trips outside of the		its learn about careers.		
		Doctors believe that stres				

Academic Vocabulary 129 52

Academic Vocabulary

Verbs Frequently Used with Canin Academic Writing

be have lead provide take do help make see use

Source: Corpus of Contemporary American English (Davies 2008-)

Verbs Frequently Used with Can in Academic Writing

be have lead provide take do help make see use

Source: Corpus of Contemporary American English (Davies 2008–)

ACTIVITY 5

Vocabulary in Academic Writing

Use the academic vocabulary with can to complete the sentences.

Subject Area

Example from Academic Writing

Sociology

By doing volunteer work, we ______
 a difference in the lives of others.

Verbs Frequently Used with Canin Academic Writing

be have do help

lead

make

provide

see

take

use

Source: Corpus of Contemporary American English (Davies 2008–)

ACTIVITY 5

Vocabulary in Academic Writing

Use the academic vocabulary with can to complete the sentences.

Subject Area

Biology

Example from Academic Writing

Some birds, such as the crow, _____ sticks and rocks to acquire food in nature.

Verbs Frequently Used with Canin Academic Writing

be have lead provide take

do help make see use

Source: Corpus of Contemporary American English (Davies 2008–)

ACTIVITY 5

Vocabulary in Academic Writing

Use the academic vocabulary with can to complete the sentences.

Subject Area

Example from Academic Writing

Nursing 3. Studies show that being overweight

_____ to diabetes and heart problems.

Task 3: Controlled Composing in Steps

Look at p. 132: Activity 8

• Editing to IMPROVE, not just CORRECT. (What does this mean? Why is it important?)

Students work individually; then check in groups.

10 steps:

mostly controlled, some offer more leeway

ACTIVITY 8

Steps to Composing

Read the paragraph. Then follow the directions in the 10 steps to edit the information and composition of the paragraph. Write your revised paragraph on a separate sheet of paper. Be careful with capitalization and punctuation. Check your answers with the class.

CAUSE-EFFECT PARAGRAPH

Dangers of Medicines for Babies

¹ Common cold and cough medicines can be life threatening to a baby. ² As a result, it is important for parents to be very careful when giving any kind of medicine to a baby. ³ One common drugstore medicine for a cold or fever is aspirin. ⁴ Aspirin can cause Reye's syndrome, which in turn can cause a baby's death. ³ Orange-flavored children's cold and cough medicines are also available at drugstores and some grocery stores, but these attractive medicines are not for children under the age of two. ⁵ They may cause a baby's heart rate to become very low and bring about unconsciousness. ₹ Another danger is with honey. ⁵ Even though honey is a food, many adults and children use honey as a remedy for coughs, but it is very dangerous to a baby. ⁵ Honey can have bacteria that babies do not digest. ¹¹ This can cause serious weakness and breathing problems. ¹¹ For these reasons, parents need a doctor's advice before giving any medicine to a baby.

- In sentence 2, use a modal. Change the main clause of sentence 2 by replacing it is important for parents to with parents should, which uses the modal for giving advice.
- 2. Add more descriptive details to sentence 3. After the word for, add the aches and pains of.
- Connect sentence 3 and 4 with the word but to contrast the two ideas. Change the period to a comma, and use a lower-case a for aspirin.
- In sentence 4, the phrase can cause is used twice. Replace the second one with could lead to, which shows future possibility.
- 5. In sentence 5, replace not with never to give a more specific meaning.
- 6. In sentence 6, the modal may means uncertainty. Change the modal so the verb shows ability.

CAUSE-EFFECT PARAGRAPH

Dangers of Medicines for Babies

¹ Common cold and cough medicines can be life threatening to a baby. ² As a result, it is important for parents to be very careful when giving any kind of medicine to a baby. ³ One common drugstore medicine for a cold or fever is aspirin. ⁴ Aspirin can cause Reye's syndrome, which in turn can cause a baby's death. ⁵ Orange-flavored children's cold and cough medicines are also available at drugstores and some grocery stores, but these attractive medicines are not for children under the age of two. ⁶ They may cause a baby's heart rate to become very low and bring about unconsciousness. ⁷ Another danger is with honey. 8 Even though honey is a food, many adults and children use honey as a remedy for coughs, but it is very dangerous to a baby. 9 Honey can have bacteria that babies do not digest. ¹⁰ This can cause serious weakness and breathing problems. ¹¹ For these reasons, parents need a doctor's advice before giving any medicine to a baby.

CAUSE-EFFECT PARAGRAPH

Dangers of Medicines for Babies

¹ Common cold and cough medicines can be life threatening to a baby. ² As a result, it is important for parents to be very careful when giving any kind of medicine to a baby. ³ One common drugstore medicine for a cold or fever is aspirin. ⁴ Aspirin can cause Reye's syndrome, which in turn can cause a baby's death. ⁵ Orange-flavored children's

1. In sentence 2, use a modal. Change the main clause of sentence 2 by replacing *it is important for parents to* with *parents should*, which uses the modal for giving advice.

CAUSE-EFFECT PARAGRAPH

Dangers of Medicines for Babies

¹ Common cold and cough medicines can be life threatening to a baby. ² As a result, it is important for parents to be very careful when giving any kind of medicine to a baby. ³ One common drugstore medicine for a cold or fever is aspirin. ⁴ Aspirin can cause Reye's syndrome, which in turn can cause a baby's death. ⁵ Orange-flavored children's

2. Add more descriptive details to sentence 3. After the word for, add the aches and pains of.

CAUSE-EFFECT PARAGRAPH

Dangers of Medicines for Babies

- ¹ Common cold and cough medicines can be life threatening to a baby. ² As a result, it is important for parents to be very careful when giving any kind of medicine to a baby. ³ One common drugstore medicine for a cold or fever is aspirin. ⁴ Aspirin can cause Reye's syndrome, which in turn can cause a baby's death. ⁵ Orange-flavored children's
- **3.** Connect sentence 3 and 4 with the word *but* to contrast the two ideas. Change the period to a comma, and use a lower-case *a* for *aspirin*.

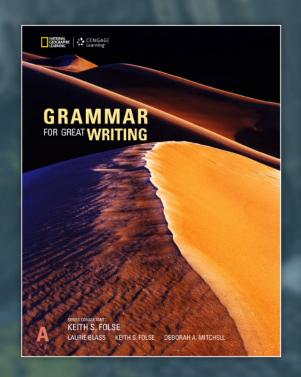
CAUSE-EFFECT PARAGRAPH

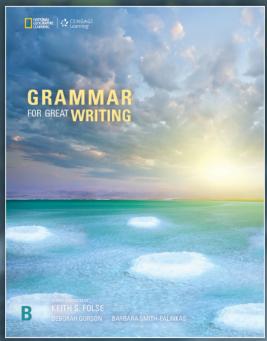
Dangers of Medicines for Babies

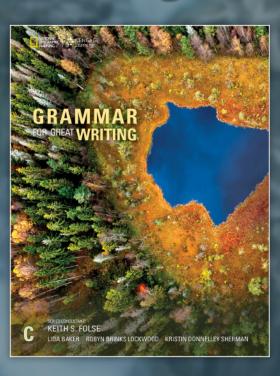
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4. In sentence 4, the phrase *can cause* is used twice. Replace the second one with *could lead to*, which shows future possibility.

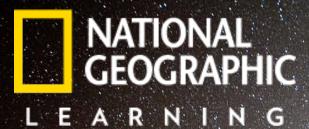
Grammar for Great Writing











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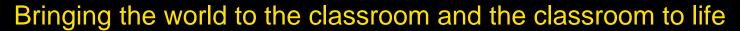
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