

# Revising: Creating Sentence Variety

*Using a variety of sentences in your writing can make it more appealing.*

Think about the sentences in your paragraphs and the way you use those sentences. Just as adding flowers makes a garden more interesting to look at, so including variety in your sentences helps hold your readers' interest.



Breaking run-on sentences makes them easier to understand.

### Vary Sentence Length

Look at the length of your sentences. Too many short sentences make writing sound choppy. Too many long sentences make your thoughts difficult to follow.

Varying the order of words or phrases can add clarity to your writing. For example, you can write “The bat hit the ball with a loud crack,” or “With a loud crack, the bat hit the ball.”

*We know that it will take money to develop the lot, and we are willing to do our part to help raise the money. We could plan several fund-raising events, such as a car wash, a raffle, and a rummage sale. Also, many teenagers and grown-ups from the neighborhood have offered to help us, also.*

Notice how revisions affect the rhythm of the paragraph.

### Journal Writing

Select a passage of several sentences from your journal. Experiment with ways to vary the length and word order of the sentences. Write the variations in your journal.



## Combine Sentences

You can also create variety by combining sentences that express similar ideas. Two or more sentences can be combined into one. Look at these sentences, and notice how they can be combined.

Wait until after the last frost to plant tomatoes. Wait until after the last frost to plant cucumbers, too.

Wait until after the last frost to plant tomatoes and cucumbers.

In both sentences, “Wait until after the last frost” expresses the same idea. “Tomatoes” and “cucumbers” are different nouns in those sentences. Consider combining sentences that express similar ideas but have different nouns, adjectives, or verbs.

When you combine sentences, certain words and phrases can clarify the relationships between ideas. For example, the sentence “Return that overdue book when you go to the library” uses the word *when* to express a relationship between two activities—*return* and *go*.

Notice how this writer combined similar thoughts and expressed the relationships between activities.

Another way that neighborhood people can help is by volunteering their time to work in the lot. Volunteers can pick up trash. <sup>and</sup> ~~They~~ can clear out weeds. <sup>They can also</sup> plant grass, trees, and flowers. ~~This can happen~~ once the work gets started. <sub>5)</sub>

## 2.8

# Writing Activities

### Vary Sentence Lengths

Adjust the sentences in your draft as you revise. Vary the lengths of your sentences.

**PURPOSE** To revise for sentence variety

**AUDIENCE** Yourself

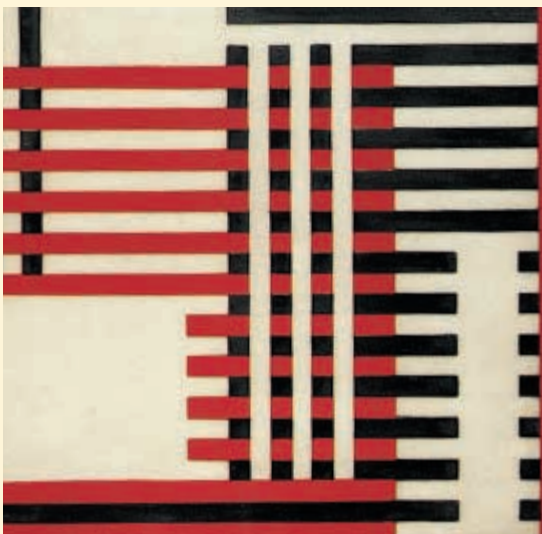
**LENGTH** Changes on the draft

**WRITING RUBRICS** To revise for sentence variety, you should

- mix long and short sentences
- vary the beginnings of sentences
- combine sentences when it makes sense to do so

### Viewing and Representing

Notice the use of vertical and horizontal lines, as well as the use of space, in *Latticework*. Discuss with a partner any patterns you see. Then create your own latticeworks and compare designs.



Josef Albers, *Latticework*, c. 1926



### Grammar Link

To avoid repetition, use pronouns to replace nouns.

*People can help by volunteering their time to work in the lot.*

Write the paragraph below, replacing nouns with pronouns where appropriate.

<sup>1</sup>Juan plays the tuba in the school band. <sup>2</sup>Juan likes the low deep sounds of the tuba. <sup>3</sup>Juan's grandfather takes an afternoon nap.

<sup>4</sup>Juan's grandfather always wakes up when Juan begins to play the tuba.

See Lessons 11.1–11.2, pages 429–432.

### Cross-Curricular Activity

**ART** Rewrite the following passage about artist Josef Albers. Change the word order or combine sentences to vary the length of the sentences and to create effective sound and rhythm.

Josef Albers was born in Germany. He left Germany for the United States. Albers arrived in the United States in 1933. Albers made pictures out of pieces of colored glass. He used primary colors.

# Editing/Proofreading: Making Final Adjustments

*Once you've made all your revisions, you need to edit and proofread your work. Now you will check your spelling, punctuation, grammar, and usage.*

Just as Keshia, Mike, and Henry are checking every part of their proposal, you need to look at every word in your writing to make sure that there are no errors or omissions. Before you present your work, make sure it looks good and reads as smoothly as possible.



## Check Your Sentences

Editing/Proofreading is usually the last stage before you make your final copy and present your writing to an audience. At this point you have already reorganized paragraphs or inserted new ideas into your work.

When you edit and proofread, go over your writing line by line, word by word.

The checklist at the right will help you find many of your errors. If you're uncertain of a spelling, consult a dictionary. Make sure you know the meanings of the words you use and that you've chosen the right words. See that you've used a singular verb with a singular subject and a plural verb with plural subject. Check that you have used verb tenses appropriately. Examine your use of periods, commas, quotation marks, semi-colons, and other punctuation marks.

Peer reviewers can help you edit. They can often spot errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics that you might overlook in your own work.



## Journal Writing

Look in your journal for some writing that you have done recently. Choose a passage. Use the checklist above, a dictionary, and the Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics section of this book to edit the passage.









## Proofread Your Copy

**Proofreading** symbols, like those shown below, make editing easier. Even if you do your own typing or word processing, use proofreading symbols as you edit. By clearly marking your copy, you can catch and correct errors before you prepare the final version of your writing.

Notice that the writer added the word *a* to create a more balanced, or parallel, construction.

The empty lot across from the Shop-Good Mart  
 on Broad street is an eyesore and <sup>a</sup> health hazard.  
 We propose that the community develop the lot  
 to make space for a garden community a play  
 lot, and a small park. ~~This~~ proposal explains  
 why we think the ~~the~~ lot should be developed and  
 describes how we think the development should  
 be done. ~~People~~ People in the neighborhood feel that the  
 empty lot is unsafe.

### Proofreading Symbols

 Insert	 Delete	 Reverse	 New paragraph
 Period	 Comma	 Capital letter	 Lower-case letter

