

Advanced Placement

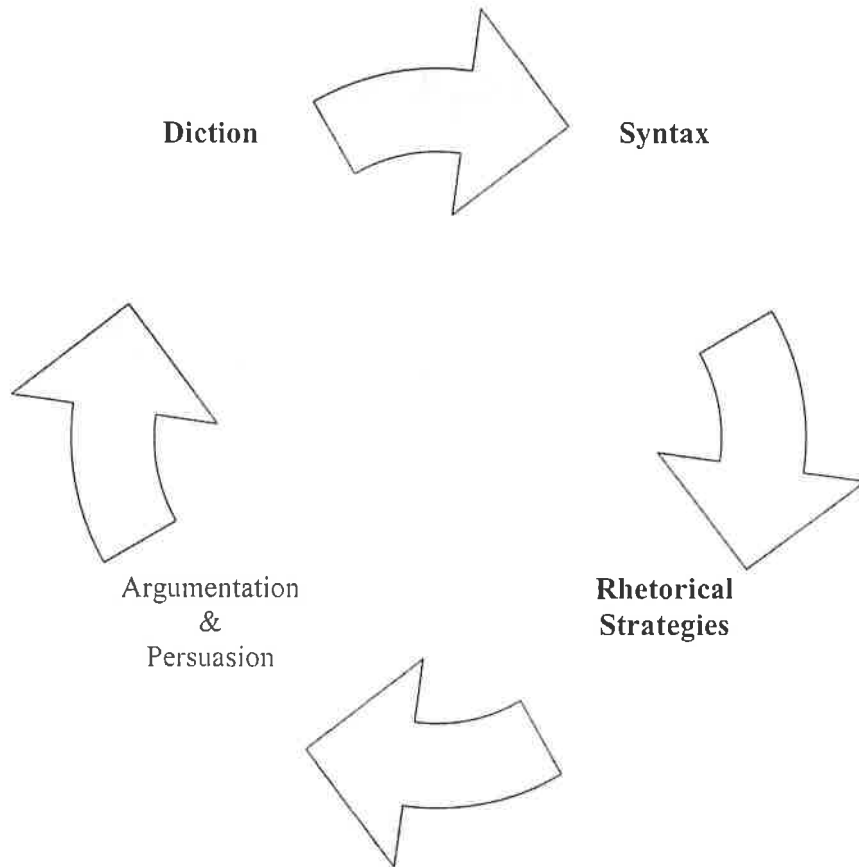
Language
&
Composition

Development of Fundamental Skills

SYNTAX

Edited and Compiled by Jeffrey Norton

Rhetoric and Persuasion



It's all tied together

Rules Grammar Change
English Traditional Replaced To Be New Syntax

The ONION June 7, 2000

WASHINGTON, DC—The U.S. Grammar Guild Monday announced that no more will traditional grammar rules English follow. Instead there will a new form of organizing sentences be.

U.S. grammar Guild according to, the new structure loosely on an obscure 800-year-old, pre-medieval Anglo-Saxon syntax is based. The syntax primarily verbs, verb clauses and adjectives at the end of sentences placing involves. Results this often, to ears American, a sentence backward appearing.

“Operating under we are, one major rule,” said Joyce Watters, president of the U.S. Grammar Guild. “Make English, want we, more archaic and dignified sounding to be, as if every word coming from the tongue of a centuries-old, mystical wizard, is.”

Brief pause Watters made than a. “Know I, know I,” said she. “Confusing sounds it, but every American used to it soon will be.”

At a press conference recent greeted warmly the new measure by President Clinton was.

“No longer will we adhere to the dull, predictable structure of our traditional grammar system. This nation will now begin speaking, writing, and listening to something fresh, exciting and different,” said Clinton.

“Excuse me,” added he pause long after a. “Meant I, the dull, predictable system our traditional grammar of adhere to no longer will we. Speaking, writing and listening to something fresh,

exciting and different will this nation now begin.”

This week beginning, America across, all dictionaries, thesauruses and any other books or objects with any sort of writing upon it or in it revised to fit the new system will be. Libraries assure people wish to that the transition promptly begin will, but that patient people should be, as so much to change there is.

“Feel good it will make people to know for all these changes that, librarians cold, crabby and as paranoid and overprotective of their books and periodicals as ever remain will,” said Yvonne Richter, Director of the Library of Congress.

The enthusiasm of government officials despite, many Americans about the new plan upset are. “Why in the world did they do this?” a New Canaan, CT, insurance salesman, said Brent Pryce. “There’s absolutely no reason. It’s utterly pointless and will cause total chaos throughout the country, not to mention the fact that it will cost billions of dollars to implement. And what’s this U.S. Grammar Guild, anyway? I’ve never heard of it.”

When of this complaint informed, government officials that they could not the man’s words understand said, because of the strange, unintelligible way of speaking he was.

SYNTAX: trying to bring unconscious understanding to the conscious level.

❖ TYPES of ELEMENTS in SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION

Parts of Speech

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.

Parts of the Sentence

- 1.
- 2.
3. phrases

- a.
- b.
- c.

- i
- ii
- iii

4. clauses

- a. independent/main
- b. dependent/subordinate

❖ TYPES of SENTENCE by STRUCTURE

simple

compound

complex

compound-complex

❖ TYPES of SENTENCE by PURPOSE

declarative

imperative

exclamatory

interrogative

rhetorical

❖ TYPES of SENTENCE by ARRANGEMENT

natural/basic
inverted
loose
periodic
interrupted
parallel
balanced

➤ SYNTACTICAL SCHEMES of CONSTRUCTION

by **Balance/Order/Placement**

parallelism
 isocolon
antithesis
 juxtaposition
 paradox
 oxymoron
listing
transition

by **Omission**

ellipsis
asyndeton

by **Addition/Repetition**

apposition (appositive)
parenthesis
polysyndeton
anaphora
epistrophe
anadiplosis
epanalepsis
antimetabole
chiasmus

Syntactical Style Analysis should include the following elements:

sentence length	sentence beginnings
sentence kind	sentence variety
sentence euphony (rhythm)	sentence coherence
figures of speech	paragraphing/organization

More often than not, SYNTACTICAL SCHEMES are used for RHYTHM AND/OR EMPAHSIS

PUNCTUATION PATTERN SHEET

Independent clause	.	Independent clause .
Independent clause	;	independent clause .
Independent clause	, but , or , yet , for , and , nor , so	independent clause .
Independent clause	; however, ; therefore, ; consequently, ; likewise, ; moreover, ; then, ; still, ; also, ; otherwise, ; nevertheless, ; in fact, ; for example, ; furthermore, ; instead,	independent clause .

Although	<u>dependent clause</u>	,	independent clause	.	
Independent clause			although	<u>dependent clause</u>	.

SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS

after	although	where
before	though	wherever
during	that	what
while	so that	whatever
once	in order that	why
as	provided that	how
as if	till	who
as long as	until	whom
whether	whereas	whose
if	unless	which
since	when	what
because	whenever	how

Independent , nonessential information, Clause .
 , I believe,
 , on the other hand,
 , however,

Independent essential information Clause .

Independent clause, afterthought .

Independent clause : word, word, word .
 : phrase, phrase, phrase .
 : clause; clause; clause .

Syntax
Prepositional Phrases
Rewrite Activity

Prepositional phrases are used to indicate possession and location in time and space. Used well, they give our writing good balance and clear emphasis. Consider, for example the ringing phrases that conclude the famous Lincoln's Gettysburg Address:

...and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

Too many prepositional phrases, however can weigh down your prose. Writing dominated by strings of prepositional phrases tends to be wordy and monotonous, each sentence following the same rhythm.

In the absence of adequate and urgently needed research into the degree of actual prevalence of emotional illness in urban communities, one can do little more than speculate.

The string of prepositional phrases in this sentence makes it hard to read. By eliminating some of the prepositional phrases, we can substantially reduce the number of words and make the meaning clearer. The sentence could easily be reduced from 28 words with 6 phrases to 17 words with 3 phrases.

Without researching the rate of emotional illness in urban communities, one can do little more than speculate.

Directions: Each of the following sentences contains far too many prepositional phrases. First, identify all of the phrases by circling the preposition and underlining the object of the preposition. Then, **revise** each sentence as necessary to improve the balance and sharpen the writing.

1. There are still obstacles in the path of the achievement of an agreement on the control of nuclear weapons.
2. All of the water on the surface and water under ground comes from the atmosphere in the form of rain, snow, or dew by means of the condensation of water vapor.
3. The condensation of water vapor occurs when the temperature of air with a certain amount of water content falls to the critical degree known as the "dew point."

4. The increase of smog in the air is attributed to the buildup of factories in areas of greatest contamination.

5. The orchard of apple trees which stood in the area behind the house yielded no fruit during the first year, but it bore a large crop during the second season.

6. Since we were sitting in seats which were near first base, we were able to judge the accuracy of the decisions of the umpire.

7. Our seats in which we sat at the LC-Ferris game were almost on the forty-yard line, and they were at the top of Albi Stadium near the concession stand side.

8. The most common complaint that is made by students of teachers is that every teacher chooses Friday on which to give quizzes.

9. In the last act of the play there is the explanation of the title of the play.

10. In the early part of the month of August there was a really mean hurricane with very high winds that was moving threateningly toward Port Arthur.

Syntax
Sentence Combining/Expanding

Combine the following sentences into a single complete sentence.

1. There is a girl. The girl is little. The girl is Stacy. The girl likes Barbies.
2. There is a goalie. The goalie is scrappy. There is a ball. The ball is spinning. The goalie trapped the ball.
3. There is a student. There is a course. The course is an AP course. The student is a junior. The student applies himself to the course. The junior will succeed.
4. Jan is marvelous. Jan won. There are trophies. There are four trophies. They are volleyball trophies.
5. There is a diver. There is a board. It is a diving board. The diver stepped to the end of the board. The diver took a deep breath. The diver raised up on his toes. The diver jumped.
6. There is thunder. The thunder is distant. The thunder warned me. There is a place. The place is safe. I have to go.
7. The knights wore armor. The armor was heavy. Knights rode horses. They fought battles.
8. The package arrived. Wendy sent the package. The package was ripped open. Chris received the package.
9. There is a dog. The dog is mad. There is a canary. The canary is frightened. The dog killed the canary. There is a house. The house is old. The house is eerie.
10. There is Dan. He is dirty. Dan dodged. There is a balloon. The balloon is huge. The balloon is for water. Dan dodged the balloon.

Several different models are provided for your study. After each model, write a representative kernel sentence that could have initiated the expansion.

1. Al was out already, unscrewing the steaming radiator cap with the tips of his fingers, jerking his hand away to escape the spurt when the cap should come loose. --- Steinbeck
2. It was hard to keep my eyes open, staring at the road, watching the black blades sweep rhythmically across the windshield, soundlessly flattening against the glass. --- M.J.E.
3. She drank slowly at first, savoring each sip, feeling the coldness on her lips and teeth, tasting the sweetness that turned to sourness as the liquid rolled back on her tongue.
4. And then crying, his head up looking at nothing, carrying himself straight and soldierly, with tears on both his cheeks and biting his lips, he walked past the machines and out the door. --- Hemingway

Expand each of the kernel sentences listed below.

1. Two buzzards sailed.
2. The little birds were working.
3. The sun was coming over the ridge now.
4. He baited a rat trap.
5. The place looked familiar.
6. There lay a stretch of fine green grass.
7. The pony's tracks were plain enough.

Kernel Paragraph

The man entered the room. He looked around. His hair covered part of his face. The room was dark. It was hard to see. He walked to the window and looked out. His steps made a noise on the bare floor. He turned around to see if someone else was in the room. He saw nothing but the furniture. His heart beat fast. Nothing could stop him now.

Complete all editing changes **on this handout** and identify those changes by using a caret ^ or a parenthesis () when you make a change. Number the changes you make according to the list below. Recopy your final, finished paragraph on the back of this handout.

Steps for rewriting your kernel paragraph:

1. Label all words in the above paragraph according to their parts of speech. (color 1)
2. Change the common noun “man” to a proper noun. (all other changes color 2)
3. Add an adjective to describe the noun you substituted for “man”.
4. Move one sentence to another place in the paragraph by drawing an arrow to where you want it to go.
5. Combine two sentences. (remember to show this, and all other changes on the paragraph.)
6. Combine two additional sentences using a conjunction when you combine the two sentences. Circle the conjunction.
7. Add two adjectives to clarify what kind of “room” the man entered.
8. Eliminate all passive verbs. (even in added and combined sentences.)
9. Change the verb “entered” to a more active verb.
10. Add an adverb to describe your new verb in place of “entered”.
11. Do not add any prepositional phrases. (but you can eliminate; show by crossing out.)
12. Replace two of the pronouns with nouns. However, do not use “man” in either case.
13. Add two additional adverbs at places of your choosing.
14. Incorporate a simile or a metaphor into the paragraph.
15. Identify one of each sentence structure: simple, compound, complex, compound-complex.
16. Identify one of each sentence by purpose: declarative, exclamatory, interrogative.

This could go on and on, but we’ll stop here. Now rewrite your paragraph on the reverse side.

Sentence Imitation

Compose one sentence of your own creation – no copying – for each of the following patterns. Underline the requested element.

1. Periodic sentences beginning with the following subordinate elements:
 - a. subordinate clause
 - b. prepositional phrase
 - c. participial phrase
 - d. appositive phrase

2. Loose sentences ending with the following elements:
 - a. subordinate clause
 - b. subordinate clause introduced by a colon
 - c. appositive phrase
 - d. participial phrase

3. Interrupted sentences containing the following interrupters:
 - a. subordinate clause
 - b. preposition phrase
 - c. participial phrase
 - d. appositive phrase

4. Parallel sentences which include:
 - a. two part
 - b. three part
 - c. isocolon
 - d. antithesis

5. One sentence each using the following syntactical schemes:
 - a. anaphora
 - b. epistrophe
 - c. anadiplosis
 - d. epanalepsis

Kinds of Sentences

The Loose Sentence, also known as The Strung Along Sentence:

The strung along sentence is simply the basic statement with a string of details added to it. The string can be as long or short as you care to make it; the basic statement does not change.

Basic statement:

Bells ring.

Loose/Strung along sentence:

Bells ring, filling the air with their clamor, startling pigeons into flight from every belfry, bringing people into the streets to hear the news.

Basic statement:

The teacher considered him a good student.

Loose/Strung along sentence:

The teacher considered him a good student, steady if not inspired, willing if not eager, responsive to instruction and conscientious about his work.

Movable modifiers can appear on either side of the main statement or within it. Loose sentences occur more commonly than periodic sentences. They mirror conversation, in which a speaker first makes a statement and then adds on further thoughts.

Examples:

He burst suddenly into the party, loud, angry, raging.

The family used to gather around the hearth, doing such chores as polishing shoes, mending ripped clothing, reading, chatting, always warmed by one another's presence as much as by the flames.

Slowly, tremulously, as if she couldn't believe her good fortune, Sally stared in disbelief, and then she smiled.

The bedsprings lay bent and rusted, festooned with spider webs, on top of the heap.

A loose sentence is one that has its main clause up front, with additional info "dangling behind."

Example: She ran out the door, hair hanging loosely behind.

A periodic sentence has its main clause near the end/period.

Example: With her hair hanging loosely behind her, she ran out the door.

A loose sentence begins with a basic sentence whose main thought is at the beginning, with descriptive phrases, clauses, etc. added after the main thought. A periodic sentence must be read to the end before the main idea can be understood. Thus, any added details come at the beginning of the sentence before the main thought.

The Periodic Sentence:

This is the sentence in which additional details are added inside the basic structure; it may be broken in two at some point and spread apart to make room for added cargo. Details are dropped into the space between the two parts:

Basic statement:

Love is blind.

Periodic sentence:

Love, as everyone knows except those who happen to be afflicted with it, is blind.

Basic statement:

John gave his mother flowers.

Periodic sentence:

John, the tough one, the sullen kid who scoffed at any show of sentiment, gave his mother flowers.

Delay, of course, is the secret weapon of the periodic sentence. By holding off the final words of the basic sentence until the last possible moment, the sentence builds its own small feeling of suspense. And the reader is carried along almost irresistibly to the end, for exactly the same reason he is carried along by a mystery – because he wants to know “how it comes out.”

The periodic sentence is the most artful of sentences. Its structure has a kind of natural elegance, an air of perfectly controlled movement, of assured grace. Its structure is so distinctive, in fact, that it is not wise to place too many periodic sentences too close together. Space them out with small, tight sentences, for contrast. An occasional periodic sentence can add tension to writing that may otherwise seem loose and casual.

PERIODIC sentences delay the main point until the end. This type of sentence lends a formal tone to what is said, slowing its pace, adding cadence, and making it more serious.

Example:

If you can keep your head when everyone around you is panicking, you probably don't understand the situation.

From the onset of his journey to the heart of darkness, Marlow witnesses many incidents that reveal the human capacity for evil.

Simplistic definition: Periodic has the subject and predicate at the end; loose has it at the beginning.

Syntax
Parallel Structure

First: The simple parallel

She looked tired, frustrated, and disgusted.

In the sentence above, the three underlined words are arranged in a series of coordinated elements. These elements all have the same **form** and the same **grammatical function** (adjectives which in the sentence serve as complements). Because of this similarity of **form and function**, they are said to be parallel construction.

Second: The more complex parallel

A more complex parallel sentence can be one which deliberately emphasizes parallel construction. A standard sentence containing two or more coordinate constructions may be said to be parallel, but here we are concerned with the kind of parallelism that goes beyond simple combining and achieves rhythm and cadence through the deliberate repetition of parallel elements. Remember the main clause (subject and verb) comes first.

Robert E. Lee was

a foe without hate,
a friend without treachery,
a soldier without cruelty.... (Canton)

....a new generation of Americans

born in this century,
tempered by war,
disciplined by a hard and bitter peace,
proud of their ancient heritage..... (Kennedy)

Throughout our nation, the major cities are in trouble –

scarred by slums and ghettos,
threatened by racial strife,
crippled by inadequate finances....

The average American citizen is

apathetic to the political process,
confused by legislative deviousness,
manipulated by the power structure,
and ignorant of what all this can mean to his
or her life. (Yorkin)

Note: if you extend one of the parallels, or break the rhythm, keep that parallel for last.

The Parallel Paragraph

Parallelism is an excellent way to build a paragraph, as well as a sentence. When parallelism is extended throughout a paragraph, each sentence becomes an element in the series and states one aspect of the idea being explored.

America, the richest and most powerful nation in the world, can well lead the way in this revolution of values. There is nothing but a lack of social will to prevent us from paying adequate wages to schoolteachers, social workers and other servants of the public to insure that we have the best available personnel in these positions which are charged with the responsibility of guiding our future generations. There is nothing but a lack of social vision to prevent us from paying an adequate wage to every American citizen, whether he be a hospital worker, laundry worker, maid or day laborer. There is nothing -- except a tragic deathwish—to prevent us from re-ordering our priorities so the pursuit of peace will take precedence over the pursuit of war. There is nothing to keep us from remolding with bruised hands a recalcitrant status quo until we have fashioned it into a brotherhood.

Martin Luther King, Jr.
Where Do We Go from Here?

Find or create examples of parallel sentences or a parallel paragraph and write them here:

Third: The periodic sentence

A periodic sentence is a type of parallel sentence which builds through three or more parallel constructions (dependent phrases or clauses) to a main clause. Remember, in the periodic sentence, the main clause (with subject and verb) comes last...by the period.

But if life hardly seems worth living,
if liberty is used for subhuman purposes,
if the pursuers of happiness know nothing about the nature of their
quarry or the elementary techniques of hunting,
these constitutional rights will not be very meaningful. (E. Warren)

As long as politicians talk about withdrawal while they attack,
as long as the government invades privacy while it discusses human rights,
as long as we act in fear while speak of courage,
there can be no security,
there can be no peace.

If students are absorbed in their own limited worlds,
if they are disdainful of the work of their teachers,
if they are scornful of the lessons of the past,
then the great cultural heritage which must be transmitted from
generation to generation will be lost.

Create three examples of periodic sentences and write them here:

The Periodic Paragraph

A writer can create a periodic paragraph by employing the same principle of building to a main clause through dependent parallel constructions.

I guess it is easy for those of you who have never felt the stinging darts of segregation to say wait. But when you have seen vicious mobs lynch your mothers and fathers at will and drown your brothers and sisters at whim; when you have seen hate filled policemen curse, kick, brutalize and even kill your black brothers and sisters; when you see the vast majority of your twenty million Negro brothers smothering in an air-tight cage of poverty in the midst of an affluent society; when you suddenly find your tongue twisted and your speech stammering as you seek to explain to your six-year-old daughter why she can't go to the public amusement park that has just been advertised on television, and see tears welling up in her little eyes when she is told that Funtown is closed to colored children, and see the depressing clouds of inferiority begin to form in her little mental sky, and see her begin to distort her little personality by unconsciously developing a bitterness towards white people; when you have to concoct an answer for a five-year-old son asking in agonizing pathos: Daddy, why do white people treat colored people so mean?; when you take a cross country drive and find it necessary to sleep night after night in the uncomfortable corners of your automobile because no motel will accept you; when you are humiliated day in and day out by nagging signs reading "white men" and "colored men"; when your first name becomes "nigger" and your middle name becomes "boy" (however old you are) and your last name becomes "John," and when your wife and mother are never given the respected title of "Mrs." When you are harried by day and haunted by night by the fact that you are a Negro, living constantly at tiptoe stance never quite knowing what to expect next, and plagued with inner fears and outer resentments, when you are forever fighting a degenerating sense of 'nobodiness' – then you will understand why we find it difficult to wait.

Martin Luther King, Jr.
Letter from a Birmingham Jail

Syntax
Parallel Structure

Fourth: The balanced sentence

A balanced sentence is another kind of parallel sentence in which two parallel elements are set off against each other like equal weights on a scale. In reading the sentence aloud, one tends to pause between the balanced parts, each seeming equal. When writing a balanced sentence, be certain that both parts of the sentence have the same **form**, that they are **parallel grammatically**.

George Bernard Shaw said of writers:
The ambition of the novice is to acquire the Literary Language; the struggle of the adept is to get rid of it.

(Each part of the sentence follows exactly the same pattern: subject, verb, predicate nominative.)

Content of a Balanced Sentence

Balanced sentences are particularly effective if you have an idea that has a contrast or antithesis. Balanced sentences can emphasize the contrast so that the rhetorical pattern reflects and supports the logical pattern.

No man has ever seen anything that Burne-Jones cannot paint, but many men have painted what Burne-Jones cannot see. (Shaw)

And so my fellow Americans – ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country. (Kennedy)

If a free society cannot help the many who are poor, it cannot save the few who are rich. (Kennedy)

It is not that today's artists cannot paint, it is that today's critics cannot see. (Rothko)

(Some of these examples illustrate not only balanced sentences but also a device called "antimetabole," in which the order of words is reversed in one of the parallel structures to produce a clever effect.)

The Balanced Paragraph

One can also develop an entire paragraph by balance. This is particularly useful if you are developing a series of contrasts.

I felt myself in rebellion against the Greek concept of justice. The concept excused Laius of attacking Oedipus, but condemned Oedipus for defending himself. It tolerated a king's deliberate attempt to kill his baby son by piercing the infant's feet and abandoning it on a mountain, but later branded the son's unintentional killing of his father as murder. It held Oedipus responsible for his ignorance, but excused those who contributed to that ignorance. (Krutch)

Comparing Parallel structures:

John F. Kennedy

Let the word go forth from this time and place, to friend and foe alike, that the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans -- born in this century, tempered by war, disciplined by a hard and bitter peace, proud of our ancient heritage -- and unwilling to witness or permit the slow undoing of those human rights to which this nation has always been committed, and to which we are committed today at home and around the world.

To that world assembly of sovereign states, the United Nations, our last, best hope in an age where instruments of war have far outpaced instruments of peace, we renew our pledge of support -- to prevent it merely from becoming a forum for invective, to strengthen its shield of the new and the weak, to enlarge the area in which its writ may run.

Abraham Lincoln

Both parties deprecated war; but one of them would *make* war rather than let the nation survive; and the other would *accept* war rather than let it perish.

With malice towards none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up our nations' wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan -- to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace, among ourselves and with all nations.

But in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate -- we cannot consecrate -- we cannot hallow -- this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here.

Syntax Within a Single Sentence

Next morning when the first light came into the sky and the sparrows stirred in the trees, when the cows rattled their chains and the rooster crowed and the early automobiles went whispering along the road, Wilber awoke and looked for Charlotte.

Charlotte's Web E.B. White

In the grass and the grain, beside the road, and in some places scattered over the road, there was much material: a field kitchen, it must have come when things were going well; many of the calfskin-covered haversacks, stick bombs, helmets, rifles, sometimes one butt-up, the bayonet stuck in the dirt, they had dug quite a little at the last; stick bombs, helmet rifles, entrenching tools, ammunition boxes, star-shell pistols, their shells scattered about, medical kits, gas masks, empty gas mask cans, a squat tri-podded machine gun in a nest of empty shells, full belts protruding from the boxes, the water cooling can empty on its side, the breech gone, the crew in odd positions, and around them, in the grass, more of the typical papers.

"A Way You'll Never Be" Ernest Hemingway

“The Broken Globe” Henry Kreisil

Sentence #	First 4 Words	Special Features	Verbs	# of Words in Sentence
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				

“The day broke fine and clear. A few white clouds were in the metallic autumn sky and the sun shone coldly down upon the earth, as if from a great distance. I drove south as far as Wetaskiwin and then turned east. The paved highway gave way to gravel and got steadily worse. I was beginning to wonder whether I was going right, when I rounded a bend and a grain elevator hovered like a signpost into view. It was now about three o’clock and I had arrived in Three Bear Hills, but, as Nick had told me, there were neither bears nor hills here, but only prairie, and suddenly the beginning of an embryonic street with a few building on either side like a small island in a vast sea, and then all was prairie again.”

-Comment on your observations after filling out this chart.

Syntax Parallel Practice

The following parallel sentences concern characters from the Ibsen play “A Doll House.” Begin by labeling each of the sentences in the left hand margin either: simple, loose, or periodic. Then write ten sentences, in parallel structure, concerning some character from your novel. Include in your ten sentences an equal number of each kind. Try not to copy the wording of the samples given.

1. Torvald is defined by appearance, controlled by appearance and obsessed by appearance.
2. At the end of the play, Nora departs from her role as a doll and remasters her sense of self by taking control of her life, control of her situation, and control of her future.
3. Though overwhelmed by poverty, submerged in sorrow, and suffocated by life, Kristine is revitalized by her budding relationship with Krogstad.
4. A woman of unfiltered honesty, unfailing sincerity, and unwavering openness, Kristine is straightforward and true.
5. Contained by the grasp of a deprecating man, Nora has a quiet subservience, unwilling complacency and coy superficiality.
6. Torvald lives in a world based on image, a foundation obscured by masks, an empty shell devoid of true meaning.
7. Nora is a woman whose revelation has saved her, a leader whose enlightenment has strengthened her, a risk taker whose actions have left her in the warmth of the relentless chaos.
8. Kristine found strength in adversity, love after loss and truth in chaos.
9. Torvald is blinded by arrogance, obsessed with control, and intent on belittling.
10. Nora is a woman fraught with unhappiness, riddled with uncertainty, isolated by her revolutionary need for independence.
11. Torvald is a pond: dirty, murky and shallow.
12. Torvald thinks he is a god, acts like a parent, and is shown to be a child.
13. Nora was raised as a doll, treated like a child, yet grew to be a woman.

Syntax
Diction/Syntax Analysis Practice

Directions: In paragraph 1 the writer tells about his young son's typical days while he was attending a private school. Paragraph 2 is a summary of paragraph 1. Read the two paragraphs and then answer the questions that follow.

Paragraph 1

His days were rich in formal experience. Wearing overalls and an old sweater (the accepted uniform of the private seminary), he sallied forth at morn accompanied by a nurse or a parent and walked (or was pulled) two blocks to a corner where the school bus made a flag stop. This flashy vehicle was as punctual as death: seeing us waiting at the cold curb, it would sweep to a halt, open its mouth, suck the boy in, and spring away with an angry growl. It was a good deal like a train picking up a bag of mail. At school the scholar was worked on for six or seven hours by half a dozen teachers and a nurse, and was revived on orange juice in midmorning. In a cinder court he played games supervised by an athletic instructor, and in a cafeteria he ate lunch worked out by a dietitian.

Paragraph 2

His days followed a set routine. He wore overalls and an old sweater, as everyone else did in his school. In the morning, a parent or nurse walked the two blocks with him to the corner where he met the school bus. The bus was always on time. During the six or seven hours of the school day, he had six teachers. The school also employed a nurse and a dietitian. Games were supervised. The children ate in the cafeteria. Orange juice was served during the morning session.

1. What impressions of the school do you get from thinking of the clothing as an "accepted uniform" rather than as what "everyone else" wears?
2. What do you learn about the boy's attitude toward the school from the first paragraph which you do not learn from the second?
3. In the first paragraph, what is the purpose of the words used in speaking of the bus? Quote some of the words and phrases used, and discuss the effect they have in creating images and ideas in the reader's mind.
4. The first paragraph tells that the boy was "worked on...by half a dozen teachers and a nurse." The second tells that he "had six teachers." What difference does the change in wording make in your impression of the way the school staff regards the students?
5. Why is it important to the general effect of the first paragraph to know that the games are supervised by an athletic director and that the meals are planned by a dietitian?
6. Explain why paragraph 1 is more effective and interesting than paragraph 2. Show how particular words, phrases, and sentences create pictures and ideas for the reader.

AP Language and Composition
Diction and Syntax Analysis
Faulkner and Hemingway

Directions: In the excerpt from “A Rose for Emily” by William Faulkner, every sentence has been numbered. In the first column, identify the syntax/diction techniques that are being used, and in the second column, comment on their purposes.

	Technique	Effect
1. Alive, Miss Emily had been a tradition, a duty, and a care; a sort of hereditary obligation upon the town, dating from that day in 1894 when Colonel Sartoris, the mayor – he who fathered the edict that no Negro woman should appear on the streets without an apron – remitted her taxes, the dispensation dating from the death of her father on into perpetuity. 2. Not that Miss Emily would have accepted charity. 3. Colonel Sartoris invented an involved tale to the effect that Miss Emily’s father had loaned money to the town, which the town, as a matter of business, preferred this way of repaying. 4. Only a man of Colonel Sartoris’ generation and thought could have invented it, and only a woman could have believed it.		

Follow the same directions for this excerpt from “The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber” by Ernest Hemingway.

	Technique	Effect
<p>1. It had taken a strange chance of hunting, a sudden precipitation into action without opportunity for worrying beforehand, to bring this about with Macomber, but regardless of how it had happened it had most certainly happened. 2. Look at the beggar now, Wilson thought. 3. It's that some of them stay little boys so long, Wilson thought. 4. Sometimes all their lives. 5. Their figures stay boyish when they're fifty. 6. The great American boy-men. 7. Damned strange people. 8. But he liked this Macomber now. 9.. Damn strange fellow. 10. Probably meant the end of cuckoldry too. 11. Well, that would be a damned good thing. 12. Damned good thing. 13. Beggar had probably been afraid all his life. 14. Don't know what started it. 15. But over now. 16. Hadn't had time to be afraid with the buff. 17. That and being angry too. 18. Motor car too. 19. Motor cars made it familiar. 20. Be a damn fire eater now. 21. He'd seen it in the war work the same way. 22. More of a change than any loss of virginity. 23. Fear gone like an operation. 24. Something else grew in its place. 25. Main thing a man had. 26. Women knew it too. 27. No bloody fear.</p>		

Syntax Analysis
Isaac's Storm

In the following passage from Erik Larson's nonfiction account of the 1900 Galveston hurricane, Isaac's Storm, Larson recreates the initial formation of the storm in the chapter "Somewhere a Butterfly." After reading and analyzing the passage compose a well organized one paragraph response discussing how Larson uses diction and syntax to convey the beauty, power, and complexity of the building storm.

It began, as all things must, with an awakening of molecules. The sun rose over the African highlands east of Cameroon and warmed grasslands, forests, lakes, and rivers, and the men and creatures that moved and breathed among them; it warmed their exhalations and caused these to rise upward as a great plume of carbon, oxygen, nitrogen, and hydrogen, the earth's soul. The air contained water: haze, steam, vapor; the stench of day-old kill and the greetings of men glad to awaken from the cool mystery of night. There was cordite, ether, urine, dung. Coffee. Bacon. Sweat. An invisible paucity of plumes and counterplumes formed above the earth, the pattern as ephemeral as the copper and bronze veils that appear when water enters whiskey.

Winds converged. A big, hot easterly raced around a heat-induced low in the Sahara, where temperatures averaged 113 degrees Fahrenheit, heat scalded the air, and winds filled the sky with dust. This easterly blew toward the moist and far cooler bulge of West Africa. High over the lush lands north of the Gulf of Guinea, over Ouagadougou, Zungeru, and Yamoussoukro, this thermal stream encountered moist monsoon air blowing in from the sea from the southwest. The monsoon crossed the point where zero latitude and zero longitude meet, and entered the continent over Nigeria.

When these winds collided, they produced a zone of instability. The air began to undulate.

The seas were hot. The land was hot. Throughout much of the United States temperatures rose into the nineties and often broke 100. Heat suffused the Rockies, Nebraska, Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, and a vast swath of country from the Gulf all the

way to Pennsylvania. At 3:00 P.M. on Saturday, August 11, the temperature in Philadelphia hit 100.6 degrees. There was no air-conditioning. Trains were hot. Suits were black wool. Dresses were taffeta, mohair, gabardine. Carriages had black canvas tops, black-enamelled bodies. Passengers roasted. Horses glistened. That same Saturday, thirty people in New York City died of heat prostration. Three children died when they fell from fire escapes where they had hoped to find a breeze. A high-pressure zone stretched from the Midwest far into the Atlantic and halted the flow of air over much of the nation. There was no breeze to find. "The air near the surface of the earth became superheated," wrote Prof. E.B. Garriott, the Weather Bureau's chief forecaster at the time. "Considered as a whole, the month of August 1900, was the warmest August on record generally from the upper Mississippi Valley over the Lake region, Ohio Valley and Middle Atlantic States."

Which meant the heat embraced most of the nation's population. Everyone shared in the suffering. What made the heat wave exceptional was no the maximum temperature recorded from city to city, but the sheer persistence of the heat. Springfield, Illinois, reported the longest hot spell in

twenty years: twelve consecutive days with temperatures of 90 or higher. The men at Weather Bureau headquarters suffered deeply as the mercury hit or surpassed 96 degrees seven days in a row. In August, mean temperatures in Albany, Atlantic City, Baltimore, Chicago, Cincinnati, Eric, New York, and Philadelphia were the highest they had been since the bureau began keeping formal records in 1873.

In Galveston there was heat *and* rain. From mid-July to mid-August, a succession of tropical squalls swept from the Gulf and deluged Galveston. In one twenty-four-hour period, the city got fourteen inches of rain. Some streets flooded. Little boys converted tubs to boats and sailed downtown. A horse

drowned. Total rainfall for that storm alone was sixteen inches in forty-eight hours, five inches greater than Galveston's previous record set in September 1875 when a hurricane struck Indianola on Matagorda Bay, 150 miles down the Texas coast. In Paris, Texas, lightning demolished a tree. Ten billion joules of energy leaped to a porch ten feet away and knocked five children unconscious.

Crickets swarmed Waco. The streets crunched. Bugs heaping under arc lights halted trolleys. Squads of citizens used unslacked lime and coal oil to drive the bugs away. The fire department deployed hoses.

The waters of the Gulf got hot.

Over the Niger, the colliding winds veered and arced. Thunderstorms of great violence purpled the sky. A huge parcel of air began circling slowly, far too high for anyone on the ground to notice. The powerful Saharan wind swept it west toward the Atlantic as a wave of turbulence, thunderstorms, and driving rain.

#1

Erik Larson, in his chapter, "Somewhere, a Butterfly" uses syntax and diction to create a scene rich with the heat and foreboding of a pending hurricane. Larson often uses simple and natural diction to convey an unforced feel to his book and to reflect the natural origins of a hurricane. Instead of using scientific words, Larson will sometimes substitute a different word, giving the particular phrase a more poetic feel. For example, he uses the words "...the first layer of sky..." which creates a dreamier undertone than if the word atmosphere would have been used. Simple language is also employed by an author to set apart a particularly important idea in the hopes that it will get noticed for the way it is written. Larson uses this technique when ending some of his paragraphs. "The waters of the Gulf got hot." He declares; the sentence is clean and straightforward. It is noticeable for those very reasons, which is what Larson intended; and creates a sense of foreboding, and a contrast with the other, more descriptive phrases. Although natural and simple language is often employed by Larson, much of his writing is overly poetic. Sunny Delaney of amazon.com eloquently comments, "At times, the prose is a bit too purple..." What Larson lacks in prose, he makes up for in his use of sentence structure. With an accomplished command of syntax, he creates a feeling of apprehension in this selection. To relay the feeling of dread associated with the commencement of the worst natural disaster of our time, he uses short, choppy sentences, which can make a reader anxious. Short sentences and asyndeton not only create feelings of apprehension or anticipation, but also force attention to what is being said. The awkward way choppy phrases, clauses, and sentences sound draws attention to the words, and the difficulty of reading short sentences or those without conjunctions causes a reader to slow down, and contemplate while pronouncing the phrase. In one section of this selection, Larson uses asyndeton and three one-word sentences in a row. For some reason, Larson wants his readers to pay particular attention to, or fear, "...cordite, ether, urine, dung. Coffee. Bacon. Sweat." A third reason Larson uses so many short sentences is to relate the feeling of sluggishness associated with unbearable heat. It is while talking about the 100-degree temperature in Philadelphia during August 1900 in which he strings together seven short sentences. Overall, Larson does a credible job at calling forth the image of a brewing storm through his use of simple language and asyndeton.

#2

According to Larson the building storm has beauty, power, and complexity. Through soft diction such as "the earth's soul" Larson implies the storm's beauty by implying its necessary relationship to the rest of the world and life. With the epistrophes repeating hot over and over again Larson's use of syntax implies power; using the connotations of "powerful Saharan wind, turbulence, and driving rain," Larson further implies the storm's power via his diction. And the storm's complexity becomes apparent with the mounting objective words such as "temperatures," "latitude," and "hot spell" all pointing towards an intricate scientific mixture. With the grace and style of Larson's diction and syntax he demonstrates the building storm's power, beauty, and complexity.

Language – coin of a better future’s realm

By Tommy Denton
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Language is the architecture of thought, and like the principles of physics that must guide the architect’s conception of a cathedral, the elements of language make possible the tensile strength of ideas.

Vacuous, imprecise and undisciplined language reflects vacuous, imprecise and undisciplined thinking. Language represents the array of tools available to construct the most noble edifices of the mind – or to tack together fragile cardboard shacks erected on foundations of sand.

The topic, dear students, is grammar and syntax, those twin artful sciences fast falling from grace in school curriculums. Sadly, some influential educators have begun to surrender and side with students, who in every age have bemoaned the drudgery of learning “the rules.”

A more dedicated generation of teachers once heard the pained pleas for reprieve but wouldn’t let us get away with it. Now, some teachers have accepted the heresy that somehow a knowledge of grammar and syntax will simply transfer by osmosis through the permeable membranes of ignorance without the exertions of first mastering them by memory. No math teacher would tolerate the notion that memorizing the multiplication tables is irrelevant to forming the foundation for learning higher orders of math, any more than a science teacher would accept the foolishness that memorizing the table of elements is a quaint pedagogical anachronism.

Yet language is at the heart of human communication and is a reflection of the advance, or decline, of a civilization’s knowledge of itself and its place not only in the cosmos but in the continuum of history. The less depth and sophistication of the knowledge, the more rigid and brittle its capacity to negotiate the future.

Youngsters who are not equipped to grapple with the nuances and complexities of their own language will be equally ill-equipped to comprehend the

connections between the dim, narrow chambers of their own limited experiences and the abstract principles of love, duty, freedom, selflessness and honor that this nation’s founders wove into the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

Disciples of the Enlightenment who gathered in Philadelphia in 1787 designed a structure of government that was more than a mere bureaucratic arrangement: It was a social compact. They sought to order a society in which individuals were free to explore the vast mysteries of truth and beauty that are uniquely within the grasp of humankind.

Education is the process by which we introduce young people to that adventure of exploration in which science, literature and philosophy may flourish. Yet a genuine understanding of freedom and the pursuit of happiness requires a grasp of those first principles, just as the ability to reason and express ideas cogently and compellingly requires a grasp of the rudiments of language. Students must first commit them to memory before they can parse their meaning.

John Frohnmayer, visiting professional scholar at the Freedom Forum First Amendment Center, recently asked those attending the convention of the National Conference of Editorial Writers in Phoenix to recite the First Amendment from memory. The response was spotty.

“I guarantee you,” he said, “because I have demonstrated it among the high school and college students that I have taught over the last year, that not one student in 100 memorized the First Amendment.

“Picky, you say. I think not. Memorization is simply a badge of interest. Those same students can quote sports statistics, lyrics to popular songs and even advertising jingles. The least motivated student can memorize 45 words in a row.”

First principles such as the First Amendment, he said, are foundations upon which knowledge rests, and within which wisdom may be found. Without the mastery of language to articulate them and to

transform ideas into a purposive response, though, they will remain dry abstractions.

“We must teach the value of words – robust words – vigorous language that says what we mean and says it with the rhythm and beauty and cadence that distinguishes our tongue,” Frohnmayer said.

“What the First Amendment embraces is vigorous debate. If we are informed by the ethics of freedom and equality, and if we acknowledge both the responsibilities and rights granted by the First Amendment, then we will have grasped the principles and the process that is the genius of our government – the principles of freedom and equality through the process of speech, petition, press and assembly that allow change and preserve the system during that change.”

Such a noble objective requires rigorous instruction of our young in our enlightened traditions – conveying to them not only the architectural conceptions of their substance but also the essential tools with which to construct a grand edifice of citizenship.

Lacking those tools, students will confine themselves, not in splendid castles of knowledge, but in cardboard shacks of mediocrity.

As Logan Pearsall Smith wrote: “Uncultivated minds are not full of wild flowers like uncultivated fields. Villainous weeds grow in them, and they are full of toads.”

■ Tommy Denton is a columnist and senior editorial writer for the Fort Worth Star-Telegram.

***Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student, Corbett and Connors, 1999,
Excerpted and adapted from Chapter IV "Style"***

I. Imitation

Classical rhetoric books are filled with testimonies about the value of imitation for the refinement of the many skills involved in effective speaking or writing. Style is, after all, the most imitable of the skills that cooperate to produce effective discourse.

Rhetoricians recommended a variety of exercises to promote conscious imitation.

[A] common practice was to set the students the task of saying something in a variety of ways. This process usually started out with a model sentence, which had to be converted into a variety of forms each retaining the basic thought of the original. Erasmus showed the students 150 ways of phrasing the sentence, originally written in Latin, "Your letter has delighted me very much." The variety was achieved partly by the choice of different words, partly by different collocations of words. Here, in English, is a sampling of Erasmus's reworkings:

Your epistle has cheered me greatly.

Your note has been the occasion of unusual pleasure for me.

When your letter came, I was seized with an extraordinary pleasure.

What you wrote to me was most delightful.

On reading your letter, I was filled with joy.

Your letter provided me with no little pleasure.

By artificially experimenting with various forms, students became aware of the flexibility of the language in which they were working and learned to extend their own range. Ultimately they learned that although there is a variety of ways of saying something, there is a "best way" for their particular subject matter, occasion, or audience. What was "best" for one occasion or audience, they discovered, is not "best" for another occasion or audience.

You will have the opportunity to practice two kinds of imitation—copying passages of prose and imitating various sentence patterns. But first, read the testimony of Malcolm X about how he learned to write.

Malcolm X

I saw the best thing I could do was get hold of a dictionary—to study, to learn some words. I was lucky enough to reason also that I should try to improve my penmanship. It was sad. I couldn't even write in a straight line. It was both ideas together that moved me to request a dictionary along with some tablets and pencils from the Norfolk Prison Colony school.

I spent two days just riffling uncertainly through the dictionary's pages. I'd never realized so many words existed! I didn't know *which* words I needed to learn. Finally, just to start some kind of action, I began copying.

In my slow, painstaking, ragged handwriting, I copied into my tablet everything printed on that first page, down to the punctuation marks.

I believe it took me a day. Then, aloud, I read back, to myself, everything I'd written on the tablet. Over and over aloud, to myself, I read my own handwriting.

I woke up the next morning, thinking about those words immensely proud to realize that not only had I written so much at one time, but I'd written words that I never knew were in the world. Moreover, with a little effort, I also could remember what many of these words meant. I reviewed the words whose meanings I didn't remember. Funny thing, from the dictionary first page right now, that "aardvark" springs to my mind. The dictionary had a picture of it, a long-tailed, long-eared, burrowing African mammal, which lives off termites caught by sticking out its tongue as an anteater does for ants.

I was so fascinated that I went on—I copied the dictionary's next page. And the same experience came when I studied that. With every succeeding page, I also learned of people and places and events from history. Actually the dictionary is like a miniature encyclopedia. Finally the dictionary's A section had filled a whole tablet — and I went on into the B's. That was the way I started copying what eventually became the entire dictionary. It went a lot faster after so much practice helped me to pick up handwriting speed. Between what I wrote in my tablet, and writing letters, during the rest of my time in prison I would guess I wrote a million words.

From *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* Grove Press Paperback Edition, 1966, p. 172. Copyright 1964 by Alex Haley and Malcolm X. Copyright 1965 by Alex Haley and Betty Shabazz.

Copying Passages

The first exercise in imitation ... consists of copying passages word for word, from admired authors. This may strike you as being a rather brainless exercise, but it can teach you a great deal about the niceties of style. We pointed out a number of features one looks for when one makes a close study of style. These features will strike you as you carefully transcribe the passage.

If you are to derive any benefit from this exercise, you must observe a few simple rules.

1. **You must not spend more than fifteen or twenty minutes copying at any one time.** If you extend this exercise much beyond twenty minutes at any one sitting, your attention will begin to wander, and you will find yourself merely copying words.
2. **You must do this copying with a pencil or pen.** Typing is so fast and so mechanical that you can copy off whole passages without paying any attention to the features of an author's style. Copying by hand, you transcribe the passage at such a pace that you have time to observe the choice and disposition of words, the patterns of sentences, and the length and variety of sentences.
3. **You must not spend too much time with any one author.** If you concentrate on a single author's style, you may find yourself falling into that "servile imitation" that rhetoricians warned of. The aim of this exercise is not to acquire someone else's style but to lay the groundwork for developing your own style by getting the "feel" of a variety of styles.
4. **You must read the entire passage before starting to copy it so that you can capture the thought and manner of the passage as a whole.** When you are copying, it is advisable to read each sentence through before transcribing it. After you have finished copying the passage, you should read your transcription so that you once again get a sense of the passage as a whole.
5. **You must copy the passage slowly and accurately.** If you are going to dash through this exercise, you might as well not do it at all. A mechanical way of insuring accuracy and the proper pace is to make your handwriting as legible as you can.

You will derive the maximum benefit from this copying exercise if you practice it over an extended period of time. Transcribing a single different passage every day for a month will prove more beneficial to you than transcribing several different pages every day for a week. You must have time to absorb what you have been observing in this exercise; and you will not have time to absorb the many lessons to be learned from this exercise if you cram it into a short period.

Passages for Imitation*Abraham Lincoln*

Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

From *The Gettysburg Address*, 1863

Ernest Hemingway

Sometimes in the dark we heard the troops marching under the window and the guns going past pulled by motor-tractors. There was much traffic at night and many mules on the roads with boxes of ammunition on each side of their packsaddles and gray motor-trucks that carried men, and other trucks with loads covered with canvas that moved slower in the traffic. There were big guns too that passed in the day drawn by tractors, the long barrels of the guns covered with green branches and green leafy branches and vines laid over the tractors. To the north we could look across a valley and see a forest of chestnut trees and behind it another mountain on this side of the river. There was fighting for that mountain too, but it was not successful, and in the fall when the rains came the leaves all fell from the chestnut trees and the branches were bare and the trunks black with rain. The vineyards were thin and bare-branched too and all the country wet and brown and dead with the autumn. There were mists over the river and clouds on the mountain and the trucks splashed mud on the road and the troops were muddy and wet in their capes; their rifles were wet and under their capes the two leather cartridge-boxes on the front of the belts, gray leather boxes heavy with the packs of clips of thin, long 6.5 mm. cartridges, bulged forward under the capes so that the men passing on the road, marched as though they were six months gone with child.

From *A Farewell to Arms*, Copyright 1929 by Charles Scribner's Sons;
renewal copyright 1957 by Ernest Hemingway

N. Scott Momaday

Although my grandmother lived out her long life in the shadow of Rainy Mountain, the immense landscape of the continental interior lay like memory in her blood. She could tell of the Crows, whom she had never seen, and of the Black Hills, where she had never been. I wanted to see in reality what she had seen more perfectly in the mind's eye, and travelled fifteen hundred miles to begin my pilgrimage.

Yellowstone, it seemed to me, was the top of the world, a region of deep lakes and dark timber, canyons and waterfalls. But, beautiful as it is, one might have the sense of confinement there. The skyline in all directions is close at hand, the high wall of the woods and deep cleavages of shade. There is a perfect freedom in the mountains, but it belongs to the eagle and the elk, the badger and the bear. The Kiowas reckoned their stature by the distance they could see, and they were bent and blind in the wilderness.

The Way to Rainy Mountain, 1967, 1969.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

I have traveled the length and breadth of Alabama, Mississippi and all the other southern states. On sweltering summer days and crisp autumn mornings I have looked at the South's beautiful churches with their lofty spires pointing heavenward. I have beheld the impressive outlines of her massive religious education buildings. Over and over I have found myself asking: "What kind of people worship here? Who is their God? Where were their voices when the lips of Governor Barnett dripped with words of interposition and nullification? Where were they when Governor Wallace gave a clarion call for defiance and hatred? Where were their voices of support when bruised and weary Negro men and women decided to rise from the dark dungeons of complacency to the bright hills of creative protest?"

Yes, these questions are still in my mind. In deep disappointment I have wept over the laxity of the church. But be assured that my tears have been tears of love. There can be no deep disappointment where there is not deep love. Yes, I love the church. How could I do otherwise? I am in the rather unique position of being the son, the grandson and the great grandson of preachers. Yes, I see the church as the body of Christ. But, oh! How we have blemished and scarred that body through social neglect and through fear of being nonconformists.

Letter from Birmingham Jail
16 April 1963

II. Imitating Sentence Patterns

After you have spent some time merely copying passages, you might attempt another kind of imitation. You can take individual sentences as patterns on which to devise sentences of your own. This is a more difficult exercise than the verbatim copying but it pays high dividends to those who use it consciously.

You will find this exercise most fruitful if you will observe at least the same *kind, number, and order of clauses and phrases*. If the model sentence has an adverb clause, you should write an adverb clause. If the model sentence is introduced by a participial phrase, you should put a participial phrase in the lead-off position. If the model sentence has three noun clauses arranged in parallel structure, you should write a sentence containing three noun clauses in a similar structure.

The aim of this exercise is to achieve an awareness of the variety of sentence structures of which the English language is capable. Many students write monotonous sentences because they have never attempted sophisticated sentence patterns. Writing such patterns according to models will increase students' syntactical resources, and with more resources at their command, they will acquire more confidence in writing.

The kind of prose we write cannot be arbitrary; it is governed by the subject matter, the occasion, the purpose, the audience, and the personality of the writer.

Sample Imitations

MODEL SENTENCE: The gallows stood in a small yard, separate from the main grounds of the prison and overgrown with tall prickly weeds. —George Orwell, *Burmese Days*

IMITATION: The dog shivered in the background, wet from nosing his way through the early-morning grasses and covered with damp cocklespurs.

MODEL SENTENCE: I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front on the essential facts of life, and see if I could learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. —Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*

IMITATION: I greeted him politely, although I planned to challenge him repeatedly, to assess his erudition, to test whether he could discriminate what was expedient in each situation, and, later, after I had probed him thoroughly, to announce that we had no place for him in our organization.

MODEL SENTENCE: To have even a portion of this illuminated reason and true philosophy is the highest state to which nature can aspire, in the way of intellect. —John Henry Newman, *The Idea of a University*

IMITATION: To win a measure of his affection and esteem was the most difficult task that I had ever assigned myself.

MODEL SENTENCE: Moths that fly by day are not properly to be called moths; they do not excite that pleasant sense of dark autumn nights and ivy-blossom which the commonest yellow-underwing asleep in the shadow of the curtain never fails to rouse in us. — Virginia Woolf, "The Death of the Moth"

YOUR IMITATION:

MODEL SENTENCE: You want to live out that age-old yearning, portrayed in myths and legends of every culture, to step above the Earth and see the whole world fidgeting and blooming below you. —Dianne Ackerman, "The Round Walls of Home," *A Natural History of the Senses*.

YOUR IMITATION:

MODEL SENTENCE: I have ever considered you in the light of *civil* acquaintance – on the word friend I lay a peculiar emphasis – and, as a mere acquaintance, you were rude and *cruel*, to step forward to insult a woman, whose conduct and misfortune demand respect. –Mary Wollstonecraft, Letter 1795

YOUR IMITATION:

MODEL SENTENCE: Every man stood firm; and at our last meeting, we pledged ourselves afresh, in the most solemn manner, that, at the time appointed, we would certainly start in pursuit of freedom. –Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

YOUR IMITATION:

MODEL SENTENCE: An active field of science is like an immense intellectual anthill; the individual almost vanishes into the mass of minds tumbling over each other, carrying information from place to place, passing it around at the speed of light. —Lewis Thomas, "Natural Science," *The Lives of a Cell*

YOUR IMITATION:

MODEL SENTENCE: You see the wide world swaddled in darkness; you see a vast breadth of hilly land, and an enormous, distant, blackened valley; you see towns' lights, a river's path, and blurred portions of your hat and scarf; you see your husband's face looking like an early black-and-white film; and you see a sprawl of black sky and blue sky together, with unfamiliar stars in it, some barely visible bands of cloud, and over there, a small white ring.—Annie Dillard, "Total Eclipse,"

Teaching a Stone to Talk

YOUR IMITATION:

III. Varying the Pattern and Alternate Expressions

Another exercise that can be worked off this concentration on a single is to **vary the pattern** of the model sentence or to devise an alternate way of expressing it. Varying the sentence pattern usually calls for nothing more than a reordering of the words in the original sentence. Devising an **alternate expression**, however, often involves the choice of different words and different syntactical structures.

MODEL SENTENCE: The gallows stood in a small yard, separate from the main grounds of the prison and overgrown with tall prickly weeds. —George Orwell, *Burmese Days*

VARIATION OF THE PATTERN: In a small yard, separate from the main grounds and overgrown with tall prickly weeds, the gallows was separated from the main grounds.

ALTERNATE EXPRESSIONS: Located in a small yard, which was overgrown with tall prickly weeds, the gallows was separated from the main grounds.

The gallows was situated outside the main grounds, in a small yard that was overgrown with tall prickly weeds.

Reducing the model to its "kernel sentences" can reveal how the "deep structure" was transformed into the "surface structure" that the author actually wrote.

MODEL SENTENCE: An active field of science is like an immense intellectual anthill; the individual almost vanishes into the mass of minds tumbling over each other, carrying information from place to place, passing it around at the speed of light.

—Lewis Thomas, "Natural Science," *The Lives of a Cell*

An active field of science is like an immense intellectual anthill.
The individual almost vanishes into the mass of minds tumbling over each other.
The individual is carrying information from place to place.
The individual is passing it around at the speed of light.

VARIATION OF THE PATTERN:

ALTERNATE EXPRESSIONS:

MODEL SENTENCE: I have ever considered you in the light of *civil* acquaintance – on the word friend I lay a peculiar emphasis – and, as a mere acquaintance, you were rude and *cruel*, to step forward to insult a woman, whose conduct and misfortune demand respect. –Mary Wollstonecraft, Letter 1795

I consider you in the light of a civil acquaintance.
On the word friend I lay a peculiar emphasis.
As a mere acquaintance, you were rude and cruel.
You insulted a woman.
The woman's conduct and misfortune demand respect.

VARIATION OF THE PATTERN:

ALTERNATE EXPRESSIONS:

All of these exercises in imitation—copying passages, writing original sentences according to pattern, varying the pattern of a model sentence, and devising alternate expressions for the same thought—can teach you a number of valuable lessons:

- (1) They can make you aware of the variety of resources that your language offers;
- (2) They can afford you practice in choosing apt words and collocating them in various ways;
- (3) They can teach you that not every variation is equally clear, graceful, or appropriate;
- (4) They can teach you that variation of the pattern of the sentence often results in a different *effect* and that an alternate expression often results in a different *meaning*.

The ultimate goal of imitation exercises, however, is eventually to cut you loose from your models, equipped with the competence and resources to go at it on your own.

