

Grammar For Effect

GCSE English · Follows the national curriculum

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

1. Worked example

Vary three simple sentences: 'The bus was late. It was raining. I was cold.'

Step 1 · Combine two with a subordinate clause

'Because the bus was late, I stood in the rain for twenty minutes.'

Step 2 · Keep one short for impact

'I was frozen.'

Step 3 · Result

'Because the bus was late, I stood in the rain for twenty minutes. I was frozen.'

Answer: Complex + simple gives rhythm and a clear emphasis.

Check: Variety with purpose, not variety for its own sake.

2. Now try one with the steps

Move the emphasis: 'A fox was sitting on the wall in the moonlight.'

Step 1 · What should the reader notice last?

Step 2 · Front the setting

Step 3 · Effect

Answer:

3. Practice

Show your working. The marks tell you how much is expected.

1. How many main clauses does a simple sentence have? Write the number. [1]

2. Name the sentence type: 'Although she was exhausted, she kept running.' [1]

3. Name the sentence type: 'The rain stopped, but the wind grew stronger.' [1]

4. What is a minor sentence? [1]
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5. Which punctuation mark is best for a reveal? [1]
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6. Rewrite 'A letter was on the doormat in the hallway' so that 'a letter' comes last. [2]
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7. What is the difference between a syndetic and an asyndetic list? [2]
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8. Turn into the passive voice: 'Someone broke the window.' [1]
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9. Explain why a short sentence after several long ones has impact. [2]
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10. Write one sentence using a semicolon to contrast two places. [2]
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11. Write a compound-complex sentence about a storm. [2]
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12. Why might a writer shift from past to present tense in a story? [2]
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13. Analyse: 'There was only one way out: through the water.' [2]
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14. Why is 'using lots of different sentence types' not enough on its own for top marks? [2]
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4. Before you hand it in

Using one-word sentences everywhere for 'drama'.

Use a minor sentence once or twice, at a turning point.

Semicolons used: 'I bought; apples, pears and plums.'

Check both sides of the semicolon could stand

Starting every sentence with 'I' or 'The'.

Front some sentences with a subordinate clause, a phrase or an -ing verb.

Naming grammar in a reading answer without effect: 'This is a complex sentence.'

Explain what the structure does to pace, emphasis or meaning.