



Mechanically Inclined: Building Grammar, Usage, and Style into Writer's Workshop

Jeff Anderson

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

Mechanically Inclined: Building Grammar, Usage, and Style into Writer's Workshop

Jeff Anderson

Mechanically Inclined: Building Grammar, Usage, and Style into Writer's Workshop Jeff Anderson

Some teachers love grammar and some hate it, but nearly all struggle to find ways of making the mechanics of English meaningful to kids. As a middle school teacher, Jeff Anderson also discovered that his students were not grasping the basics, and that it was preventing them from reaching their potential as writers. Jeff readily admits, "I am not a grammarian, nor am I punctilious about anything," so he began researching and testing the ideas of scores of grammar experts in his classroom, gradually finding successful ways of integrating grammar instruction into writer's workshop.

Mechanically Inclined is the culmination of years of experimentation that merges the best of writer's workshop elements with relevant theory about how and why skills should be taught. It connects theory about using grammar in context with practical instructional strategies, explains why kids often don't understand or apply grammar and mechanics correctly, focuses on attending to the "high payoff," or most common errors in student writing, and shows how to carefully construct a workshop environment that can best support grammar and mechanics concepts. Jeff emphasizes four key elements in his teaching:

short daily instruction in grammar and mechanics within writer's workshop;
using high-quality mentor texts to teach grammar and mechanics in context;
visual scaffolds, including wall charts, and visual cues that can be pasted into writer's notebooks;
regular, short routines, like "express-lane edits," that help students spot and correct errors automatically.
Comprising an overview of the research-based context for grammar instruction, a series of over thirty detailed lessons, and an appendix of helpful forms and instructional tools, *Mechanically Inclined* is a boon to teachers regardless of their level of grammar-phobia. It shifts the negative, rule-plagued emphasis of much grammar instruction into one which celebrates the power and beauty these tools have in shaping all forms of writing.

Mechanically Inclined: Building Grammar, Usage, and Style into Writer's Workshop **Details**

Date : Published January 1st 2005 by Stenhouse Publishers

ISBN : 9781571104120

Author : Jeff Anderson

Format : Paperback 216 pages

Genre : Teaching, Education, Language, Writing, Nonfiction

 [Download Mechanically Inclined: Building Grammar, Usage, and Sty ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Mechanically Inclined: Building Grammar, Usage, and S ...pdf](#)



**Download and Read Free Online Mechanically Inclined: Building Grammar, Usage, and Style into
Writer's Workshop Jeff Anderson**

From Reader Review Mechanically Inclined: Building Grammar, Usage, and Style into Writer's Workshop for online ebook

Karen Cullison says

Again....LOVE, LOVE, LOVE. It's NOT overwhelming, BUT inspiring. I CAN do these things and I think I am seeing progress in my kids. It's exciting and brings back that rewarding feeling teaching USED to have on me! Great resource!

Nichole Wulf says

I used DOL in my classroom until I discovered it wasn't effective, but I had nothing to put in its place. Now mentor sentences are taking over and I love this concept; however, it's not easy to shift my teaching practice. This book was packed full of ideas and a great guide for teaching in this way. Overall a wonderful book; the more advanced version, though, for those of us moving to mentor sentences. I will need the Mentor Sentences for Dummies first.

Michelle Mayfield says

This is a great book to show teachers how to teach grammar in context. We are told that is the best way to do it, then we are given reading series that give worksheets and teach out of context. I am excited to go to school and try some of his ideas in my class tomorrow.

Sarah Voigt says

This is an extremely helpful book for teachers who want to, as the title states, build instruction of grammar into a writing-centric classroom. I really appreciated how the grammar instruction was instantly applicable to the students' writing, giving them the opportunity to see certain structures in the context of a short mentor text and then have them turn around and use the structures in their own writing. Most of all, I appreciated Anderson's appreciation of the students' abilities and knowledge that they bring to the table, continually praising them for the internalized processes that they do right, instead of the archetypal grammar teacher constantly berating students for their ignorance. I use this in my classroom and would encourage any English teacher who teaches 4th grade and up to do the same.

Todd says

This book is brilliant, very useful. Most education literature is limited in how useful it is, but this one, is a gold mine of useful and practical tools. In addition I've learned how to improve my own writing from it!

Kristin says

Wow, I don't think I've been as captivated by a professional book since 2009's *Readicide* by Kelly Gallagher! I was reading this book every free moment I had visualizing how Anderson's techniques would look in the classroom. I love his authentic and active engagement of mentor texts to support students' writing in a workshop model. I plan to share this with my 6th grade team who will be implementing *Writer's Workshop* next school year. I hope they find it as motivating and inspiring as I did.

Michelle says

I have to say that this is not one of my favorite professional development books. I was thrilled when I read the title, drawn in by the notion of connecting grammar, usage and style lessons into my classroom without boring my students to death. I believe that all grammar lessons should be connected and rooted in student writing and their reading. I have to say that this book has let me down. It did not thrill me with any new or innovative ways of teaching grammar.

That being said, I do think this book will be a helpful guide/resource when a specific grammar, style and/or usage problems comes up in my classroom. It just doesn't address problems in a fresh or pioneering way.

What Jeff Anderson does is cover talking points for different grammar, usage and style issues. What is lacking, is moving beyond the talking points, and providing innovative lessons and exciting ideas for student practice.

Another note for teachers considering this book, I think that it is better suited for the middle school teacher versus high school teacher. The mentor texts that Jeff Anderson chooses as guides for his grammar lessons are better suited for the humor and interests of middle school age children.

I think there is value in this book, it just was not the value I was seeking or expecting based on the title.

Rachel D. says

Great read to help teachers who want to teach mechanics within the context of students' reading and writing. The mini lessons are practical and easy to use. These were great for me to use with summer school classes.

Mrs. Giese says

Good book, just really technical. I got a lot of great information out of it for teaching writing. I am a little less afraid of grammar now :)

Erika Reynolds says

Super useful book! I love it more for the lessons and worksheets/grammar guides in the back of the book than for the philosophy in the first half. This has definitely changed my thinking about grammar instruction, and I appreciate the amount of resources Anderson provides.

Christine Engelbrecht says

This is a nice handbook for every writing teacher's shelf, focusing on each element of grammar or often made grammatical error and how to address it in a writing context.

I especially appreciate the mentor texts included in the book for each grammatical errors tat students commonly make. I also think the appendices, the handouts and exercises, are quite helpful. I found it interesting that they included Cloze assessments, which are traditionally used to gage a students comprehension.

Elie says

The actual rating is kind of pending. This is one of those books that I'm not sure how useful it'll be until I actually try to implement some ideas in the classroom.

Maybe it's because I'm a new teacher, but the first few, short chapters changed the way I see myself teaching grammar. Yes, the mini lessons that take up a majority of the pages seem great, and I'm planning to use some of them, but it was the foundational idea of how and when to teach grammar that stood out to me. Students should be writing every day, so after a writing session, give a grammar mini lesson using mentor texts (which Anderson provides), and then let students revise their writing using the strategy they were just taught. Alternatively, show a mentor text before writing and have students mimic the style.

Anderson also advocates for filling the walls with grammar anchor charts to remind students of grammar rules and to show off great sentences that students write.

If you're someone who doesn't feel strong in grammar, this book will definitely help you out. I consider myself a grammar expert, but I still learned a lot. This book could be used as early as elementary school and all the way through college. Irritatingly, there is so much information that I can't just put it back on my shelf and only look back at my concise notes. I have a feeling I'll be referencing this one frequently.

Karen Koch says

While Anderson has some valuable ideas about how to teach grammar in the context of reading and writing, please believe him when he says he is “not a grammarian” (page 3). His examples show he doesn’t know the difference between a participle and a gerund, or between a preposition and an adverb (some words can be either, depending on usage). His methodology might be good, but the actual grammatical content is off. Even some of his general writing and his mentor sentences have errors (such as lay/lie on page 54 and who/whom on page 44.)

I enjoyed the first 50 pages on which Anderson discussed how to weave grammar instruction into reading and writing (except for the grammar errors.) The rest of the book is basically an attempt at a grammar

handbook. If you are a novice with grammar, this part might be helpful since Anderson puts explanations in plain language and gives tips on how to teach the concepts. If you're already skilled with grammar, pages 51-160 will be pretty useless to you. The appendices have ideas for reminders to paste into student notebooks, games to play with classes, and visual reminders to post in the classroom.

Mrs. Augustin says

One of the only books I still go back to. I credit him and Jon Ostenson for making me confidently love teaching grammar.

Gayle says

Awesome, awesome, AWESOME! (Don't let the "writer's workshop" part of the title scare you!) First, it's a grammar book that is engaging to read. Second, it is designed in a very user-friendly way with 3 parts: method/philosophy, individual lessons (based on the most common student errors in grammar/mechanics--and the lessons are clear, fast, and FUN!), and an appendix with forms for the lessons. So, you could skip the method/philosophy part and go right to whatever individual lessons you needed. You COULD skip it. But I wouldn't. I thought I would just skim the first part, but I found so many great ideas and other lessons--seriously, almost one per page. This book connects so well to the Common Core. And although it was written for middle school, there were hardly any lessons that didn't cover rules my high school--and even AP--students don't make. You may have to adapt the lessons a little for high school, but most of them could work as they are. BUY THIS BOOK!
