

License Plate Quickies

Writing a Paragraph

About the Lesson

This lesson offers students some real brainstretching fun with license plate messages. They will translate particular sets of letters and numbers from license plates into possible sentences. Then they will write a paragraph based on their license plate “translations.”

Before giving “License Plate Quickies” to your students, try to do one or two of the items yourself. The lesson could be too much of a challenge for some of your students.

- 1 When conducting this lesson, give students seven, eight, or ten minutes. It is a good idea to place a limit on the time they have and thus make it more like a game.

To give you an idea of how one mind played with the license plate numbers, these are some possible reactions to the numbers:

- RWB 422** Red, white, and blue are colors found in 422 dresses at Macy’s.
- PKU 266** Plastic kitchen utensils broken in our house number 266 at last count.
- FNS 482** Fresh noodle soup was served at Jake’s Restaurant last month 482 times.
- SCL 114** Silvia coughed loudly 114 times (without covering her mouth).
- DGG 601** Darned good guys in our town who like soccer number at least 601.
- ANA 974** Alvin never ages. He’s now 974.
- TJI 853** Tearful Jane Ingle’s badge number at Elmer’s Onion Works is 853. She’s the Chief Slicer.

One of the difficult parts of translating the license numbers in this way is in writing complete sentences.

Targeted Learner Outcomes

The student will:

- produce sentences for seven license plate numbers, and
- take one of the sentences and put it in a paragraph.

- 2 The task at the end of the unit is challenging. Students are to add one or two sentences to their translations to make a paragraph. It is assumed that (a) they have written complete sentences and (b) they know how to construct a paragraph. If they are not adept at composing paragraphs, it will be up to you to decide whether a lesson in paragraphing is necessary.



Following Through

If your students are in need of further instruction about writing paragraphs, you can remind them that, generally speaking, a paragraph is a unit of written communication containing sentences that are closely related in structure and meaning. The subject, or main idea, may be expressed implicitly or explicitly, but if the subject is stated explicitly, it will generally appear in the form of a topic sentence.

License Plate Quickies



Name _____ Date _____

1 For many years people have played games by reading the license plates of the cars they see on the road. One of the most popular games is finding the letters of the alphabet on license plates, starting with A and ending the game with Z. Jim, whose ideas are sometimes considered strange by his friends, thought of a more challenging game while he was staring at the license plate of the car in front of him. It read QMG 490. With a little effort, Jim said to himself, “Quick Mike Geary was the last person to end the road race, and they gave him number 490.”

“Ah,” Jim thought, “I can do that with any license plate I see on this street.” Well, he tried, but it took him longer for some plates than for others to come up with one or two sentences based on the letters and numbers. Here are the other plates that he saw:

KT DT	SCL 114
RWB 422	DGG 601
PKU 266	ANA 974
FNS 482	TJI 853

Except for the first plate, KT DT, they all had three letters followed by three numerals. Jim’s reaction to “KT DT” was: “Kate ‘told’ but Don ‘tattled.’”

How many of the other plates can you make into one or two sentences in *five minutes*? If you get more than a couple, you’ll be doing quite well.

RWB 422 _____

PKU 266 _____

FNS 482 _____

SCL 114 _____

License Plate Quickies (continued)



Name _____ Date _____

DGG 601 _____

ANA 974 _____

TJI 853 _____

- 2** Choose one of the sentences and add two or more sentences to it to make a paragraph. If you'd like, draw a scene to illustrate your writing.

