



Aiming for Levels 4 to 6 – Lesson 14

Lesson title:	Animal survival (part one)
Learning objective:	To understand how to vary sentence structure for effect (WAF5)
Learning outcome:	Students rewrite a paragraph, using a variety of sentence structures to engage the reader

Success criteria

AF	Level 4 / All students can ...	Level 5 / Most students can ...	Level 6 / Some students can ...
WAF5	Sometimes vary length, structure or subject of sentences	Vary sentence length, structure and subject for clarity and emphasis	Alternate between simple and complex sentences for purpose and effect

Resources

Texts	Worksheets / Other
<i>Life of Pi</i> novel extract (<i>Student's Book</i> , p. 35)	Worksheet 14a (Levels 4–6, Lesson 14) Worksheet 14b (Levels 4–6, Lesson 14) Worksheet 14c (Levels 4–6, Lesson 14)
Resource CD-ROM (see pp. 4–5)	Additional suggestions
PowerPoint 14 (Levels 4–6, Lesson 14) <i>Life of Pi</i> novel extract – PDF and plain text PDF Image bank	
Related lessons	
Levels 5 to 7, Lesson 14 – pp. 68–69 – finds students examining sentence structure in a short extract from <i>Life of Pi</i> and using the extract as a model for their own writing.	
Levels 6 to 8, Lesson 14 – pp. 102–103 – sees students examining sentence structure in a short extract from <i>Life of Pi</i> before producing a short piece of writing on a similar subject.	

Coverage

Assessment focuses	Assessment objectives (GCSE)
WAF5 Vary sentences for clarity, purpose and effect	Eng A03 (iii) / Eng Lang A04 (iii) Use a range of sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate punctuation and spelling

Summary

Students study the varied sentence structure in an extract from *Life of Pi* and use the extract as a model for rewriting a sample paragraph.

Starter

Either Ask students to work in pairs. Hand out **Worksheet 14a** (also see **PowerPoint 14, Slide 3**) and ask pairs to choose four verbs from those provided: crashing, flickered, lunge, pulled, sink, splashed, thrashing. Direct them to write one paragraph using the verbs they have chosen. You may wish to give students a hint about the direction of the paragraph – for example, *the verbs might be used to describe a sinking ship* – or you may prefer to leave it open. Encourage them to experiment with a variety of sentence structures.

Or Vary the activity above so that you give students, working either in pairs or individually, one verb from the list at a time. Each time a verb is revealed, students have one minute to write a sentence. Each sentence should build on the last to create a cohesive paragraph. As above, you may wish to give students a direction for their writing, or you may prefer to leave this open. Encourage them to experiment with a variety of sentence structures.

Main / Development

1. Take brief feedback from the Starter activity, sharing some of the paragraphs students have written and highlighting any references in students' work to water or a scene at sea. If you chose to keep the direction of the Starter activity broad, now elicit that all these verbs might be used to describe a ship sinking. Then explain that they have been taken from a novel called *Life of Pi*, in which a boy is stranded on a lifeboat with some animals after the cargo ship they are travelling in sinks. Explain that the novel is well known for its varied and interesting written style.
2. Establish the learning objective and success criteria (see **PowerPoint 14, Slide 2**), then read the extract from the novel **Life of Pi** (*Student's Book*, p. 35) together. Ask students what effect this extract has on the reader, drawing out the variation in sentence structure and length. Model a paragraph to highlight how this works, using the following sentence as a starting point (also see **PowerPoint 14, Slide 4**): *The writer creates a sense of tension and shock in this extract by varying the sentence structure and length ...* Explain that students will shortly have a go at varying sentence structure for effect themselves.
3. As a class, recap on the definition of simple and complex sentences (see **PowerPoint 14, Slide 5**). Explain to students that their creative writing will often have more fluency if they vary their sentence structure and use a combination of simple and complex sentences. Ask them to re-read their paragraph from the Starter activity. What sentence structures did they use? How did they start their sentences? Did they use any short, simple sentences for effect? Briefly share findings as a class.
4. Hand out **Worksheet 14b** (also see **PowerPoint 14, Slide 6**). Together, explore how this extract uses a blend of simple and complex sentences for effect. Draw attention to how the extract moves from examples of simple sentences near the beginning, to complex sentences in the middle, and then back to simple ones at the end. Elicit how the simple sentences suggest a feeling of shock, while the complex ones build a sense of panic. Emphasise how the variation in sentence structure lends fluency to the writing.
5. Now hand out **Worksheet 14c** (also see **PowerPoint 14, Slide 7**) and invite students to work in pairs to rewrite the paragraph (written from the tiger's perspective). They should use a variety of simple and complex sentences for effect. If you have access to computers, you may wish to allow students to rework the paragraph on screen. (For more guidance, see 'Using ICT' in the General Guidance section, pp. 108–128.)

Plenary

Review the learning objective and success criteria (see **PowerPoint 14, Slide 2**). Give each pair of students a number and ask them to write it on their copy of **Worksheet 14c**. You will need to make sure that there is a record of the number given to each pair. Then collect the papers in and redistribute them around the class. Invite students to work quickly in groups of four to identify the most effective rewritten paragraph in their group. Ask them to think about the reasons for their choice. Then direct each group to join another, forming a group of eight, and to compare the two selected paragraphs, again selecting the most effective. The final selection should then be passed forward and shared as a class. Lead a brief discussion about how the paragraphs are effective, referring back to the learning objective and success criteria.

Homework / Extension

Direct students to complete one of the following activities.

Either Students select another paragraph from the full extract from *Life of Pi* and explain how the writer varies the sentence structure to create tension.

Or Students recap on the definition of a compound sentence, find an example from the full extract from *Life of Pi* and comment on its effect.