



Sentence Variety

Sometimes, students receive graded essays with points taken due to a lack of sentence variety. If you receive this comment on any of your essays, try these things to help add spice to your sentence structures.

Prepositional Phrase

- In the beginning, there were three.

Adverb Clause

- While Dan baked bread, Marty set the table.

Adverb Phrase

- While riding his skateboard, Dan listens to Drake.

Gerund Phrase

- Asking for help may prove difficult.
- Becoming a lawyer take a great deal of time and money.

Participle Phrase

- Standing near the puddle, Dan got splashed.

Infinitive Phrase

- To go to college is not cheap.
- To win a race will require perseverance.

Subordinate Clause (*if, because, since, as, and although*)

- Because you prefer it, we will have beef instead of pork.
- Whatever decision you make, I will support you.

Absolute Phrase (the whole sentence)

- The weather being warm and clear, we decided to stop for a picnic.

Begin with a Coordinate Series

- The clock at Tillman, my car radio, and my watch all chimed noon at the same time.

Introductory Appositive Series

- High devotion to her royal task, domestic virtues, evident sincerity of nature, and a piercing and sometime disconcerting truthfulness – all these qualities of the Queen’s had long impressed themselves upon the mind of her subjects.
- Forlorn and weary, the student dragged into the ASC.

Deliberate Fragment

- They remember the tinkling of falling glass all right, and the timid brushing noise of the young foliage hitting the road. And the mewing of people too frightened to scream.

Rhythm (End Focus)

- Instead of “William Strunk was my professor,” say, “My professor was William Strunk

Changing Rhythm for Interest and Effect

- You can rearrange words in a sentence to stress them and so that they have different effects. For example, “it was yesterday that Dan wrecked his motorcycle” (stress on yesterday). “It was Dan that wrecked his motorcycle yesterday” (stress on Dan). “It was his motorcycle that Dan wrecked yesterday” (stress on motorcycle).