Alan Peat's

Sentence Structures

25 ways to improve your sentence writing!

Reproduced with the kind permission of Alan Peat. www.alanpeat.com

1.

B.O.Y.S.

Examples:

a) She was happily playing a game, but got upset when she lost.
b) The cookies could be double chocolate chip, or oat and raisin.
c) It was a warm day, yet storm clouds gathered over the distant horizon.
d) Mr File was hungry, so he ate all the chocolate biscuits.

Rule: A B.O.Y.S sentence is a two-part sentence. The first part of the sentence always ends with a comma [,] and the last part always begins with a connective.

Reproduced with the kind permission of
Alan Peat. www.alanpeat.com

2.

2Ad

Examples:

a) Mr Twit was a dirty, horrible man with long, soggy spaghetti in his beard.

b) It was a sparse, dry desert with a calming, exotic oasis in the distance.

Rule: A 2Ad sentence has TWO adjectives before the first noun and TWO adjectives before the second noun. This sentence creates a clear picture for the reader.

Reproduced with the kind permission of
Alan Peat. www.alanpeat.com

3.

Simile

Examples:

The huge, green monster chased after the children like a tornado.

Although the pirate was as tall as a mountain, he wasn't frightening.

Rule:

A simile creates a picture in the reader's mind.

It compares one thing with another, using ...like a.... and ...as a.....

Reproduced with the kind permission of
Alan Peat. www.alanpeat.com

4.

3 _ed

Examples:

Confused, shocked, scared, the children ran from the burning building!

Excited, elated, thrilled, she won the dance competition.

Rule:

A 3_ed sentence starts with three adjectives, that end in _ed and describe emotions. The _ed words MUST be followed by commas.

Reproduced with the kind permission of
Alan Peat. www.alanpeat.com

5.

2 pairs

Examples:

Exhausted ***and*** worried, cold ***and*** hungry, they did not know how much further they had to go.

Rule: Begins with two pairs of related adjectives. Each pair is:

- followed by a comma
- separated by ***and***

Reproduced with the kind permission of
Alan Peat. www.alanpeat.com

6.

De:De

Examples:

I was exhausted: I hadn't slept for more than two days.

Rule: A Description: Detail or De-De sentence is a

- A compound sentence in which two independent clauses are separated by a **colon**
- The first clause is descriptive
- The second adds further detail

Reproduced with the kind permission of
Alan Peat. www.alanpeat.com

7.

Verb, person

Examples:

a. Running, Sarah almost tripped over her own feet.

b. Tiptoeing, he tried to sneak out across the landing without waking anybody up.

Rule: A sentence starts with a verb to give it more importance. The verb is always followed by a comma and then a name or personal pronoun (he, she, they, it) followed by the rest of the sentence.

Reproduced with the kind permission of
Alan Peat. www.alanpeat.com

8.

O. (I.)

Examples:

a. Kate ate the cake that was given to her with enthusiasm and delight. (Inside, however she wished she had turned down the offer.)
b. She smiled at the cheeky little boy. (At the same time she was hurt by his tricks.)

Rule: They are Outside: Inside sentences. They are made up of two related sentences. The first sentence tells the reader a character's outward action and the second reveals their true feelings.

Reproduced with the kind permission of
Alan Peat. www.alanpeat.com

9.

If, if , if, then

Examples:

If the alarm hadn't gone off, if the bus had been on time, if the road repairs had been completed, then his life would not have been destroyed.

If Hannibal hadn't been lost, if Rome hadn't won, if Carthage hadn't fallen, then the Mediterranean would be very different today.

Rule: Summarising a dramatic plot (key plots) at beginning or end of a story in groups of 3. The emphasis is on using a comma after each clause.

Reproduced with the kind permission of
Alan Peat. www.alanpeat.com

10.

Emotion word, (comma)

Examples:

Desperate, she screamed for help.

Terrified, he froze instantly to the spot.

Happily, she skipped along the gravely path.

Rule: Emotion first followed by the actions that are caused by the emotion. Putting the word first gives more weight to the emotion. When teaching produce an A-Z list of emotions the children could use (e.g: Afraid, Brave, Cantankerous etc.)

Reproduced with the kind permission of
Alan Peat. www.alanpeat.com

11.

NOUN, which, who, where

Examples:

- Snakes, which scare me, are not always poisonous.
- My pet dog, who only has three legs, loves to chase seagulls.
- The deserted beach, where the shipwreck was found, can only be reached by sea.

Rule:

Use commas to embed a clause in a sentence, add information that links with the sentence topic and start the clause with which, who or where.

Reproduced with the kind permission of
Alan Peat. www.alanpeat.com

12.

Many Questions

Examples:

- Where is the treasure? the diamonds? the gold? the rubies?
- What if she was lost? trapped? captured? murdered?

Rule:

Start with a question and question mark, followed by further words or phrases which pose linked questions. Beware - you don't need to start each phrase with a capital letter!

Reproduced with the kind permission of
Alan Peat. www.alanpeat.com

13.

Ad, same ad

Examples:

He was a fast runner, fast because he needed to be.

It was a cold planet, cold due to the distance from the sun.

Rule: Same adjective used twice. The second adjective repeated straight after a comma.

Reproduced with the kind permission of
Alan Peat. www.alanpeat.com

14.

3 bad - (dash) question?

Examples:

Cold, dark, airlessness – which would kill the spaceman first?

Greed, jealousy, hatred – which of these is most evil?

Rule: 3 negative adjectives followed by a dash then a question which relates to the 3 adjectives.

Reproduced with the kind permission of
Alan Peat. www.alanpeat.com

15.

Double ly ending

Examples:

- She sang soulfully and emotionally.
- He exercised vigorously and enthusiastically.
- They laughed loudly and shrilly.

Rule:

The sentence must end in two adverbs which add detail to, and describe how the verb within the sentence is being carried out.

Reproduced with the kind permission of
Alan Peat. www.alanpeat.com

16.

All the Ws

Examples:

Would there ever be another opportunity like this one?

Who would take over his role now?

What if you had all of the money in the world?

Why do zebras have stripes?

Rule:

Your short sentence must start with one of the following W words:
Who? What? When? Where? Why? Would? Was? Will? What if?

Reproduced with the kind permission of
Alan Peat. www.alanpeat.com

17.

List sentences

Examples: It was a dark, long, leafy lane.

It was a cold, wet, miserable and misty morning .

Rule: A LIST sentence must have 3 or 4 adjectives before the noun.

Use *and* between the final 2 adjectives.

Reproduced with the kind permission of
Alan Peat. www.alanpeat.com

18.

Some; others sentences

Examples:

Some people love football; others just can't stand it.

Some days are full of enjoyment; others begin and end terribly.

Rule: *Some; others* sentences are compound sentences which begin with the word *some* and have a semi-colon to replace the word *but*.

Reproduced with the kind permission of
Alan Peat. www.alanpeat.com

19.

P.C

Examples:

a. Neither money nor gifts could make him visit the haunted mansion again.

b. It was both cold and unpleasant for him to work there.

Rule: P.C is short for Paired Conjunctions. This is when some words need a second word in order to make sense.

Reproduced with the kind permission of
Alan Peat. www.alanpeat.com

20.

The more, the more

Examples:

a. The **more** angry he became, the **more** he hammered his fist on the table.



emotion comma action related to emotion

Rule: This sentence type is particularly useful when developing a character trait in a story. The first **more** should be followed by an **emotive** word and the **second more** should be followed by a **related action**.

Reproduced with the kind permission of
Alan Peat. www.alanpeat.com

21.

Short

Examples:

Everything failed!

The ship exploded!

Rule: 1-3 word sentences possibly with an exclamation mark.

Reproduced with the kind permission of
Alan Peat. www.alanpeat.com

22.

Personification of weather

Examples:

The wind stroked the space shuttle gently before liftoff. = caring.

Norman was beaten by the hail. = attacked/ aggressive.

Rule: A type of weather; wind, rain, sun, hail etc.. is given a human a mood.

Reproduced with the kind permission of
Alan Peat. www.alanpeat.com

23.



Examples:

- Dancing in the studio, she watched in the mirror as a ghost appeared.
- Skipping along the street, he stopped abruptly when a car screeched past.

Rule:

The sentence must begin with a verb ending in 'ing' followed by a location of the action

Reproduced with the kind permission of
Alan Peat. www.alanpeat.com

24.

Irony

Examples:

- Our 'luxury' hotel turned out to be a farm outbuilding.
- With dawn breaking, the 'beautiful view' which the brochure described, revealed itself to be a scrap-yard and a rubbish tip.
- The 'trip of our dreams' was, in fact, our worst nightmare.

Rule:

An irony sentence deliberately overstates how good or bad something is. The overstated word is then shown to be false through the remainder of the sentence which reveals the truth.

Reproduced with the kind permission of
Alan Peat. www.alanpeat.com

25.

Imagine 3 examples:

Examples: Imagine a place where the sun always shines, where wars never happen, where no-one ever dies: in the Andromeda 5 system, there is such a planet.

Rule: Sentence begins with

- The word 'imagine'
- Then describes three parts of something
- The first two parts are separated by commas
- The third ends with a colon

Reproduced with the kind permission of
Alan Peat. www.alanpeat.com