

Writing Tips for Parents

Sentence Structure – Stage 3



Syllabus Links

- **EN3-6B:** A student uses knowledge of sentence structure, grammar, punctuation and vocabulary to respond to and compose clear and cohesive texts in different media and technologies.
- **Content:** - understand the difference between main and subordinate clauses and that a complex sentence involves at least one subordinate clause.
 - experiment with different types of sentences, e.g. short sentences to build tension and complex sentences to add detail.

Advice for Parents

A sentence is a set of words that is complete in itself. It typically contains a subject, conveys a statement, question, exclamation or command, and consists of a main clause. The different sentence types are simple, compound and complex sentences. High level writing includes the sophisticated use of a range of sentence types for effect. Students are able to enhance their writing by understanding how sentences are structured and using different types of sentences. Another way to improve the use of sentences in writing is by providing your child with appropriate books to read. Authors such as Suzanne Collins, Veronica Roth and Judy Blume use a range of sentence types in their stories which greatly benefit their writing.

Activities for Home

Sick Sentences

Task Description

Using a novel of their choice, students identify examples of simple 'sick' sentences that could be improved by adding an adverb or extra descriptive language. Students can discuss what type of emotion they want the reader to have after reading their sentences.

Example

Sick sentences!

These sentences are 'sick' and need help to get better. Can you help? Could you add an adverb?

- ▶ The boy rowed the boat.
- ▶ Underneath him was a big fish.
- ▶ It swam around, waiting.

In the sentence **The boy rowed the boat**, you can add an adverb to describe how the boy rowed the boat.

The boy rowed the boat as quickly as a duck paddles its feet – added a simile as well.

Curious Conjunctions

Task Description

Students recount one thing they have done in a day and write it as a simple sentence. They then use a subordinating conjunction and dependent clause to create a complex sentence.

| Subordinate Conjunctions | | |
|--------------------------|---------------|----------|
| after | once | until |
| although | provided that | when |
| as | rather than | whenever |
| because | since | where |
| before | so that | whereas |
| even if | than | wherever |
| even though | that | whether |
| if | though | while |
| in order that | unless | why |

Example

I went to school today – simple sentence, one independent clause

I went to school today after sleeping in– complex sentence, one independent and dependent clause linked by the subordinating conjunction after

Opulent Openers

Task Description

Using sections from a book of their choice, students are to try using a subordinating conjunction to begin a sentence and see how it changes the sound and meaning of the sentence.

Example

And then, exactly a year ago, Hogwarts had written to Harry, and the whole story had come out. Harry had taken up his place at wizard school, where he and his scar were famous... **but** now the school year was over, and he was back with the Dursleys for the summer, back to being treated like a dog that had rolled in something smelly.

A subordinate clause can add extra meaning and depth to a written text.

Picture Perfect

Task Description

Using images found in a magazine, newspaper or from an online source, students write a simple, compound and complex sentence to describe what is in the image.

Example



Prince Harry got married to Megan Markle – simple sentence, one independent clause.



France played in the World Cup and won the tournament – compound sentence, two independent clauses joined by the conjunction *and*.



The earthquake in Lombok was very strong, many people died – complex sentence, independent and dependent clause joined by the comma.