

Focus 5

Reviewing the Techniques

Earlier in this workbook you learned the techniques of unscrambling, imitating, combining, and expanding. Here you will refresh your understanding of those techniques to apply them in the rest of this workbook and in your own writing.

Unscrambling

Practice 1

The sentences below have movable sentence parts that are underlined. Rearrange them in each sentence. Make sure that your rearrangement is as effective as the original.

Example

Original Sentence:

Tom was on his feet, shouting.

Hal Borland, *When the Legends Die*

Effective Rearrangements:

Shouting, Tom was on his feet.

Tom, shouting, was on his feet.

1. Taran cried, his teeth chattering violently.

Lloyd Alexander, *The Book of Three*

2. The Fog Horn was blowing steadily, once every fifteen seconds.

Ray Bradbury, *"The Fog Horn"*

3. He sat on a rail fence, watching the night come over Gettysburg.

Michael Shaara, *The Killer Angels*

4. Slowly, filled with dissatisfaction, he had gone to his room and got into bed.

Betsy Byars, *The Summer of the Swans*

5. There are boys from broken homes, and boys who have been in difficulty with the law, studying in the classrooms, working in the fields and in the workshops.

William E. Barrett, *The Lilies of the Field*

6. Somewhere there, on that desolate plain, was lurking this fendish man, hiding in a burrow like a wild beast, his heart full of malignancy against the whole race which had cast him out.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*

7. Alan made a business of checking his own reflection in the mirror, giving Norris time to make a clean getaway, while Keeton stood by the door, watching him impatiently.

Stephen King, *Needful Things*

8. The garden was to the left of the barn and the pasture hidden from the house by the smokehouse and a pecan grove and a row of little peach trees that because of the drought had dropped hard knotty fruit not even fit to make spiced pickle with.

Olive Ann Burns, *Cold Sassy Tree*

9. She ate a great deal and afterward fell asleep herself, and Mary sat and stared at her and watched her fine bonnet slip on one side until she herself fell asleep once more in the corner of the carriage, lulled by the splashing of the rain against the windows.

Frances Hodgson Burnett, *The Secret Garden*

10. Standing in front of the room, her blond hair pulled back to emphasize the determination of her face, her body girdled to emphasize the determination of her spine, her eyes holding determinedly to anger, Miss Lass was afraid.

► *Rosa Guy*, *The Friends*

Imitating

Practice 2

Imitate these model sentences, using your own content but the structure of the model. Imitate one sentence part at a

time. Aim for approximating, not duplicating, the model.

Example

Model: Mollie, the foolish, pretty white mare who drew Mr. Jones's trap, came mincing daintily in, chewing a lump of sugar.

George Orwell, Animal Farm

Sample Student Imitation: The garbage disposal, a noisy, chewing metal mouth that ate the meal's leftovers, began gurgling suddenly then, spitting-up a half-eaten carrot.

1. *Model:* Great was his care of them.

Jack London, "All Gold Canyon"

Sample Student Imitation: Chilling was her story of anger.

2. *Model:* The big thing, exciting yet frightening, was to talk to her, say what he hoped to do.

Bernard Malamud, The Assistant

Sample Student Imitation: An acceptable solution, simple and obvious, is to talk with the manager, emphasize what the workers want to request.

3. *Model:* He had never been hungrier, and he filled his mouth with wine, faintly tarry-tasting from the leather bag, and swallowed.

Ernest Hemingway, For Whom the Bell Tolls

Sample Student Imitation: The horse had never been nastier, and it threw its riders to the ground, cold and hard from the frost, and bolted.

4. *Model:* Soon afterwards they retired, Mama in her big oak bed on one side of the room, Emilio and Rosy in their boxes full of straw and sheepskins on the other side of the room.

John Steinbeck, "Flight"

Sample Student Imitation: Much later the accountant finished, computer disks in their neat boxes on the right side of the desk, pencils and pens in their containers

decorated with seals and designs on the shelf above the desk.

5. *Model:* On stormy nights, when the tide was out, the bay of Fougere, fifty feet below the house, resembled an immense black pit, from which arose mutterings and sighs as if the sands down there had been alive and complaining.

Joseph Conrad, "The Idiots"

Sample Student Imitation: During rush-hour traffic, when his nerves were frazzled, Brent Hammond, a few miles above the speed limit, hit his brakes, from which came sharp peals and leaden grindings as though the metal were alive and hurting.

6. *Model:* The first gray light had just appeared in the living room windows, black mirrors a moment ago, now opening on the view of the woods to the south.

Thacy Kidder, Old Friends

Sample Student Imitation: A great new scent had suddenly caught his attention, a citrus aroma from her perfume, subtly recalling smells of childhood summers in the south of Florida during vacation.

7. *Model:* When I peeped into the sickroom again, Grandpa was bent forward in the rocker, his arms and head resting on the bed by Granny's side.

Olive Ann Burns, Cold Sassy Tree

Sample Student Imitation: When the professor repeated her theory, Toby was leaning forward from his desk, his facial expression and body language fixing on every word of her lecture.

8. *Model:* She was no more than twelve, slender, dirty, nervous and timid as a bird, but beneath the grime as eerily beautiful as a marsh fairy.

Paul Gallico, The Snow Goose

Sample Student Imitation: The rabbit outside was more than vigilant, alert, wary, cautious and watchful as a sentinel, and inside its warren as instinctively maternal as a human mother.

9. *Model:* In the dining hall, over the stone fireplace that was never used, there was a huge stuffed moose head, which looked somehow carnivorous.

Margaret Atwood, "Death by Landscape"

Sample Student Imitation: In his dorm room, on his desk that he shared with his roommate, there was a pile of research notes, which seemed neatly arranged.

10. *Model:* As a girl of ten, Maria had been given a crippled pony, not a true pony, but a small, spotted horse that had injured itself badly on some barbed wire strung by the men who owned the big ranch across the river.

Larry McMurtry, Streets of Laredo

Sample Student Imitation: While an explorer in the damp region, Johnson had gotten a mysterious illness, not a fatal illness, but a rare tropical sickness that had encroached itself selectively on people exposed to a virus that also caused strange diseases of the skin.

Combining

Practice 3

Combine the sets of sentences into just one sentence by making the underlined portions sentence parts of the first sentence. Decide where the sentence parts fit most smoothly into the first sentence. Add commas to punctuate the sentence parts you insert into the first sentence.

Example

Set: The Horned King rode to the wicker baskets and thrust the fire into them. He did this before Gwydion could speak again. The Horned King was bearing a torch.

Combined: Before Gwydion could speak again, the Horned King, bearing a torch, rode to the wicker baskets and thrust the fire into them.

Lloyd Alexander, The Book of Three

1. Aunt Dorothy was waiting at the front door with her own small daughter. Aunt Dorothy was tall and bony. Her daughter was Diane.

Robert Lipsyte, The Contender

2. My mother and father should have stayed in New York. New York was where they met. New York was where they married. New York was where I was born.

Frank McCourt, Angela's Ashes

3. Craig sat and waited for his father to tell him what he should do next. Craig was calm now, at peace. He sat and waited just as he had done so many times as a child.

Stephen King, The Langoliers

4. Perhaps an elderly gentleman lived there. He lived there alone. He was someone who had known her grandfather. He was someone who had visited the Parris in Cunningham.

Joyce Carol Oates, "The Doll" from Haunted

5. The lawyer lay on an old Army cot. The cot was in the closed anteroom. It was one that he kept there for naps. There was a newspaper folded over his face as though he were a corpse being protected from flies.

Frank Bonham, Chief

Expanding

Practice 4

Expand the sentences at the slash mark, and then check the References on pages 165–166 to see the original sentences.

1. / , a woman sang.

Ray Bradbury, The Martian Chronicles

2. A large woman. / , got out and waddled over to them.

Alexander Ky, The Forgotten Door

3. Mary asked no more questions but waited in the darkness of her corner. /.

Frances Hodgson Burnett, The Secret Garden

4. / , he held his temples desperately with both hands and was wretchedly sick.
Bill and Vera Cleaver. Where the Lilies Bloom
5. He walked on. / .
Robert Lipsyte. The Contender
6. / , warriors on high stilts bear upraised swords against their shields.
Lloyd Alexander. The Book of Three
7. Ima Dean, with a huge bag of yellow and red wrapped candies, was sitting on the floor. / , / .
Bill and Vera Cleaver. Where the Lilies Bloom
8. He was a broad, brandy-legged little man with a walrus mustache, with square hands, / and / .
John Steinbeck. The Red Pony
9. They were standing there in front of the locked door in the nearly empty plane. / , when the man in the red shirt and the man in the crew-necked jersey arrived. / .
Stephen King. The Langoliers
10. / . / . / . the boy followed the dog.
William Armstrong. Sounder