

Paragraphs for Elementary School

A Sentence-Composing Approach

The Teacher's Booklet

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Portsmouth, NH

Heinemann

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Portsmouth, NH 03801-3912
www.heinemann.com

Offices and agents throughout the world

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Editor: Tobey Antao
Production: Sonja S. Chapman
Interior and cover designs: Monica Ann Crigler
Typesetter: Cape Cod Compositors, Inc.

If the new grammar is to be brought to bear on composition, it must be brought to bear on the rhetoric of the sentence. . . . With hundreds of handbooks and rhetorics to draw from I have never been able to work out a program for teaching the sentence as I find it in the work of contemporary writers.

—Francis Christensen, “A Generative Rhetoric of the Sentence”



The practice of professional writers gives no support to the classroom notion that the paragraph should end with a clincher.

—Francis Christensen, “A Generative Rhetoric of the Paragraph”

To the memory of Francis Christensen, the first to see the light: *Christensen’s life’s work made possible our sentence-composing approach, a “program for teaching the sentence as [it is found] in the work of contemporary writers.” We are deeply grateful to him, our silent partner, for helping us work out that program to help students write better sentences and paragraphs.*

—Don and Jenny Killgallon, coauthors of
Paragraphs for Elementary School: A Sentence-Composing Approach

Well, it’s hard to write honestly about anything. But my approach is to focus all my attention on the sentences—try to get them as good and honest and interesting as I can.

—George Saunders, author of *Tenth of December*

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THE SOURCES

For a text-rich environment, and for abundant examples of real rather than concocted writing, only sentences and paragraphs from authors are the source for exercises in *Paragraphs for Elementary School: A Sentence-Composing Approach*—including authors and titles that elementary children may recognize, among them the following:

Anna Sewell, *Black Beauty*
Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, *The Little Prince*
Astrid Lindgren, *Pippi Longstocking*
C. S. Lewis, *The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe*
Carl Hiaasen, *Flush*
Christopher Paolini, *Eragon*
E. B. White, *Charlotte's Web*
Elizabeth George Speare, *The Witch of Blackbird Pond*
Gary Paulsen, *Hatchet*
J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter novels*
J. M. Barrie, *Peter Pan*
J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Hobbit*
Jean Craighead George, *Julie of the Wolves*
Jerry Spinelli, *Maniac McGee*
Kate DiCamillo, *Because of Winn-Dixie*
L. Frank Baum, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*
Laura Ingalls Wilder, *Little House on the Prairie*
Lemony Snicket, *The Bad Beginning*
Louis Sachar, *Holes*
Madeleine L'Engle, *A Wrinkle in Time*
Margery Williams, *The Velveteen Rabbit*
Maurice Sendak, *Where the Wild Things Are*
Mildred D. Taylor, *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*
Neil Gaiman, *The Graveyard Book*
Orson Scott Card, *Ender's Game*
Phyllis Reynolds Naylor, *Shiloh*
Richard Adams, *Watership Down*
Rick Riordan, *The Lightning Thief*
Roald Dahl, *Matilda*
Scott O'Dell, *Island of the Blue Dolphins*
Suzanne Collins, *The Hunger Games*
Thomas Rockwell, *How to Eat Fried Worms*
William H. Armstrong, *Sounder*

William Pene duBois, *The Twenty-One Balloons*

William Steig, *Doctor DeSoto*

Wilson Rawls, *Where the Red Fern Grows*

(For a complete list, please see pages 31–36.)

Many sources come from award-winning or honor books: Caldecott, Newbery, National Book Awards, Coretta Scott King Awards, and others.

Students see that authors' sentences and paragraphs are authentic and skillful, not like, in many textbooks, artificial sentences and paragraphs concocted simply to illustrate a grammatical structure (*Hilda, my favorite aunt, is a nice lady*) to illustrate an appositive, or a brief paragraph with a turgid topic sentence (*Baseball is my favorite sport for the following reasons*), scant development (*My first reason is that it is fun, my second reason is, and finally . . .*), then a clunky clincher sentence (*For those reasons I have listed, baseball is a fun sport that I like a lot.*)

Furthermore, the content of text-rich sentences and paragraphs by authors is infinitely more interesting and memorable, so students are motivated to glean the meaning as a prerequisite to learning structural tools for writing their own sentences and paragraphs to resemble the structure of the authors' sentences and paragraphs.

Your students, and you their teacher, deserve more and better. The over three hundred sources listed in this booklet (pages 31–36) are the “more,” and the exercises in *Paragraph Composing for Elementary School: A Sentence-Composing Approach* are the “better.”

THE ADDITION FACTOR

The purpose of *Paragraphs for Elementary School: A Sentence-Composing Approach* is threefold:

- to teach students that good writing often results from the addition of sentence parts to sentences, and sentences to paragraphs
- to provide students varied activities via authors' sentences and paragraphs demonstrating and practicing the power of those additions
- to challenge students to include similar additions in their own sentences and paragraphs

Pioneering linguist Francis Christensen proclaimed a profound observation about good writing: it is the “add-ons” that differentiate the writing of professionals from the writing of students. In his landmark work *Notes Toward a New Rhetoric*, he said, “Composition is essentially a process of addition.” He means, essentially, that good writers say more through adding sentence parts to sentences, sentences to paragraphs: in other words, good writing often results from elaboration. State-mandated and other writing tests confirm this characteristic of good writing: the biggest reason students perform poorly on such tests is failure to elaborate.

Once students acquire the same structures that authors use to add to their writing, those structures—sentence-composing tools—generate content in their writing—in short, elaboration. Imitating the additions used by authors through the sentence-composing techniques in *Paragraphs for Elementary School: A Sentence-Composing Approach* provides **the how**, and thereby also enhances **the what**.

The worktext teaches those sentence-composing additions—called “tools” in the worktext—by saturating students with authors' sentences and paragraphs. Students acquire those tools through varied activities: chunking, combining, imitating, unscrambling, expanding, creating. All of them emphasize ways to provide additions to writing, and therefore elaboration, so that students' writing becomes more like authors' writing.

In the past, teachers used authors' paragraphs mainly as specimens for dissection, not as models for imitation. Instruction rarely went beyond “topic sentence” and “clincher sentence” and types of content (comparison, contrast, definition, narration, process, and so forth). Far too often, results were concocted anemic paragraphs bearing no resemblance to paragraphs of good writers.

Paragraphs for Elementary School: A Sentence-Composing Approach eschews such pedagogy in favor of imitation of real and rich models written by accomplished authors. With this approach, students succeed, students ranging from least able to most able. With only a single sentence or a single paragraph as the focus, and with frequent imitation through varied activities, students succeed, often astonishingly, in writing paragraphs like those of authors.

Students see clearly that authors, in their sentences and paragraphs, write well largely because they say more, and say it better. Christensen singles out “the addition factor” as the key to good writing, and he’s right:

Texture provides a descriptive or evaluative term.
If a writer adds to few of his nouns or verbs or independent clauses,
the texture may be said to be thin. The style will be plain or bare.
The writing of most of our students is thin—even threadbare.
But if he [or she] adds frequently or much or both,
then the texture may be said to be dense or rich.

—Francis Christensen, “A Generative Rhetoric of the Sentence”

To learn more of Francis Christensen’s theories about writing, which are the underpinnings for the sentence-composing approach, read this compilation of his essays on the rhetoric of sentences and paragraphs: *Notes Toward a New Rhetoric*, Francis and Bonniejean Christensen, Third Edition, edited by Don Stewart. Highly recommended.

THE SENTENCE-COMPOSING APPROACH

Like a building rising brick by brick, paragraphs unfold one sentence at a time. The quality of sentences largely determines the quality of paragraphs. The focus of this worktext is to help students build better sentences, and through them, better paragraphs, by imitating model sentences and paragraphs by authors.

An approach developed many years ago by coauthor Don Killgallon, the sentence-composing approach is a unique, eminently teachable rhetoric of the sentence. Its distinguishing feature is the linking of the three strands of the English language arts curriculum—grammar, composition, and literature—through exclusive use of rich model sentences and paragraphs for students to manipulate and imitate.

One purpose of writing is the making of texts, very much the way one might make a chair or a cake. One way to learn how to make anything is to have a model, either for duplication or for triggering one's own ideas.

—Miles Myers, former director, National Council of Teachers of English,
Theory and Practice in the Teaching of Composition

WHY SENTENCE COMPOSING WORKS

Sentence composing provides acrobatic training in sentence dexterity. Sentence-composing techniques—such as unscrambling, imitating, combining, expanding, and others—use literature as a school for writing with a faculty of professional writers to teach students to build better sentences and paragraphs.

Growth in the writing of students stems from two processes in composing sentences, both taught through *Paragraphs for Elementary School: A Sentence-Composing Approach*:

addition—the ability to *add structures* associated with sentences by authors

transformation—the ability to *convert structures* into ones associated with sentences by authors

For both processes, this worktext for elementary school students provides many activities for teaching students to build better—often *much* better—sentences and the paragraphs that contain them.

IMITATION: THE FOUNDATION OF SENTENCE COMPOSING

Steeped in the sentences and paragraphs of authors, *Paragraphs for Elementary School: A Sentence-Composing Approach* is designed to expand students' linguistic repertoire through imitation of the tools authors use in building sentences and paragraphs.

Syntax is the arrangement of sentence parts within a sentence. The size of one's syntactic repertoire is proportionate to the number of different syntactic structures one can manipulate within a single sentence. Enlarging the syntactic repertoire of students through scaffolding exercises is the major goal of *Paragraphs for Elementary School: A Sentence-Composing Approach*.

BAD IMITATION VS. GOOD IMITATION

Teachers often try to use imitation to teach writing, too often without success: for example, reading and discussing an author's descriptive essay as a preliminary to students writing their own descriptive essays. Teachers advise students to use the author's essay as a model, saying, in effect, "Go thou and do likewise."

Almost none do. They can't. They attempt the task, feebly, but, except superficially, the result is disappointingly unlike the proffered model essay. Superficial imitation and deep frustration abound.

It's not surprising, really. Because the model essay is overwhelming, not much rubs off on students cowed by that kind of unattainable imitation. Like trying to eat a whole turkey instead of just a slice, it's just too much to swallow.

However, when students imitate a model of just one sentence or paragraph, the result is vastly different: that kind of model is quick to read, easy to analyze, even often fun to imitate. For students and their teachers, unlike longer models (essays, stories, and so forth), sentences or paragraph models are undaunting, and therefore attainable. Same advice: "Go thou and do likewise." And they do.

It is, demonstrably, at the sentence and paragraph levels that imitating succeeds because student imitations actually resemble the proffered professional models. No choking here, because one sentence or one paragraph can be easily swallowed, digested—and imitated.

IMITATION REDUX

Classical rhetoric books are filled with examples of imitating the masters to learn the styles that distinguished their writing, with repeated practices to internalize them for personal use in writing.

Sentence composing revives that time-tested practice, but narrows the focus to the imitation of sentences and paragraphs, focusing on the specific tools authors use to build their sentences, and creates an apprenticeship for students with masters of the writer's craft. Sentence imitating demonstrates that professional sentences have "architecture" and that

the structure of the sentence is its blueprint. Students can, with surprising and remarkable ease, build their own sentences with similar architecture from the same blueprint.

Writing is architecture, not interior decoration.

—Ernest Hemingway

The ultimate purpose of imitation is liberation, the freedom to create a unique writing style gleaned from imitation: first, imitation to learn, then to create.

Students often write the way they talk, importing inappropriate speech patterns into their writing, unaware of the *difference* in conversational style and literary style. In her classic book *Errors and Expectations*, Mina P. O’Shaughnessy describes the problem: “Students impose the conditions of speech upon writing.” Good writers build sentences; others just say them written down. Also, today’s world of instant, unedited electronic writing via texting and emailing makes matters worse.

Why is imitation of the sentences and paragraphs of authors an effective way to teach writing? Through abundant and exclusive use of authors’ sentences and paragraphs as models, *Paragraphs for Elementary School: A Sentence-Composing Approach* demonstrates how literary style differs from conversational style—in short, how good writing differs from speech.

Within each student is an inborn capacity to learn by imitating others—in talking or walking, in choosing clothes or grooming hair, in hitting a tennis ball or throwing a baseball, *and in composing sentences or paragraphs*. Imitating authors’ model sentences and paragraphs is the foundation of the sentence-composing approach to writing improvement. It is a bridge between the conversational style of students and the literary style of authors. Through imitation, students can learn to build sentences and paragraphs like almost any author.

Perhaps you might like to involve your students in discussing the value of imitating as a means of learning.

- Begin by having students jot down five to ten activities they learned through imitating someone who knows how to do those activities.
- Have students share some of them with the class.
- Ask students to share how imitating can also be used to improve writing.

CREATION: THE GOAL OF SENTENCE COMPOSING

IMITATION WITH INVENTION

Imitation and invention are not mutually exclusive. The dichotomies are there: form/function; imitation/creation; writing process/writing product. Dichotomies, however, are differences, not necessarily divisions. Perhaps the differences are complementary, not contradictory: a symbiosis of diverse elements. As is often the case when one movement succeeds another and the passage of time starts the pendulum swinging in the opposite direction, perhaps *thesis* (writing process approach) and *antithesis* (mimetic approach) can become *synthesis*, a mutually supportive merger enhancing the teaching and learning of writing through imitation *and* invention.

To encourage the free expression of thought in writing increases fluency but not skill. The result is more writing, but not more *skillful* writing. Imitation links skill to fluency—a winning combination—to foster improved content and style.

FROM IMITATION TO CREATION

In the worktext, when students imitate sentence or paragraph models to reflect the style of an author, they resemble an art student drawing from a Picasso painting to mirror its style, a music student fashioning a piece to reflect Mozart. In any endeavor—artistic or otherwise, in building a skyscraper, or in building a sentence or paragraph—all imitative processes are akin to creative processes: a model is both an end-point and a starting-point. Something is borrowed from the model, and something is begun from it. Something is retained, and something is originated.

In imitating model sentences or paragraphs, students borrow something (structure) and contribute something (content), through a merging of imitation and creation. Imitation is, in short, a conduit to originality, a link to creation.

A baby learns to speak by imitating the speech of people who know how to talk. The baby thereby learns the oral tools of language, and then applies those tools to build speech in unique ways. A student can learn to write sentences and paragraphs by imitating the sentences and paragraphs of authors. The student thereby learns the structural tools of literary style, and then applies those tools to build sentences and paragraphs in unique ways.

Providing authors as mentors for students places students on the shoulders of giants. From that vantage point, their vision of how to build better sentences and paragraphs will be amazingly clear. Imitation is sincerest flattery, yes—but also, for sure, profound pedagogy.

As a result of completing this worktext, students sense the link between imitation, which is the foundation of sentence composing, and creation, which is its goal.

Imitation “allows students to be creative, to find their own voices as they imitate certain aspects of other voices.”

—Paul Butler, “Imitation as Freedom”

As students work through *Paragraphs for Elementary School: A Sentence-Composing Approach*, they assimilate the tools of authors, creating their own “toolbox,” out of which they can develop their unique style, discovering their own significant voices as writers, but lastingly hearing the whispering of other voices—Suzanne Collins’, Roald Dahl’s, Neil Gaiman’s, Gary Paulsen’s, J. K. Rowling’s, and all the rest of the hundreds in the worktext, voices that help them discover their own.

LEARNING TO WRITE

Whenever I read a book or a passage that particularly pleased me, in which a thing was said or an effect rendered with propriety, in which there was either some conspicuous force or some happy distinction in the style, I must sit down at once and set myself to ape [imitate] that quality. *That, like it or not, is the way to learn to write.*

Perhaps I hear some one cry out: But imitation is not the way to be original! It is not; nor is there any way but to be born so. Nor yet, if you are born original, is there anything in this training that shall clip the wings of your originality.

Before he can tell what cadences he [or she] truly prefers, the student should have tried all that are possible; before he can choose and preserve a fitting key of words, he should long have practiced the literary scales; and it is only after years of such gymnastics that he can sit down at last—legions of words swarming to his call, dozens of turns of phrase simultaneously bidding for his choice—that he himself will know what he wants to do and be able to do it.

—Robert Louis Stevenson, writer

A CROSS-GRADE CURRICULUM FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

TEACHING VARIOUS SENTENCE-COMPOSING WORKTEXTS ACROSS THREE GRADES

In some elementary schools, teachers will teach *Paragraphs for Elementary School: A Sentence-Composing Approach* in one year. To provide a sentence-composing curriculum for other grades, elementary schools may want the other elementary school sentence-composing worktexts for the other two grades: *Sentence Composing for Elementary School* and *Story Grammar for Elementary School: A Sentence-Composing Approach*.

The best sequence for this approach across grades is to begin with *Sentence Composing for Elementary School*, followed by *Story Grammar for Elementary School*, ending with *Paragraphs for Elementary School: A Sentence-Composing Approach*.

TEACHING THIS WORKTEXT ACROSS TWO GRADE LEVELS

In other schools, *Paragraphs for Elementary School: A Sentence-Composing Approach* can be divided across two grade levels. Following are divisions of the worktext for each year.

TWO-YEAR PLAN—YEAR #1

Exercising Paragraph Muscles

Paragraph Training Program	1–3
Paragraph Primer	4–14
Paragraph Links	15–30

Exercising Sentence Muscles

Basic Sentence Parts	31–41
Sentence-Composing Tools	42–60
Chunking Sentences	61–69
Imitating Sentences	70–82
Unscrambling Sentences	83–90

TWO-YEAR PLAN—YEAR #2

Building Strong Paragraphs

Paragraph Training Program1–3
(Review this section from last year.)
Paragraph Primer4–14
(Review this section from last year.)
Paragraph Links15–30
(Review this section from last year.)
Varying Paragraphs91–98
Imitating Paragraphs99–119
Unscrambling Paragraphs120–133
Putting Paragraphs to Work134–140
Adding Pizzazz141–160

TEACHING THIS WORKTEXT ACROSS THREE GRADE LEVELS

In other schools, *Paragraphs for Elementary School: A Sentence-Composing Approach* can be divided across three grade levels. Below are divisions of the worktext for each year.

THREE-YEAR PLAN—YEAR #1

Exercising Paragraph Muscles

Paragraph Training Program1–3
Paragraph Primer4–14
Paragraph Links15–30

THREE-YEAR PLAN—YEAR #2

Exercising Sentence Muscles

Basic Sentence Parts31–41
Sentence-Composing Tools42–60
Chunking Sentences61–69
Imitating Sentences70–82
Unscrambling Sentences83–90

THREE-YEAR PLAN—YEAR #3

Building Strong Paragraphs

Varying Paragraphs	91–98
Imitating Paragraphs	99–119
Unscrambling Paragraphs	120–133
Putting Paragraphs to Work	134–140
Adding Pizzazz	141–160

TEACHING TIPS

The first section of the worktext is “Exercising Paragraph Muscles” (pages 1–30). There, students learn, practice, and apply in their own writing tools for building stronger sentences for paragraphs. The goal is to introduce students to the value of elaboration in their writing, measured by the addition of sentence parts to their paragraphs. Those sentence parts are called “tools for building better sentences.”

Students see sentences and paragraphs without tools, then with tools, to demonstrate the power of tools to provide elaboration.

EXAMPLE

Weak Paragraph

(1) He ran down the mountain path. (2) Several times he fell, but was on his feet again in the next breath. (3) He fell hard onto his face.

Strong Paragraph

(1) Blindly, he ran down the mountain path, heedless of the rocks and shrubs. (2) Several times he fell, but was on his feet again in the next breath, stumbling, tripping, skidding in a head-long descent. (3) When at last he reached the point where the path leveled out, he fell hard onto his face, the dirt mixing with his tears, his teeth cutting into his top lip, causing him to spit blood. (adapted)

Linda Sue Park, *A Single Shard*

Throughout the worktext, various mainstay sentence-composing exercises develop knowledge of and skill with tools. One type that recurs throughout the worktext is sentence imitating. Here are some strategies to vary the approach.

- Limit all students to imitating the model’s sentence parts in segments—just the first sentence part (and then go around the class to hear results), then the second sentence part (and then hear the results from everyone), and so forth. The segmentation reinforces awareness of the structure of the sentence parts of the model and facilitates imitating those sentence parts in that model.
- To monitor the activity, have students recite just the first sentence part of their imitations of the model so that you and classmates can hear the structure of that sentence part. Continue this recitation for each of the remaining sentence parts. The effect of this activity is that students whose parts don’t match the model become easily aware of the discrepancy and can revise.
- Have students choose one model to imitate from a list of model sentences. After students finish their imitations, have the sentences read aloud while the class guesses what model was imitated. This interactive activity reinforces understanding

Teaching Tips

of sentence imitating and spotlights successful imitations and—just as important—unsuccessful attempts glaringly different from the structure of the model sentence.

- Assign a paragraph on a personal experience—sports victory, sickness, embarrassing moment, act of courage or kindness, and so forth. As students narrate the experience, they should “bury” imitations of their choice of one or two model sentences. Emphasize with students that all of the sentences in their paragraph—not just their imitations—should be high quality. Success means no one can guess which sentences were imitations of the models because all of the sentences—not just the imitations—are written well.

TEACHING PARAGRAPHS THROUGH SENTENCE COMPOSING

This worktext focuses on paragraphs of authors and how they build them through sentence-composing tools. It emphasizes the addition of sentence parts to a paragraph's sentences and the addition of sentences to paragraphs. The focus is on "the addition factor" as a way of improving writing.

Exercises develop traditional concepts and skills about effective paragraphs, but in nontraditional ways: through imitation rather than prescription—usually using model paragraphs by authors. These are the sections that teach ways to build stronger paragraphs:

PARAGRAPH TRAINING PROGRAM (See pages 1–3.)

Motivational in intent, this section introduces the analogy and presents students with a rationale for doing well in the exercises in the worktext to build strong writing "muscles."

PARAGRAPH PRIMER (See pages 4–14.)

Presenting the basics of paragraphing, the section uses new terms for old concepts: "preview sentence" for "topic sentence" (although both are usually mentioned); "linked sentences" for "developing sentences." It teaches that a paragraph contains linked sentences about the same topic, built like a tree with branches attached to the trunk. The trunk is the topic of the paragraph, and the branches are the sentences attached to that topic.

PARAGRAPH LINKS (See pages 15–30.)

Illustrating coherence and unity within good paragraphs, the section provides exercises on the difference between poorly developed and well-developed paragraphs. Good paragraphs contain linked sentences, like a bowl containing cornflakes, milk, sugar. Bad paragraphs don't contain linked sentences, like a bowl containing cornflakes, raw hamburger, vinegar.

VARYING PARAGRAPHS (See pages 91–98.)

Applying sentence-composing tools in various lengths, positions, and numbers, effective writers achieve stylistic variation within paragraphs. Variety is the spice of life. In this section, students practice ways to add spice within their paragraphs through variety in sentence-composing tools.

IMITATING PARAGRAPHS (See pages 99–119.)

Earlier, students learned how to imitate authors' sentences. Here, they apply that skill to a similar process: imitating paragraphs. Students learn how to build stronger paragraphs by imitating ones by their author-trainers in the student's writing fitness program.

UNSCRAMBLING PARAGRAPHS (See pages 120–133.)

Good paragraphs have sentences arranged in ways that make sense to readers. Unscrambling paragraphs is good practice for building stronger paragraphs.

COMPOSING PARAGRAPHS WITH DIFFERENT PURPOSES (See pages 134–139.)

Throughout *Paragraphs for Elementary School: A Sentence-Composing Approach*, in addition to attention to the structure and style of paragraphs, exercises provide practice in and application of the various kinds of paragraphs.

Another way paragraphs are varied is their content. A paragraph telling a story is different from a paragraph persuading people to agree with your opinion. Paragraphs have different purposes: to narrate, to inform, to describe, to explain, to define, to persuade. (See pages 134–139 for an example of how these are developed.)

1. **NARRATE** means to tell a true or imaginary story.
2. **INFORM** means to provide education, facts, or information.
3. **DESCRIBE** means to paint a word picture of a person, place, or thing.
4. **EXPLAIN** means to tell how something happens, works, or functions.
5. **DEFINE** means to tell what something is.
6. **PERSUADE** means to convince readers.

Writers learn to write by paying a certain sort of attention to the works of their great and less great predecessors in the medium of written language, as well as by merely reading them.

—John Barth, writer

THE GRAMMAR UNDERLAY: A PRIMER FOR TEACHERS

Paragraphs for Elementary School: A Sentence-Composing Approach treats the three strands of the typical English language arts curriculum:

- **writing**, through the sentence and paragraph models for students to imitate or approximate to strengthen their writing;
- **literature**, through the exclusive inclusion of only carefully selected sentences and paragraphs by recognizable authors for students to read, analyze, and interpret; and
- **language**, through *applied* grammar throughout the worktext via the sentences within paragraphs by authors.

Although *Paragraphs for Elementary School: A Sentence-Composing Approach* is intended primarily to improve writing and secondarily reading, it also contains an underlay of grammar. After all, paragraphs consist of sentences, and sentences consist of sentence parts, which are the grammatical structures that build those sentences for the paragraphs that contain them.

If, however, you want to go deeper, what follows is a breakdown of the specific grammatical structures that are the sentence-composing tools covered in many of the activities in the worktext. They are first listed by type (*words, phrases, clauses*), then by function (*noun, verb, adjective, adverb*).

If your preference or program includes instruction in grammar, here are ways to help your students apply what they learn in grammar to their understanding and practice of good writing:

- Make a chart of the grammatical structures for display in the room for reference as students read model sentences and paragraphs from the worktext, and challenge students to identify any of the structures they contain.
- Duplicate the following information for students' notebooks, email it to students, or post it on a website.
- Assign each student a different grammatical structure to learn, with the responsibility of pointing out that structure in authors' sentences and paragraphs in the worktext. Since, paradoxically, a teacher is the best student in the class, casting students as teachers will reinforce their understanding of the grammatical structure, empower them to be responsible for teaching it to their peers, and create a peer teaching environment that fosters communication, cooperation, reciprocity, and learning.
- When you present authors' sentences or paragraphs from the worktext, ask students to identify any grammatical structures they recognize.
- After teaching certain grammatical structures, assign students to include and visually code them in their own writing. For example, if you have taught appositive phrases, participle phrases, ask students to *italicize* appositives, underline participles, and so forth—or use color-coding.

- Have students locate and imitate assigned grammatical structures in what they are reading in your class or reading on their own.

If you are interested in a more overt treatment of grammar for elementary school via the sentence-composing approach, in which many of these tools are taught and practiced through varied activities using authors' sentences, see *Story Grammar for Elementary School: A Sentence-Composing Approach* and also *Sentence Composing for Elementary School: A Worktext to Build Better Sentences*—both from Heinemann.

Note: The illustrative sentences that follow are from contemporary writing with good examples of the grammatical tools covered in this primer for teachers. They are intended as an introduction or refresher for teachers.

TOOLS BY TYPE

WORDS

1. **opening adjective**—*An adjective word or phrase in the opener position of a sentence. It always precedes what is described.*

single—**Wordless**, we split up.

Annie Dillard, *An American Childhood*

multiple—**Dizzy** and **sick to his stomach**, he really felt as if the whole car were moving beneath him.

Michael Crichton, *Jurassic Park*

2. **delayed adjective**—*An adjective word or phrase in the S-V split or closer position of a sentence. It always follows what is described.*

single—His chin, **bristly with sparse whiskers**, rested on the back of one hand.
(S-V split)

Annie Dillard, *An American Childhood*

multiple—He was an elderly man, **thin** and **frail**. (*closer*)

Michael Crichton, *Jurassic Park*

3. **opening adverb**—*An adverb in the opener position of a sentence. It always precedes what is described.*

single—**Certainly**, no one had ever played a piece of music for her before.

Ann Patchett, *Bel Canto*

multiple—**Softly** but **persistently**, she was sobbing.

Keith Donohue, *The Stolen Child*

4. **delayed adverb**—*An adverb placed after the action described.*

single—What has changed, **decisively**, is the context in which the book might now be read.

Barack Obama, *Dreams from My Father*

multiple—When he saw that I was looking at him, he closed his eyes, **sleepily**, **angelically**, then stuck out his tongue.

J. D. Salinger, “For Esme—with Love and Squalor”

PHRASES

5. **absolute**—*A phrase expanding the meaning of the sentence. An absolute phrase is almost a complete sentence. As a test, you can make every absolute phrase into a sentence by adding *was* or *were*.* Examples:

Instinctively, Harry looked at Dumbledore, who smiled faintly, **the firelight glancing off his professor’s half-moon spectacles.**

J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*

Test: The firelight [WAS] glancing off his professor’s half-moon spectacles.

They walked in silence for a moment through the fragrant woods, **the rusty pine needles gentle under their feet.**

Madeleine L’Engle, *A Wrinkle in Time*

Test: The rusty pine needles [WERE] gentle under their feet.

single—Two boys, **each carrying a shovel**, were coming across the compound.

Louis Sachar, *Holes*

multiple—They were walking in the direction of Robbie’s apartment now, **the leaves rattling around their feet, a quarter moon flying through the wind-driven clouds overhead.**

Stephen King, *UR*

Many absolute phrases begin with one of these words: *my, his, her, its, our, their* (possessive pronouns). Two examples:

single—Gasping, **his hands raw**, he reached a flat place at the top.

Richard Connell, “The Most Dangerous Game”

multiple—Caroline is tiny and exquisite, **her blonde hair framing a face that is glowing with laughter, her arms outstretched to whoever is taking the picture.**

Katherine Paterson, *Jacob Have I Loved*

6. **appositive**—*A phrase identifying a person, place, or thing already named in a sentence.* Appositives often begin with the words *a, an, or the*. They always answer one of these questions:

Who is he? Who is she? Who are they? (*people*)

What is it? What are they? (*places or things*)

single—**A bald slight man**, he reminded me of a baby bird. This answers the question: who is he?

Tracy Chevalier, *The Girl with a Pearl Earring*

multiple—Most of the town’s natives did their shopping on King Street, **the town’s shopping strip, a slice of chain department stores, auto dealerships, fast-food restaurants.**

Tracy Kidder, *Home Town*

7. **prepositional**—*A phrase that begins with any word that will fit in this blank: It was _____ the box. about the box, at the box, beyond the box, from the box, near the box, over the box, under the box, inside the box, outside the box, by the box, etc.*

single—The kids were lean and hard, **with callused hands and feet.**

Jeanette Walls, *The Glass Castle*

connected—This was Chicago, **on the eve of the greatest fair in history**. (*three connected prepositional phrases: on the eve and of the greatest fair and in history*)

Eric Larson, *The Devil in the White City*

multiple—**In 1959, at the age of twenty-three**, my father arrived **at the University of Hawaii** as that institution's first African student. (*three nonconnected prepositional phrases: in 1959 and at the age of twenty-three and at the University of Hawaii*)

Barack Obama, *Dreams from My Father*

8. **participial**—*A verbal phrase ending in -ing or -ed used to describe*. A verbal is a verb that also functions like another part of speech. Participles show action, so they act like verbs, but they also describe, so they act like adjectives.

Present participial phrases always end in *-ing*. Unlike *-ing* verbs, which cannot be removed from a sentence, participles are removable.

Verb (not removable): He was **clearing his throat loudly**. If *clearing his throat loudly* were removed, the sentence would be ruined: *He was . . .* (incomplete sentence)

Present Participle (removable): **Clearing his throat loudly**, he stepped out from behind the bookshelves.

J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*

If *clearing his throat loudly* were removed, the sentence would not be ruined: *He stepped out from behind the bookshelves*. (complete sentence)

Difference between present participles and gerunds—Like present participles, gerunds (page 22) are verbals that also end in *-ing*, but it's easy to tell the difference. Present participles are removable; gerunds are not. *In each pair, the first contains a present participle, and the second a gerund*. Only the present participles can be removed.

1a. *Feeling so much better after the nap*, Gunster dressed and went out.

1b. *Feeling so much better after the nap* relieved Gunster.

2a. Ralston, *going down the staircase backward*, was very unsteady.

2b. The cause of Ralston's fall was *going down the staircase backward*.

- 3a. The damaged plane landed poorly, *skidding left and right with sparks flying everywhere*.
- 3b. The captain during touchdown worried about *skidding left and right with sparks flying everywhere*.

Past participial phrases usually end in *-ed*. Unlike *-ed* verbs, which cannot be removed from a sentence, past participles are removable. Some past participles end in *-en* (*forgiven*), or end irregularly (*sung*).

Verb (not removable): A wide pink ribbon was **tied in back with a bow**.

If *tied in back with a bow* were removed, the sentence would be ruined: *A wide pink ribbon was . . . (incomplete sentence)*

Past participial phrase (removable): Around her waist was a wide pink ribbon, **tied in back with a bow**.

Bill Brittain, *The Wish Giver*

If *tied in back with a bow* were removed, the sentence would not be ruined: *Around her waist was a wide pink ribbon. (complete sentence)*

Present participial phrase: The men within the door stared at one another, **shifting on their boots, twiddling their fingers, and holding onto their hip belts**. (*three*)

Ray Bradbury, *The Martian Chronicles*

Past participial phrases: **Hated by the Federalists and suspected by the Republicans**, John Quincy Adams returned to private life. (*two*)

John F. Kennedy, *Profiles in Courage*

Both present and past participial phrases: **Curled up inside a big one-meter drainage pipe that ran under the road**, she had her baseball glove in her mouth, and she was rocking back and forth, **banging her head repeatedly against the back of the pipe**. (*one past participle and one present participle*)

Michael Crichton, *Jurassic Park*

9. **gerund**—*A verbal ending in -ing that names activities*. A verbal is a verb that also functions like another part of speech. Gerunds show action, so they act like verbs, but they also name, so they act like nouns by naming activities.

To see how gerunds function like nouns, insert any of these phrases into any of the blanks: *playing chess, learning new things, climbing mountains in distant lands, building sand castles on the beach, taking a computer apart to investigate its guts, etc.*

1. _____ is fun. (*subject*)
2. We like _____. (*direct object*)
3. They talked about _____. (*object of preposition*)
4. A great leisure activity is _____. (*predicate noun*)
5. Their favorite pastime, _____, is enjoyed by many. (*appositive*)

Difference between gerunds and present participles—Like gerunds, present participles are verbals that end in *-ing*, but it's easy to tell the difference between them and gerunds. Present participles can be removed from the sentence without destroying the sentence, but gerunds cannot be removed without destroying the sentence. *In each pair, the first contains a present participle, and the second contains a gerund.* Notice that only the present participles can be removed.

1a. *Feeling so much better after the nap*, Gunster dressed and went out.

1b. *Feeling so much better after the nap* relieved Gunster.

2a. Ricky, *going down the staircase backward*, was very unsteady.

2b. His mom had warned Ricky about *going down the staircase backward*.

3a. The damaged plane landed poorly, *skidding left and right with sparks flying everywhere*.

3b. The captain during touchdown worried about *skidding left and right with sparks flying everywhere*.

single—Everything necessary, books, music, wine, he could receive in any quantity by **sending a note through the window**.

Anton Chekov, "The Bet"

multiple—My mother told me about **dressing in her best party clothes on Saturday nights** and **going to the town’s plaza to promenade with her girlfriends in front of the boys they liked**.

Judith Ortiz Coffer, “The Myth of the Latin Woman”

10. **infinitive**—*A phrase that always begins with “to” plus a verb: to sing, to read, to linger, to laugh, to sigh, to study, etc. Infinitive phrases can name something (like nouns), describe something (like adjectives), or explain something (like adverbs).*

noun infinitive—To make it to the final round of the playoffs was the team’s goal. *The infinitive names the team’s goal. Noun infinitives answer the question “What?”*

adjective infinitive—The coach emphasized the need to make it to the final round of the playoffs. *The infinitive describes the need. Adjective infinitives answer the question “What kind?”*

adverb infinitive—The team from Western High School worked overtime to make it to the final round of the playoffs. *The infinitive explains why the team worked overtime. Adverb infinitives answer the question “Why?”*

single—**To be in a place her mother had never seen** was in a way helpful. (*Names what was helpful.*)

Jhumpa Lahiri, *Unaccustomed Earth*

multiple—Wesley almost told him **to mind his business, to peddle his papers, and to put an egg in his shoe and beat it**. (*Names what Wesley told him.*)

Stephen King, *UR*

CLAUSES

11. **clause**—*A group of words containing a subject and its verb. An independent clause can stand alone as a complete sentence. A dependent clause cannot stand alone as a complete sentence because it is only a sentence part, not a complete sentence. Every dependent clause must be linked to an independent clause for its full meaning. All sentences have at least one independent clause—frequently more—and many sentences also have dependent clauses. In the following sentences, independent clauses are underlined, and dependent clauses are bolded.*

(1) **When you speak and write**, there is no law that says you have to use big words.
This sentence contains one dependent clause and one independent clause.

Richard Lederer, *The Miracle of Language*

(2) Suddenly, Alfred, who had heard the fight from across the street, attacked from the rear with his favorite weapon, an indoor ball bat. *This sentence contains one dependent clause that interrupts the one independent clause.*

John Steinbeck, *Cannery Row*

(3) Whatever she planted grew as if by magic. *This dependent clause is also a part of the independent clause.*

Alice Walker, *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens*

(4) I will tell you what Gandalf heard, although Bilbo did not understand it. *The first dependent clause is also a part of the independent clause; the second dependent clause is not a part of the independent clause.*

J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Hobbit*

(5) Catherine had loaded her oilcloth satchel with the leftovers from Sunday dinner, and we were enjoying a breakfast of cake and chicken **when gunfire slapped through the woods.** *This sentence contains two independent clauses, and one dependent clause.*

Truman Capote, *The Grass Harp*

(6) No one spoke at supper, and his mother, who sat next to him, leaned her head in her hand all through the meal, curving her fingers over her eyes so as not to see him. *This sentence contains two independent clauses, and one dependent clause that interrupts the second independent clause.*

Gina Berriault, "The Stone Boy"

12. **adjective clause**—*A dependent clause that describes a person, place, or thing.* An adjective clause often begins with one of these words: *who, which, whose, where.*

who: I sleep with two cats, **who sleep on my legs.**

Annie Dillard, "Death of a Moth"

which: The good news is that we Americans are governed under a unique Constitution, **which allows us to write whatever we please without fear of punishment.**

Kurt Vonnegut, "How to Write with Style"

whose: Stunned, Jem and I looked at each other, then at Atticus, **whose collar seemed to worry him.**

Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird*

where: Jody continued on through the large vegetable patch, **where the green corn was higher than his head.**

John Steinbeck, *The Red Pony*

SINGLE

(1) He misses his sisters and cousins, **who have known him since he was a strong, good-looking boy.**

Barbara Kingsolver, *Pigs in Heaven*

(2) Sully, **whose skills were already maturing**, moved up from the Wolves level to the Lions.

Stephen King, *Hearts in Atlantis*

(3) They gave me a cable knit sweater and an oilskin jacket, **which kept me dry on the wettest days.**

Keith Donohue, *The Stolen Child*

MULTIPLE

(4) To Richardson, **whose nerves were tingling and twitching like live wires, and whose heart jolted inside him**, this pause was a long horror.

Stephen Crane, "Horses—One Dash"

(5) She failed to see a shadow, **which followed her like her own shadow, which stopped when she stopped, and which started again when she did.**

Gaston Leroux, *The Phantom of the Opera*

(6) These are the men of chemistry, **who spray the trees against pests, who sulfur the grapes, who cut out diseases and rots, mildews and sicknesses.**

John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*

13. **adverb clause**—*A dependent clause that gives more information about the rest of the sentence.* Like all clauses, adverb clauses contain a subject and its verb. Adverb clauses answer these questions about an independent clause and begin with the words in parentheses (called *subordinate conjunctions*):

When does it happen? (*after, as, before, when, while, until*)

Why does it happen? (*because, since*)

How does it happen? (*as if, as though*)

Under what condition does it happen? (*although, if*)

An adverb clause is a sentence part, not a complete sentence. An easy way to identify an adverb clause is to remove the first word (the conjunction). Without that word, it's a complete sentence. With that word, it's a sentence part.

Example: When he arrived at the bottom, soft dusk was creeping over everything, blurring colors and shapes into gray masses.

Christopher Paolini, *Eragon*

If *when* were removed, the result would be this: *He arrived at the bottom* (a sentence, not an adverb clause).

SINGLE

(1) **Although good looks may rally one's attention**, a lasting sense of a person's beauty reveals itself in stages.

Diane Ackerman, "The Face of Beauty"

(2) Delicatessens on Sunday night, **when all other stores are shut**, will overcharge you ferociously.

Saul Bellow, "A Father-to-Be"

(3) One leg was gone, and the other was held by tendons, and part of the trousers and stump twitched and jerked **as though it were not connected**.

Ernest Hemingway, *A Farewell to Arms*

MULTIPLE

(4) He was one of those guys that think they're being a pansy **if they don't break around forty of your fingers when they shake hands with you**. (Contains two consecutive adverb clauses, one beginning with *if* and the other, *when*.)

J. D. Salinger, *The Catcher in the Rye*

(5) **When she grinned**, her baby teeth shone like a string of pearls, and **when she laughed**, her thin shoulders shook and twitched. (Contains two nonconsecutive adverb clauses beginning with *when*.)

Keith Donohue, *The Stolen Child*

(6) **As he soared upward, as the wind rushed through his hair, as the crowd's faces became mere flesh-colored pinpricks below, and as the Horntail shrank to the size of a dog,** he realized that he had left not only the ground behind, but also his fear. (Contains four consecutive adverb clauses beginning with *as*.)

J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*

14. **noun clause**—*A dependent clause that works like a noun.* To understand how noun clauses act like nouns, insert *what we eat for breakfast* into any of these blanks:

1. _____ is important. (*subject*)
2. We discussed _____. (*direct object*)
3. The health teacher talked about _____. (*object of preposition*)
4. A valuable part of a healthy diet is _____. (*predicate noun*)
5. A regular morning meal, _____, provides energy for school. (*appositive*)

Most noun clauses begin with *that*, *what*, or *how*. However, some noun clauses begin with other words. The best way to identify a noun clause is this: if a clause is removable, it's not a noun clause; if a clause is *not* removable, it is a noun clause.

-----**REMOVABLE** (adverb or adjective clauses)

1. The exact year when George Washington was born was 1732. (*adjective clause*)
2. When George Washington was born, cars didn't exist. (*adverb clause*)

-----**NONREMOVABLE** (noun clauses)

3. When George Washington was born was a question on the quiz.
4. The discussion was about when George Washington was born.
5. Mr. Jameson discussed when George Washington was born.

-----**SINGLE**

(1) The most insidious thing about Ronnie was **that weak minds found him worth imitating**.

Stephen King, *Hearts in Atlantis*

(2) Her mind only vaguely grasped **what he was saying**.

Kate Chopin, "A Respectable Woman"

(3) I don't know **how he found his way back to the car.**

Annie Dillard, *An American Childhood*

MULTIPLE

(4) The writer must learn to read critically but constructively, to cut **what is bad**, to reveal **what is good**.

Donald M. Murray, "The Maker's Eye: Revising Your Own Manuscripts"

(5) Most of **what I write**, like most of **what I say in casual conversation**, will not amount to much.

William Stafford, "A Way of Writing"

(6) I asked him once **why he had to go away, why the land was so important.**

Mildred D. Taylor, *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*

APPLICATION OF THE TOOLS: AN EXAMPLE

When you prepare to teach a model paragraph (below and on page 103 in the worktext in the section "Imitating Paragraphs"), you notice that it contains effective examples of these tools: *adverb clause, prepositional phrase, present participial phrase, past participial phrase, appositive phrase*.

Prior to teaching the model paragraph, introduce your students to a few of those tools by giving definitions and examples. Once students are comfortable with their understanding, then as part of your introduction to the model paragraph, have students locate examples of those tools and discuss how the author uses them to build the paragraph.

The Chicago Fire

(1) Sullivan ambled down a stretch of land, crossed the street, and sat down on the wooden sidewalk. (2) Adjusting his wooden leg to make himself comfortable, he leaned back against the fence to enjoy the night. (3) The wind, coming off the prairie, had been strong all day, gusting wildly sometimes, with leaves scuttling across the street. (4) While he pushed himself up to go home, Sullivan first saw the fire, a single tongue of flame shooting out the side of O'Leary's barn. (5) Sullivan made his way directly to the barn to save the animals inside. (6) The barn's loft held over three tons of hay, delivered earlier that day. (7) Flames from the burning hay pushed against the roof and beams, as if they were struggling to break free. (8) A shower of burning embers greeted Sullivan as he entered the building. (9) The heat was fiercely intense and blinding. (10) In his rush to flee, Sullivan slipped on the uneven floorboards and fell with a thud. (11) As he struggled

to get up, Sullivan discovered that his wooden leg had gotten stuck between two boards and come off.

Jim Murphy, *The Great Fire*

PHRASES

appositive

- a single tongue of flame shooting out the side of O’Leary’s barn (4)

present participial

- adjusting his wooden leg to make himself comfortable (2)
- coming off the prairie (3)

past participial

- delivered earlier that day (6)

CLAUSES

adverb clause

- while he pushed himself up to go home (4)
- as if they were struggling to break free (7)
- as he entered the building (8)
- as he struggled to get up (11)

INVISIBLE TEACHERS

Below are the sources for the exercises in *Paragraphs for Elementary School: A Sentence-Composing Approach*, from authors who provided a training program for your students to build stronger sentence and paragraph muscles.

Listed are the names of a faculty of invisible teachers whose subliminal teaching complements your very visible and so important teaching.

They are your team-teachers—over three hundred and fifty of them.

Alan Armstrong, *Whittington*

Alexander Key, *The Forgotten Door*

Amar'e Stoudemire, *STAT: Home Court*

Anna Sewell, *Black Beauty*

Anne Ursu, *Breadcrumbs*

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, *The Little Prince*

Astrid Lindgren, *Pippi Longstocking*

Avi, *Crispin: The Cross of Lead*

Barbara Brooks Wallace, *Peppermints in the Parlor*

Barbara Hattemer, "Media and Our Youth"

Becca Fitzpatrick, *Hush, Hush*

Betsy Byars, *The Night Swimmers*

Betsy Byars, *The Summer of the Swans*

Beverly Cleary, *Beezus and Ramona*

Beverly Cleary, *The Mouse and the Motorcycle*

Beverly Cleary, *Ramona and Her Father*

Beverly Cleary, *Ribsy*

Bill Brittain, *The Wish Giver*

Bill and Vera Cleaver, *Where the Lilies Bloom*

Bohumil Hrabal (quoted)

Brian Selznick, *Wonderstruck*

C. S. Lewis, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*

C. S. Lewis, *Prince Caspian*

C. S. Lewis, *The Silver Chair*

Carl Hiaasen, *Flush*

Carolyn Keene, *The Bungalow Mystery*

Carolyn Keene, *The Secret of Shadow Ranch*

Catherynne M. Valente, *The Girl Who Circumnavigated Fairyland in a Ship of Her Own Making*

Chris Colfer, *The Land of Stories: The Wishing Well*

Christopher Healey, *The Hero's Guide to Saving Your Kingdom*

Christopher Paolini, *Eragon*

Christopher Paolini, *Inheritance*

Chris Van Allsburg, *The Sweetest Fig*
Clair Bee, *Strike Three!*
Clare Vanderpool, *Moon Over Manifest*
Clare Vanderpool, *Navigating Early*
Clifford Geertz (quoted)
Cressida Cowell, *How to Train Your Dragon*
Cynthia Voigt, *Homecoming*
Deborah and James Howe, *Bunnicula: A Rabbit-Tale of Mystery*
Dick King-Smith, *Pigs Might Fly*
Earline Moses (quoted)
E. B. White, *Charlotte's Web*
E. B. White, *Stuart Little*
E. B. White, *The Trumpet of the Swan*
Edmund Ware, "An Underground Episode"
Edward Bloor, *Tangerine*
Eleanor Coerr, *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes*
Eleanor Estes, *Ginger Pye*
Eleanor H. Porter, *Pollyanna*
E. L. Konigsburg, *From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*
Elizabeth George Speare, *The Bronze Bow*
Elizabeth George Speare, *The Witch of Blackbird Pond*
Enid Bagnold, *National Velvet*
Eoin Colfer, *Artemis Fowl*
Eric P. Kelly, *The Trumpeter of Krakow*
Erik Masterson, *The Curse of the Zombie Zoo*
Ernesto Galarza, *Barrio Boy*
Esther Averill, *Jenny and the Cat Club*
Esther Hoskins Forbes, *Johnny Tremain*
Ezra Jack Keats, *The Snowy Day*
Fanny Billingsley, *Chime*
Frances Hodgson Burnett, *A Little Princess*
Franklin W. Dixon, *The Secret of the Old Mill*
Franklin W. Dixon, *The Tower Treasure*
Gail Carson Levine, *Ella Enchanted*
Gary Paulsen, *Hatchet*
Gary Paulsen, *The Monument*
Gary Paulsen, *The Time Hackers*
Gary Paulsen, *Wood-Song*
Gene Olson, *The Roaring Road*
Gene Zion, "Harry the Dirty Dog"

Gertrude Chandler Warner, *The Boxcar Children*
Grace Lin, *Where the Mountain Meets the Moon*
Hans Augusto Rey, *Curious George*
Harry Allard, *Miss Nelson Is Missing!*
Heywood Broun, "The Fifty-First Dragon"
J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*
J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*
J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*
J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*
J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*
J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*
J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*
J. M. Barrie, *Peter Pan*
J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*
J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Hobbit*
Jack Gantos, *Dead End in Norvelt*
Jack London, "To Build a Fire"
Jacqueline Davies, *The Lemonade War*
Jacqueline Kelly, *The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate*
James Hurst, "The Scarlet Ibis"
Janell Cannon, *Stellaluna*
Jean Craighead George, *The Fire Bug Connection*
Jean Craighead George, *Julie of the Wolves*
Jean Craighead George, *The Missing 'Gator of Gumbo Limbo*
Jean Craighead George, *My Side of the Mountain*
Jean Craighead George, *The Talking Earth*
Jean Merrill, *The Pushcart War*
Jennifer A. Nielsen, *The False Prince*
Jerry Spinelli, *Knots in My Yo-Yo String*
Jerry Spinelli, *Maniac Magee*
Jim Murphy, *The Great Fire*
John Christopher, *The Guardians*
John R. Tunis, *All American*
John R. Tunis, *World Series*
Joseph Delaney, *The Last Apprentice*
Joseph Krungold, . . . *And Now Miguel*
K. A. Applegate, *Animorphs: The Underground*
Kate DiCamillo, *Because of Winn-Dixie*
Kate DiCamillo, *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*
Kate DiCamillo, *The Tale of Despereaux*

Kate DiCamillo, *The Tiger Rising*
Katherine Paterson, *Bridge to Terabithia*
Kenneth Grahame, *The Wind in the Willows*
Kip Taylor, *Finn Flanagan and the Fledglings*
Kristin Cashore, *Fire*
Langston Hughes, "Thank You, M'am"
Larry Scheckel, *Ask Your Science Teacher*
Laura Ingalls Wilder, *Little House on the Prairie*
Laurel Snyder, *Bigger Than a Bread Box*
Laurence Yep, *Dragon of the Lost Sea*
Lemony Snicket, *The Bad Beginning*
Lemony Snicket, *The End*
Lemony Snicket, *Who Could That Be at This Hour?*
Leo Lionni, *Swimmy*
Leon Hugo, "My Father and the Hippopotamus"
Leslie Morris, "Three Shots for Charlie Beston"
Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*
L. Frank Baum, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*
Libba Bray, *A Great and Terrible Beauty*
Linda Sue Park, *A Single Shard*
Linda Urban, *Hound Dog True*
Lloyd Alexander, *The Book of Three*
Lois Duncan, *A Gift of Magic*
Lois Lenski, *Strawberry Girl*
Lois Lowry, *The Giver*
Lois Lowry, *Number the Stars*
Louis Sachar, *Holes*
Louis Sachar, *There's a Boy in the Girl's Bathroom*
Louise Fitzhugh, *Harriet the Spy*
Louise Fitzhugh, *The Long Secret*
Lynne Rae Perkins, *Criss Cross*
Lynne Reid Banks, *The Indian in the Cupboard*
Lynne Reid Banks, *One More River*
Madeleine L'Engle, *A Swiftly Tilting Planet*
Madeleine L'Engle, *A Wind in the Door*
Madeleine L'Engle, *A Wrinkle in Time*
Margaret Peterson Haddix, *Among the Hidden*
Margarita Engle, *The Firefly Letters*
Margery Williams, *The Velveteen Rabbit*
Marguerite Henry, *Misty of Chincoteague*

Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, *The Yearling*
Maurice Sendak, *Where the Wild Things Are*
Megan Whalen Turner, *The King of Atollia*
Michael Crichton, *Jurassic Park*
Michael Morpurgo, *War Horse*
Mildred D. Taylor, *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*
Munro Leaf, *The Story of Ferdinand*
Murray Heyert, "The New Kid"
Nancy Farmer, *The House of the Scorpion*
Neil Gaiman, *Coraline*
Neil Gaiman, *The Graveyard Book*
Norah Burke, "Polar Night"
Norton Juster, *The Phantom Tollbooth*
Olive Ann Burns, *Cold Sassy Tree*
Orson Scott Card, *Ender's Game*
Pam Conrad, "The Tub People"
Pam Muñoz Ryan, *Esperanza Rising*
Pat Conroy, *My Reading Life*
Patricia A. Halbert (editor), *I Wish I Knew That: U.S. Presidents*
Patricia C. McKissack, *A Million Fish . . . More or Less*
Patricia MacLachlan, *Sarah, Plain and Tall*
Patrick Ness, *A Monster Calls*
Peter Lerangis, *39 Clues*
Philip Pullman, *The Golden Compass*
Phillip Hoose, *Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice*
Phyllis Reynolds Naylor, *Shiloh*
Post Wheeler, *Vasilissa the Beautiful*
R. J. Palacio, *Wonder*
R. L. Stine, *Ghost Beach*
Rachel Carson, *The Edge of the Sea*
Randall Jarrell, *The Bat Poet*
Ray Bradbury, "The Whole Town's Sleeping"
Rebecca Stead, *When You Reach Me*
Richard Adams, *Watership Down*
Richard Connell, "The Most Dangerous Game"
Rick Riordan, *The Lightning Thief*
Rick Riordan, *A Maze of Bones*
Rick Riordan, *The Son of Neptune*
Rita Williams-Garcia, *One Crazy Summer*
Roald Dahl, *The BFG*

Roald Dahl, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*
Roald Dahl, *Fantastic Mr. Fox*
Roald Dahl, *Matilda*
Roald Dahl, *The Witches*
Robert C. O'Brien, *Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH*
Robert Lipsyte, *The Contender*
Roger Duvoisin, "Petunia"
Roland Smith, *Peak*
Rosa Guy, *Edith Jackson*
Sarah Dessen, *Dreamland*
Scott O'Dell, *The Black Pearl*
Scott O'Dell, *Island of the Blue Dolphins*
Scott Westerfeld, *Goliath*
Scott Westerfeld, *Leviathan*
Sharon Creech, *The Great Unexpected*
Sharon Creech, *Walk Two Moons*
Sheila Burnford, *The Incredible Journey*
Steve Sheinkin, *Bomb*
Susan Patron, *The Higher Power of Lucky*
Suzanne Collins, *Catching Fire*
Suzanne Collins, *The Hunger Games*
Suzanne Collins, *Mockingjay*
Terry Pratchett, *Dodger*
Thomas Rockwell, *How to Eat Fried Worms*
Thornton Wilder (quoted)
Tom Wolfe, *A Man in Full*
Toni Cade Bambara, "Geraldine Moore the Poet"
Ursula K. LeGuin, *Earthsea: The Farthest Shore*
Virginia Lee Burton, *Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel*
Walter Dean Myers, *Motown and Didi*
Walter Farley, *The Black Stallion*
Wanda Gag, "Millions of Cats"
Wendy Wan-Long Shang, *The Great Wall of Lucy Wu*
William H. Armstrong, *Sounder*
William Pene duBois, *The Twenty-One Balloons*
William Steig, *Doctor DeSoto*
Wilson Rawls, *Where the Red Fern Grows*

REFERENCES

REFERENCES: PARAGRAPH PRIMER (pages 4–14)

EXERCISE 1: SELECTING PARAGRAPH TITLES (pages 5–8)

1. C
2. B
3. C
4. B
5. C

EXERCISE 2: CREATING PARAGRAPH TITLES (pages 8–10)

Note: *The purpose of the exercise is to demonstrate unity in a paragraph. A good title can reflect that unity. Accept any plausible titles that capture the topic and development in the paragraph.*

EXERCISE 3: ARRANGING PARAGRAPHS (pages 11–14)

PARAGRAPH ONE

first sentence—B (Doodle was just about the craziest brother a boy ever had.)

last sentence—A (Such a name sounds good only on a tombstone.)

PARAGRAPH TWO

first sentence—B (We had to get used to the Americans.)

last sentence—A (Until you got used to them, you could hardly tell whether the boisterous Americans were roaring mad or roaring happy.)

PARAGRAPH THREE

first sentence—A (Albert was about my height, and talked so gently as he approached me that I was immediately calmed and a little intrigued so stood where I was against the wall.)

last sentence—B (As he turned to go out of the stable, I called out to him to thank him, and he seemed to understand, for he smiled broadly and stroked my nose.)

PARAGRAPH FOUR

first sentence—B (Out of the water in the everglades rose a tail so large it could have belonged to a whale.)

last sentence—A (The wood splintered.)

PARAGRAPH FIVE

first sentence—B (Sitting in bed at Prim's knees, guarding her, is the world's ugliest cat, with mashed-in nose, half of one ear missing, eyes the color of rotting squash.)

last sentence—A (This is the closest we will ever come to love.)

REFERENCES: PARAGRAPH LINKS (pages 15–30)

EXERCISE 1: IDENTIFYING PARAGRAPHS (pages 15–20)

Paragraph One: Group B

Paragraph Two: Group B

Paragraph Three: Group A

Paragraph Four: Group A

Paragraph Five: Group B

EXERCISE 2: FINDING THE MISSING LINK (pages 20–24)

1. B—wrong content
2. C—wrong style
3. A—(*missing link*) Bright pink light surges from her body and pulses over us.
4. C—wrong style
5. B—wrong content
6. A—(*missing link*) It swelled out at the end like a fox's brush.
7. B—wrong content
8. C—wrong style
9. A—(*missing link*) As Conor watched, the uppermost branches of the tree gathered themselves into a great and terrible face, shimmering into a mouth and nose and even eyes, peering back at him.

References

10. A—(*missing link*) From under the table where he was lying at Charles Wallace's feet, hoping for a crumb or two, Fortinbras raised his slender dark head, and his tail thumped against the floor.
11. B—wrong content
12. C—wrong style
13. B—wrong content
14. A—(*missing link*) Somehow he kept in motion, kept on running, stumbling, head down, until he managed to recover balance.
15. C—wrong style

EXERCISE 3: MATCHING (pages 24–25)

1. d
2. a
3. b
4. c
5. e

EXERCISE 4: CREATING (pages 26–27)

Note: *Below are the original sentences. Accept any student sentences consistent in content and style with the rest of the paragraph.*

1. He had every cast he'd ever had since kindergarten, all twelve of them.
2. He turned the hot and cold water on and off in the washbasin and slipped one of the small bars of paper-wrapped soap into his pocket.
3. A man in a tattered army jacket and battered pants lay along the curb asleep, propped up on an elbow, his eyes closed.
4. That was of course very nice because there was no one there to tell her to go to bed just when she was having the most fun, and no one who could make her take cod liver oil when she much preferred caramel candy.
5. It was a dark, oval, wicked face.

REFERENCES: BASIC SENTENCE PARTS (pages 31–41)

EXERCISE 1: MATCHING (page 33)

1. d
2. a
3. b
4. c
5. e

EXERCISE 2: CREATING SUBJECTS AND PREDICATES (pages 35–37)

EXAMPLES—SUBJECTS ARE UNDERLINED ONCE, AND PREDICATES TWICE.

1. Frank and Joe Hardy clutched the grips of their motorcycles and stared in horror at the oncoming car. (*two subjects and two predicates*)
 2. Alan and Tom and Joe leaned on their shovels under a tree in the apple orchard and watched the worms squirming on a flat rock. (*three subjects and two predicates*)
 3. Hastily, he and I tugged on the well rope, pulled up the water tube, and poured the water into the bucket. (*two subjects and three predicates*)
-

1. A few embers were still glowing in the fireplace, turning all the armchairs into hunched black shadows.
2. Among all Arawn's deeds, this is one of the cruelest.
3. Always meticulously neat, six-year-old Little Man never allowed dirt or tears or stains to mar anything he owned.
4. After Jim had pulled some tangled pine branches away from the convertible, he and the two girls were able to lift the trunk.
5. All at once, a huge tear that would have filled a bucket rolled down one of the Big Friendly Giant's cheeks and fell with a splash on the floor.
6. A burning limb fell into the pit, struck the water, hissed like a snake, and went out.
7. Frank picked up the costume, unzipped the back, and stepped into the skeleton outfit.
8. Suddenly, a slim white cat sped through the grass, dashed up the maple tree, and began to sing.

References

9. Justin was out with a mighty leap, hit the floor with a thump, shook himself, and ran, disappearing from my view, heading toward the end of the room.
10. The cats bit and scratched and clawed each other and made such a great noise that the very old man and the very old woman ran into the house as fast as they could.
11. Together Ramona and her father unrolled the paper across the kitchen and knelt with a box of crayons between them.
12. Mrs. Sasaki and Mitsue had scrubbed and swept the house until it shone.
13. The cloaked figure reached the unicorn, lowered its head over the wound in the animal's side, and began to drink its blood.
14. Somewhere beyond the sink-hole, past the magnolia, under the live oaks, a boy and a yearling ran side by side, and were gone forever.
15. They grabbed ink bottles and sprayed the class with them, shredded books and papers, tore pictures from the walls, up-ended the waste basket, grabbed bags and books, and threw them out of the smashed window.

PARAGRAPH WORKOUT (pages 39–41)

PART ONE

(1) The doctor was twisting something at the back of Ender's head. (2) Suddenly a pain stabbed through him like a needle from his neck to his groin. (3) Ender felt his back spasm. (4) His body arched violently backward. (5) His head struck the bed. (6) He could feel his legs thrashing. (7) His hands were clenching each other, wringing each other so tightly that they ached. (adapted)

PART TWO

(1) Fern loved Wilbur more than anything. (2) She loved to stroke him, to feed him, to put him to bed. (3) Every morning, when she got up, she warmed his milk, tied his bib on, and held the bottle for him. (4) Every afternoon, when the school bus stopped in front of her house, she jumped out and ran to the kitchen to fix another bottle for him. (5) She fed him again at suppertime, and again just before going to bed. (6) Fern's mother gave him a feeding around noontime each day, when Fern was away at school. (7) Wilbur loved his milk. (8) He was never happier than when Fern was warming up a bottle for him. (9) He would stand and gaze up at her with adoring eyes. (adapted)

PART THREE

(1) Their teacher was called Miss Honey, and she could not have been more than twenty-three or twenty-four. (2) She had a lovely pale oval Madonna face with blue eyes, and her hair was light-brown. (3) Her body was so slim and fragile one got the feeling that if she fell over she would break into a thousand pieces, like a porcelain figure. (4) Miss Jennifer Honey was a mild and quiet person who never raised her voice and was seldom seen to smile, but there is no doubt she possessed that rare gift for being adored by every small child under her care. (5) She seemed to understand totally the bewilderment and fear that overwhelms young children who for the first time in their lives are herded into a classroom and told to obey orders.

REFERENCES: SENTENCE-COMPOSING TOOLS (pages 42–60)

EXERCISE 1: TOOL TALK (pages 42–45)

Note: The purpose of the discussion is to establish that elaboration is the result of adding sentence parts to sentences for more information, texture, and style.

EXERCISE 2: IDENTIFYING SENTENCE PARTS (pages 45–49)

1a. A large woman (*subject*)

1b. came out from the back room, (*predicate*)

1c. her hair in a frazzled bun. (*tool*)

2a. To keep from wobbling, (*tool*)

2b. Lice Peeking (*subject*)

2c. braced himself with both arms in the doorway. (*predicate*)

3a. After breaking a telephone conversation in an abrupt manner, (*tool*)

3b. the person (*subject*)

3c. called back as soon as possible to explain what had happened.
(*predicate*)

4a. A thin spider web of sweat (*subject*)

4b. draped itself over his forehead, (*predicate*)

4c. spreading into his hair. (*tool*)

References

5a. He (*subject*)

5b. was white and shaking (*predicate*)

5c. his mouth opening and shutting without words. (*tool*)

6a. Templeton, (*subject*)

6b. asleep in the straw, (*tool*)

6c. heard the commotion and awoke. (*predicate*)

7a. Lost in his studies, (*tool*)

7b. Oppenheimer (*subject*)

7c. paid little attention to the outside world. (*predicate*)

8a. Faintly over the rain, (*tool*)

8b. Grant (*subject*)

8c. heard the sound of a little girl screaming. (*predicate*)

9a. With rattlesnake speed, (*tool*)

9b. Maniac Magee (*subject*)

9c. snatched the book back. (*predicate*)

10a. To reassure herself, (*tool*)

10b. Emily (*subject*)

10c. reached inside her green velveteen coat, pulled out the gold locket that hung from a chain around her neck, and opened the clasp. (*This predicate has three parts.*)

Note: Sentences 11–15 have two or more tools.

11a. Until a few months ago, (*tool*)

11b. I (*subject*)

11c. was a boarding student at Yancy Academy, (*predicate*)

11d. a private school for troubled kids in upstate New York. (*tool*)

References

12a. Trying to appear something less than frantic under the searching scrutiny of his father, (*tool*)

12b. he (*subject*)

12c. checked his safety belt buckle with elaborate coolness (*predicate*)

12d. rubbing at an imaginary windshield spot with a gloved hand. (*tool*)

13a. Trembling, (*tool*)

13b. the two girls (*subject*)

13c. followed him, (*predicate*)

13d. brushing past the two remaining officers in the doorway, (*tool*)

13e. to the living room. (*tool*)

14a. Charles Wallace, (*subject*)

14b. in yellow footed pajamas, (*tool*)

14c. his fresh wounds band-aided, (*tool*)

14d. his small nose looking puffy and red, (*tool*)

14e. slept on the foot of Meg's big brass bed, (*predicate*)

14f. his head pillowed on the shiny black bulk of the dog. (*tool*)

15a. Their path (*subject*)

15b. wound, (*predicate*)

15c. in and out, (*tool*)

15d. through the scrub, (*tool*)

15e. around palmetto clumps, (*tool*)

15f. over trunks of fallen trees, (*tool*)

15g. under dwarf pines and oaks. (*tool*)

EXERCISE 3: MATCHING (pages 49–52)

PART ONE

1. c
2. e
3. b
4. d
5. a

PART TWO

6. d
7. c
8. b
9. a
10. e

PART THREE

11. e
12. c
13. a
14. b
15. d

PART FOUR

16. d
17. a
18. c
19. e
20. b

EXERCISE 4: UNSCRAMBLING (pages 53–55)

Note: *Subjects are underlined once, predicates twice, and tools are **bolded**.*

1. The students learned to type, **pressing on the correct keys of their keyboards over and over**.
2. The star pitcher walked across the diamond, **his stare focusing**, and **his glove on his hip**.
3. **When the rain during the storm poured down**, the happy farmer took shelter gratefully, **closing the barn-door and shaking his umbrella so fast that it almost fell from his hand**.
4. **After some of her students started singing**, the teacher looked up and swayed to the music, **followed by others, who were imitating her**.
5. **When the horse galloped within the mist around the castle's enormous fortress, surrounded by grey roads dotted with crumbling statues**, Sir Neville heard one single, terrifying shriek, **breaking silence like sudden thunder**.

PARAGRAPH WORKOUT (pages 58–60)

Note: *Tools are **bolded**.*

PART ONE

(1) The second man I'd never seen before. (2) **Dressed like a gentleman, with a face of older years**, he wore a hood attached to a flowing cape, **which hung down behind his legs**. (3) Gray hair reached his shoulders. (4) His blue over-tunic was long, quilted, and dark, **with yellow clasps that gleamed in the torchlight**. (5) **Within the circle of light**, I also saw the fine head of a horse. (6) I assumed it was the stranger's.

PART TWO

(1) The first place that I can well remember was a large pleasant meadow, **with a pond of clear water in it**. (2) Some shady trees leaned over it, and rushes and water-lilies grew at the deep end. (3) Over the hedge on one side, we looked into a plowed field. (4) **On the other side**, we looked over a gate at our master's house, **which stood by the roadside**. (5) At the top of the meadow was a grove of fir trees, and at the bottom a running brook, **overhung by a steep bank**. (6) **While I was young**, I lived upon my mother's milk, as I could not eat grass. (7) In the daytime, I ran by her side. (8) At night, I lay down close by her. (9) **When it was hot**, we used to stand by the pond in the shade of the trees. (10) **When it was cold**, we had a nice warm shed near the grove.

PART THREE

(1) An enemy below crouched to his bow and drew back the arrow **as far as he could draw**. (2) The string whirred. (3) **Like a swift bird**, the dark arrow flew straight for the mark. (4) The arrow pierced the breast of the young trumpeter **when he was near the end of his song**. (5) The arrow quivered there a moment, and the song ceased. (6) **Still holding to the trumpet**, the youth fell back against the supporting wall and blew one last glorious note. (7) The note began strongly, trembled, and then eased, **broken like the young life that gave it birth**.

REFERENCES: CHUNKING SENTENCES (pages 61–69)

Teaching Tip: *Chunking sentences is a good way to teach deep reading. You can create chunking exercises easily simply by presenting students with sentences with multiple sentence parts and asking them to draw a slash (/) between chunks. Alternatively, you can present the same sentence chunked poorly, then well. Additionally, you can ask students to find “chunkable” sentences, and exchange them with fellow students to practice using slash marks between chunks.*

EXERCISE 1: FINDING CHUNKS (pages 62–64)

1. b
2. b
3. b
4. a
5. b
6. a
7. b
8. a
9. b
10. b

EXERCISE 2: SPOTTING GOOD CHUNKS (pages 65–66)

Sentences 2, 5, 8, 9, and 10 have good chunks.

EXERCISE 3: MARKING CHUNKS (pages 66–68)

Note: *Chunkings below are only possibilities. Accept any chunkings that divide the sentence into meaningful sentence parts.*

References

1. In the dungeon, / there were rats, / large rats, mean rats.
2. Between two tall grass blades in the clearing, / a spider had spun a web, / a circle delicately suspended.
3. He was a rather skinny boy, / neither large nor small / for fourteen.
4. She was aware / that Johnny was watching her, / hoping to find fault, / so she swam / with deliberate grace.
5. The plume of flame / suddenly enveloped three of the soldiers, / killing them so quickly / that they did not even have time to scream.
6. The eagle had two heads, / and two necks, / coiled around each other / like a pair of black feathered snakes, / glossy black wings fluttering.
7. Close on me, / he stopped and raised on his back legs and hung over me, / his forelegs and paws hanging down, / weaving back and forth gently / as he took his time / and decided whether or not / to tear my head off.
8. Dorothy looked at where her house had landed, and, / giving a little cry of fright, / noticed that just under the corner of the house, / there the witch's two feet / were sticking out, / shod in silver shoes / with pointed toes.
9. He was Joel bar Hezron, / the red-cheeked boy who used to come to the synagogue school, / the scribe's son, / the one the rabbi held up for an example, / the one they used to tease / because his twin sister always waited outside / to walk home with him.
10. Even in the lovely city of Matanzas, / with elegant shops / and ladies in carriages waving silk fans, / there was always the scent of rotting tropical vegetation, / a smell that releases a bit of sorrow, / like the death of some small wild thing, / perhaps a bird or a frog.

REFERENCES: IMITATING SENTENCES (pages 70–82)

EXERCISE 1: IDENTIFYING TWIN SENTENCES (pages 72–74)

1. b
2. a
3. a
4. a
5. b

EXERCISE 2: FINDING TWIN SENTENCES (pages 74–75)

1. e
2. c
3. a
4. b
5. d

EXERCISE 3: UNSCRAMBLING IMITATIONS (pages 75–77)

1. The hostess went to the podium, checked the list of reservations, escorted the guests into the dining room, and seated them.
2. In sync, two Olympic divers dove together into the clear pool.
3. The lost girl, tiny, alone, and very frightened, sat crying on the bench.
4. After I verified that both of the documents were absolutely authentic, I examined Harold’s final document, the list of soldiers’ names, inside of his security box.
5. Josie didn’t hear what he was saying, and instead of listening to the calm, clear instructions of her teacher, she missed all the directions.

EXERCISE 4: WRITING IMITATIONS (pages 77–80)

PART ONE

Accept and praise imitations that approximate the structure of the model sentence.

PART TWO

6. c
7. b
8. b
9. a
10. c

REFERENCES: UNSCRAMBLING SENTENCES (pages 83–90)

EXERCISE 1: UNSCRAMBLING SENTENCE PARTS (pages 84–87)

These are the original versions, but accept alternate arrangements that make sense. Monitor students' use of commas for pauses.

1. She had her eye on Henry Piper, the young farm machinery salesman who came to town twice a year.
2. When they set down their empty soda glasses, each of the ladies had a chocolate moustache on her upper lip.
3. He looked behind him, and there, coming out of the woods, was a skunk.
4. Before Sophie could protest, the Big Friendly Giant picked her up off the table and popped her into his waistcoat pocket.
5. Polar bears are white like the snow so that they will be harder to see, and they can sneak up on their next meal.
6. The velveteen rabbit grew to like sleeping in the boy's bed, for the Boy made nice tunnels for him under the bedclothes that he said were like the burrows the real rabbits lived in.
7. Sara curled herself up in the window-seat, opened a book, and began to read.
8. Craning his neck sideways, he realized that they had reached the ridge of a vast hollow, a hollow that had been cleared of trees, so that the stars shone brightly onto the worst scene he had ever laid eyes on.
9. He watched the cat, well-fed and content, curl himself on the lap of one of the sleepy children by the fire.
10. Every morning, Maggie watched the spider pull down her ragged torn web, and every night she watched her weave a new one.

EXERCISE 2: PLACING SENTENCE PARTS (pages 87–88)

Accept all arrangements that make sense. Monitor students' use of commas for pauses.

A PARAGRAPH WORKOUT (pages 88–89)

Accept all arrangements that make sense. Monitor students' use of commas for pauses. Here is the original paragraph.

(1) By the age of one and a half, Matilda's speech was perfect, and she knew as many words as most grown-ups. (2) Her parents, instead of applauding her, called her a noisy chatterbox and told her that little girls should be seen and not heard. (3) By the time she was three, Matilda had taught herself to read by studying newspapers and magazines

References

that lay around the house. (4) At the age of four, she could read fast and well, and she naturally began hankering after books. (5) The only book in this enlightened household was something called *Easy Cooking* belonging to Matilda's mother. (6) When she had read this from cover to cover and had learned all the recipes by heart, she decided she wanted something more interesting.

REFERENCES: VARYING PARAGRAPHS (pages 91–98)

EXERCISE 1: PLACING TOOLS (pages 91–92)

Note: *The purpose is to learn that tools are movable sentence parts. Accept any rearrangements that make sense.*

EXERCISE 2: PLACING AND CREATING TOOLS (pages 92–94)

Note: *Encourage students to vary the length of the tools they create—some short, some medium, some long—to avoid monotony and provide varying levels of detail. Accept all variations that adhere to the intended meaning of the author and original sentence parts compatible with that meaning.*

A PARAGRAPH WORKOUT (pages 97–98)

Original tools are underlined, but accept any tools by students that demonstrate understanding of the context of the sentence and illustrate some kind of tool—word, phrase, or dependent clause.

PARAGRAPH ONE

There are my wounds to contend with—burns, cuts, and bruises from smashing into the trees, and three tracker jacker stings, which are as sore and swollen as ever. I treat my burns with the ointment and try dabbing a bit on my stings as well, but it has no effect on them. My mother knew a treatment for them, some type of leaf that could draw out the poison, but she seldom had cause to use it, and I don't even remember its name let alone its appearance.

PARAGRAPH TWO

Next moment, the luggage, the seat, the platform, and the train station had completely vanished. (2) The four children, holding hands and panting, found themselves standing in a woody place, with branches sticking into them, and there was hardly room to move. (3) Rubbing their eyes, they all took a deep breath. (4) In a flash, they were back in Narnia.

PARAGRAPH THREE

(1) My grandmother, a wonderful storyteller, enthralled me with every story she told me. (2) She was tremendously old and wrinkled, with a massive wide body which was smothered in grey lace. (3) At my bedtime, in the big living room of her house, with snow falling slowly in the windows on an outside world that was black as tar, Grandmother sat there majestic in her armchair, filling every inch of it. (4) Not even a mouse could have squeezed in to sit beside her. (5) I myself, just seven years old, was crouched on the floor by her feet, wearing pajamas, dressing-gown, and slippers. [slightly adapted]

REFERENCES: IMITATING PARAGRAPHS (pages 99–119)

EXERCISE 1: SPOTTING THE TWIN PARAGRAPH (pages 99–104)

Model Paragraph One—A

Model Paragraph Two—B

Model Paragraph Three—B

Model Paragraph Four—B

Model Paragraph Five—A

REFERENCES: UNSCRAMBLING PARAGRAPHS (pages 120–133)

EXERCISE 1: UNSCRAMBLING SENTENCE PARTS (pages 121–126)

PARAGRAPH ONE

(1) The doll had certainly a very intelligent expression in her eyes when Sara took her in her arms. (2) She was a large doll, but not too large to carry about easily. (3) She had naturally curling golden-brown hair, which hung like a mantle about her, and her eyes were a deep, clear, grey blue, with soft, thick eyelashes, which were real eyelashes and not mere painted lines.

PARAGRAPH TWO

(1) The Hemlock Tearoom and Stationery Shop is a place where the floors always feel dirty, even when they are clean. (2) On the day in question, they were not clean. (3) The food at the Hemlock is too awful to eat, particularly the eggs, which are probably the worst eggs in the entire city, including those on exhibit at the Museum of Bad Breakfast, where visitors can learn just how badly eggs can be prepared.

PARAGRAPH THREE

(1) Keith, the boy in the rumpled shorts and shirt, did not know he was being watched as he entered Room 215 of the Mountain View Inn. (2) Neither did two others, his mother and father, who both looked hot and tired. (3) The fourth person entering Room 215 was Matt, sixty years old, who, at the moment, was the bellboy. (4) Other times, Matt did everything, replacing worn out light bulbs, renewing washers in leaky faucets, carrying trays for people who telephoned room service to order food sent to their rooms, and sometimes preventing children from hitting one another with croquet mallets on the lawn behind the hotel. (adapted)

PARAGRAPH FOUR

(1) Barely aware of the earth beneath my feet or the roof of trees above, I paid no mind into what I ran, or that my sole garment, a gray wool tunic, tore on brambles and bushes. (2) Nor did I care that my leather shoes, catching on roots or stones, kept tripping me, causing me to fall. (3) Each time, I picked myself up and rushed on, panting, crying. (4) Deeper and deeper into the ancient woods I went, past thick bracken and stately oaks, until I tripped and fell again, my head striking a stone. (5) Stunned, I lay upon the decaying earth, fingers clutching rotting leaves, a cold rain drenching me. (6) As daylight faded, I was entombed in a world darker than any night could bring.

PARAGRAPH FIVE

(1) Outside, the prairie reached out and touched the places where the sky came down. (2) Though the winter was nearly over, there were patches of snow and ice everywhere. (3) I looked at the long dirt road that crawled across the plains, remembering the morning that Mama died, cruel and sunny. (4) They had come for her in a wagon and taken her away to be buried. (5) Then the cousins and aunts and uncles came and tried to fill up the house, but couldn't. (6) Slowly, one by one, they left. (7) Afterwards, the days seemed long and dark like winter days, even though it wasn't winter, with Papa never singing.

EXERCISE 2: UNSCRAMBLING SENTENCE PARTS AND SENTENCES

(pages 126–132)

PARAGRAPH ONE

(1) The hair sticking out from under the front of the Spook's hood matched his beard, which was gray, but his eyebrows were black and very bushy. (2) There was quite a bit of black hair sprouting out of his nostrils, too. (3) His eyes were green, the same color as my own.

PARAGRAPH TWO

(1) Chip stepped up to the side of the home plate, yanked his cap a little farther down over his short hair, and eyed Trullo, the tall pitcher on the mound. (2) Trullo began his windup and then blazed a fast one straight for Chip's head. (3) Chip fell away from the ball and landed in the dirt. (4) It was a clumsy fall, the boy's face burning as he slowly got to his feet. (5) He picked up the bat and gave Trullo a long, questioning look.

PARAGRAPH THREE

(1) Between two tall grass blades in the clearing, a spider had spun a web, a circle delicately suspended. (2) The silver threads were catching the sunlight, as in the center the spider waited. (3) It was a grey and black thing no larger than the pupil of an eye. (4) The round web with its black center seemed to watch them both.

PARAGRAPH FOUR

(1) For what seemed hours, the ship plowed through wave after wave, trembling and careening on its side, yet somehow managing to stay afloat. (2) Zigzagging through the sky, the sharp cracks of lightning, never diminishing, resounded on the water. (3) Alec saw one of the crew make his way along the deck, desperately fighting to hold on to the rail. (4) The ship rolled sideways, and a huge wave swept over the boat. (5) When it had passed, the sailor was gone. (6) Then Alec became conscious of feet stepping on him. (7) The passengers, yelling and screaming, were climbing and crawling over him.

PARAGRAPH FIVE

(1) The dwarfs were at the top of a wide steep slope of fallen stones, the remains of a landslide. (2) When they began to go down those remains, rubbish and small pebbles rolled away from their feet. (3) Soon larger bits of split stone went clattering down and started other stones slithering and rolling. (4) Then lumps of rock were disturbed and bounded off, crashing down with a dust and a noise. (5) Before long the whole slope above them and below them seemed on the move. (6) The dwarfs were sliding away, huddled all together, in a fearful confusion of slipping slabs and stones. (7) It was the trees at the bottom that saved them. (8) Some dwarfs caught hold of the trunks and swung themselves into lower branches, and some got behind a tree for shelter from the onslaught of the rocks.

REFERENCES: ADDING PIZZAZZ (pages 141–160)

EXERCISE 1: PLACING ADDITIONS (pages 144–151)

Note: *Accept all variations that adhere to the intended meaning of the author. Below are the original paragraphs.*

PARAGRAPH ONE

(1) A long time ago, when all the grandfathers and grandmothers of today were little boys and little girls or very small babies, or perhaps not even born, Pa and Ma and Mary and Laura and Baby Carrie left their little house in the Big Woods of Wisconsin. (2) They drove away, leaving it lonely and empty in the clearing among the big trees, never to see that little house again.

PARAGRAPH TWO

(1) Dorothy lived in the midst of the great Kansas prairies, with Uncle Henry, who was a farmer, and Aunt Em, who was the farmer's wife. (2) Their house was small, for the lumber to build it had to be carried by wagon many miles. (3) The cellar was a small hole dug in the ground, a cyclone cellar, where the family could go if one of those great whirlwinds arose, mighty enough to crush any building in its path. (4) It was reached by a trap-door, from which a ladder led down into the small, dark hole.

PARAGRAPH THREE

(1) In the dungeon, large rats chased each other across the floor, searching for food. (2) Just past midnight, all was quiet, except the occasional rustle of a chain. (3) Through the heavy silence, a single set of footsteps echoed throughout the halls as someone climbed down the spiral steps further into the dungeon. (4) A young woman emerged down the steps, dressed from head to toe in a long emerald cloak. (5) Cautiously, she made her way past the row of cells, sparking the interest of the prisoners inside. (6) With every step she took, her pace became slower and slower, her heart beating faster and faster.

PARAGRAPH FOUR

(1) On Monday, May 17, 1954, in the case of *Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka*, the U.S. Supreme Court outlawed racial segregation in public schools. (2) It was a solid punch to segregation, one that produced shock waves throughout the South. (3) The

References

ruling allowed black students to anticipate a different future, emboldening a few of them to try to make it happen. (4) One such student was fifteen-year-old Claudette Colvin, whose school had been studying black history almost nonstop for a solid month.

(5) Around 3:30 on March 2, 1955, this slim, bespectacled high school junior boarded the Highland Gardens segregated bus with a few of her friends and slid into a window seat on the left side, behind the white section of the bus, piling her textbooks on her lap.

(6) She smoothed her blue dress, and settled back for a five-block ride that not only would change the course of her life but would spark the most important social movement in U.S. history.

----- PARAGRAPH FIVE

(1) It was cold, and the rain was pelting the windows, the wind howling, so it felt pretty good to be indoors. (2) I was lying on the rug with my head in my paws, just staring absently at the front door. (3) My friend Chester the cat was curled up on the brown velvet armchair, which years ago he had staked out as his own. (4) I saw that once again Chester had covered the whole seat with his cat hair, and I chuckled to myself, picturing the scene tomorrow. (5) Next to grasshoppers, there is nothing that frightens Chester more than a vacuum cleaner. (6) After a moment, the front door flew open, showing a flash of lightning, and in its glare I noticed that Mr. Monroe was carrying a little package, a blanketed bundle with tiny glistening eyes. (7) He unwrapped the blanket, and there in the center was a tiny black and white rabbit, sitting in a shoebox filled with dirt.

EXERCISE 2: ADDING PIZZAZZ (pages 152–154) (*The author's additions are bolded.*)

----- PARAGRAPH ONE

(1) **Because of the horrible heat**, I asked Mother if I could cut off my hair, **which hung in a swelter all the way down my back**. (2) She said no, **and that she wouldn't have me running around like a shorn savage**. (3) I found this manifestly unfair, **to say nothing of *hot*, so I devised a plan**. (4) Every week I would cut off an inch of hair, **just one stealthy inch**, so that Mother wouldn't notice.

----- PARAGRAPH TWO

(1) Something heavy could be heard sliding across the floor beneath the table.
(2) The huge snake emerged to climb slowly up Voldemort's chair. (3) It rose, **seemingly**

endlessly, and came to rest across Voldemort's shoulder, its neck the thickness of a man's thigh, its eyes, with their vertical slits for eyes, unblinking. (4) Voldemort stroked the creature absently with long thin fingers, still looking at Lucius Malfoy.

PARAGRAPH THREE

(1) **Crowded in the corner of where Fruitless Mountain and the Jade River met**, the village was a shade of faded brown. (2) This was because the land around the village was hard and poor. (3) **To coax rice out of the stubborn land**, the fields had to be flooded with water. (4) The villagers had to tramp in the mud, **bending and stooping and planting day after day**. (5) Working in the mud so much made it spread everywhere, **the hot sun drying it on their clothes and their homes**. (adapted)

PARAGRAPH FOUR

(1) They were not long in the mountains before Larch accepted, **bitterly**, that it was an impossible hiding place. (2) It wasn't the cold that was the problem, **though autumn here was as raw as midwinter had been on the lord's estate**. (3) It wasn't the terrain either, **though the scrub was hard and sharp, and they slept on rock every night, and there was no place even to imagine growing vegetables or grain**. (4) It was the predators. (5) Not a week went by that Larch didn't have to defend against some attack: **mountain lions, bears, wolves, the enormous birds, the raptors, with a wingspan twice the height of a man**. (6) Some of the creatures were territorial, all of them were vicious, and **as winter closed in bleakly around Larch and Immiker**, all of them were starving. (7) Their horse was lost one day to a pair of mountain lions.

Kristin Cashore, *Fire*

PARAGRAPH FIVE

(1) The Spanish conqueror Pizarro in the 16th century held the Inca king hostage for a ransom of gold, **so the Incas brought Pizarro piles of golden life-size statues of people and animals and plants, all sculpted from solid gold as if the Incas had the Midas touch while they strolled through their fantastic cities and farms and jungles, and everything they even gently brushed up against turned into pure gold**. (2) No one, though, will ever again see that life-size golden world **because once the conquistadors got their greedy hands on the gold, they melted it down**. (3) Pizarro's men melted all those beautiful golden sculptures into boring Spanish coins and shipped

References

boatloads of them back to the king and queen of Spain, **who loved the gold but wanted even more.**

EXERCISE 3: THE MISSING PARAGRAPH (pages 154–157)

PARAGRAPH SERIES ONE

It was a boy, close about my age, maybe twelve. He had shaggy hair the color of dry dirt. He wore brown pants and a blue t-shirt. He had bare feet. He was dead.

PARAGRAPH SERIES TWO

The only light came from the hall, and Coraline, who was standing in the doorway, cast a huge and distorted shadow onto the room's carpet. She looked like a thin giant woman. Coraline was just wondering whether she ought to turn on the lights when she saw the black shape edge out from beneath the sofa. It paused, and then dashed silently across the carpet toward the farthest corner of the room.

PARAGRAPH SERIES THREE

In kitchens and sitting rooms, and over backyard fences women talked of it, and wept openly. On street corners and in stores the men talked, too, and wept, though not so openly.

PARAGRAPH SERIES FOUR

A blaze of sunshine met them. It poured through the doorway as the light of a June day pours into a garage when you open the door. It made the drops of water on the grass glitter like beads. The sunlight was coming from what certainly did look like a different world. They saw smooth turf, smoother and brighter than they had ever seen before, and blue sky, and, darting to and fro, things so bright that they might have been jewels or huge butterflies.

PARAGRAPH SERIES FIVE

Mothers of my friends also threatened them with the Manta Diablo. He was a somewhat different monster from the one my mother knew, for he had more teeth or fewer, or eyes shaped in a different way, or only a single eye instead of seven.

*When you know the basics [and beyond] of writing paragraphs,
it's really a good feeling.*

—Odessa Davis
