



Aiming for Levels 5 to 7 – Lesson 14

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

Success criteria

AF	Level 5 / All students can ...	Level 6 / Most students can ...	Level 7 / Some students can ...
WAF5	Vary sentence length, structure and subject for clarity and emphasis	Alternate between simple and complex sentences for purpose and effect	Deliberately design sentences for purpose and effect

Resources

Texts	Worksheets / Other
<i>Life of Pi</i> novel extract (<i>Student's Book</i> , p. 35)	Worksheet 14 (Levels 5–7, Lesson 14) Coloured or highlighter pens
Resource CD-ROM (see pp. 4–5)	Additional suggestions
PowerPoint 14 (Levels 5–7, Lesson 14) <i>Life of Pi</i> novel extract – PDF and plain text PDF Image bank	
Related lessons	
Levels 4 to 6, Lesson 14 – pp. 34–35 – finds students examining sentence structure in a short extract from <i>Life of Pi</i> before rewriting a sample paragraph for effect.	
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 writing a paragraph of their own.

Starter

Either Elicit definitions and examples of simple and complex sentences from the class. (See **PowerPoint 14, Slide 3**.)

Or Quickly recap on the definitions of simple and complex sentences (see **PowerPoint 14, Slide 3**). Then put students into pairs. Give pairs one minute to find one example of each sentence structure from the extract from the novel *Life of Pi* (*Student's Book*, p. 35). Increase the challenge by asking that the examples are adjacent sentences; for example, 'I could hardly breathe. If there hadn't been the lifebuoy I wouldn't have lasted a minute.' Then invite pairs to compare findings with another pair. You may wish to take brief feedback as a class.

Main / Development

1. Explain to the class that the novel *Life of Pi* is famous for its unusual subject matter, but also its very imaginative written style. As a class, read the full extract from the novel.
2. Now establish the learning objective and success criteria (see **PowerPoint 14, Slide 2**). Tell students that, in this lesson, they will be studying a shorter extract from the novel in order to improve their own writing style. They will then write a paragraph of their own, focusing on using a range of sentence structures for effect.
3. Hand out **Worksheet 14** and explain that students are going to work in pairs to colour code the extract, highlighting the simple and complex sentences. Tell pairs to decide on one colour for simple sentences and one for complex sentences, and then to identify as many examples of each as possible. Encourage them to note down any other interesting features of sentence structure as they work through the extract. If you have access to computers, you may wish to allow students to annotate the extract on screen. (For more guidance on annotating text, see 'Using ICT' in the General Guidance section, pp. 108–128.)
4. Share findings briefly as a class, discussing why varying the sentence structure is effective. (Also see **PowerPoint 14, Slide 4**.) 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 return to the full extract from *Life of Pi*. Direct students, either working individually or in small groups, to find other examples of effective variation in sentence structure. Ask them to think carefully about the effect that is created and how it is achieved. Give students a time limit in which to complete the task, and then take feedback, sharing and discussing the examples identified.
6. Direct students to write their own paragraph, from the perspective of the tiger in the lifeboat. Explain that they should aim to alternate between simple and complex sentences to create a sense of tension. You may wish to model a few sentences for the class, inviting students to make suggestions as you write (also see **PowerPoint 14, Slide 5**); for example, *I was hungry. Although I felt seasick, I could smell the boy ...*

Plenary

Review the learning objective and success criteria (see **PowerPoint 14, Slide 2**). Then invite students to swap their paragraph with a partner. Give students a few minutes to redraft their partner's paragraph, changing sentence structures or word sequences for effect. (Again, access to ICT may be useful here; see the section on annotating text in the General Guidance section, pp. 108–128.) If students find nothing in their partner's work to improve, ask them to highlight a particularly effective example of varied sentence structure and prepare to explain what makes it effective.

Pairs should then share original and redrafted versions, decide on which (or which parts) are most effective and why. You may wish to share findings briefly as a class.

Homework / Extension

Direct students to complete one of the following activities.

Either Students find another passage from the full extract from *Life of Pi* and rewrite it from the tiger's perspective, varying sentence structure for effect.

Or Students work in pairs to identify the most effective example of variation in sentence structure they can find from any of the texts in the *Student's Book*.