

## *Varying Sentence Structure*

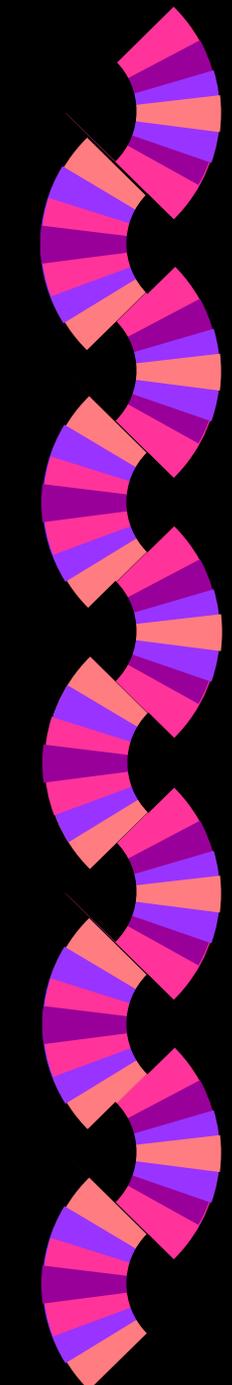
**TPS:** What is wrong with this paragraph?

The boy walked up to the house. The boy stared in through window. He saw a large room with a fireplace at one end. It was covered in fine powdery dust. There were cobwebs draped elaborately from the furniture and a huge table in the centre held a vase filled with dead flowers. The boy was frightened by what he saw and started to run.....



*Objective: To vary the structure of sentences by using a number of techniques*

**TPS:** What techniques can you use to vary the starts of sentences and the length of sentences?



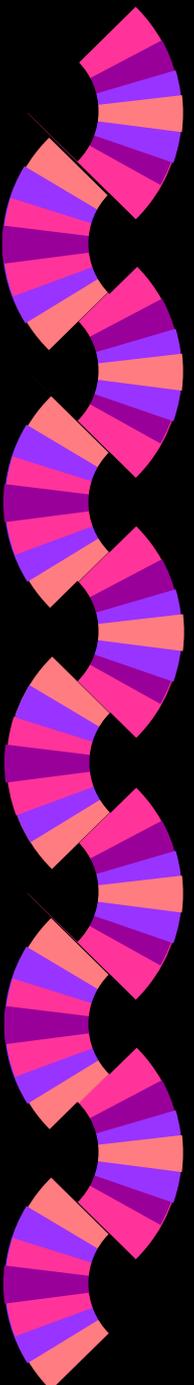
# *Varying sentence starters*

## **Varying Sentence Openers**

If you look at the sentence structures in any piece of writing—from novels to news articles—you'll be sure to notice one thing: sentence variety is the key to writing that flows easily from one sentence to the next.

If you structure all the sentences in a paragraph the same way, your paragraph will sound boring and repetitive.

**Altering the way in which your own sentences begin is one way to introduce sentence variety and improve the flow of your writing.**



*Have a look at some of the ways to vary your sentence openings*

*START WITH AN ABSOLUTE PHRASE*

*All things considered, it was a good day*

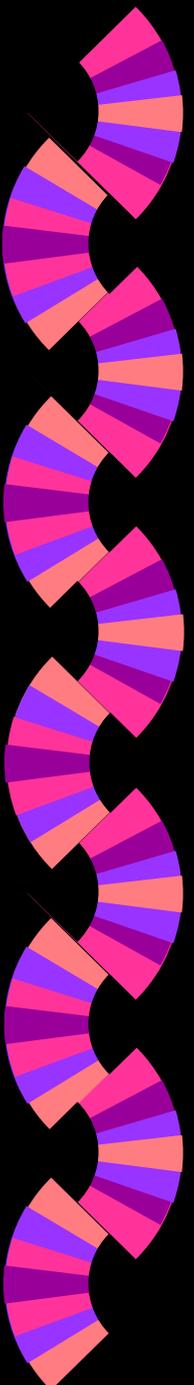
*Finally, it was over*

*All in all, the news was taken well*

You can also use more than one of these options, as in the following example:

*Quickly, without fanfare, Paul handed out the gifts.*

**TPS:** Can you make up another sentence using more than one absolute phrase?



## *START WITH A VERB*

*Shouting* his dog's name, Ross headed for the park.

*Cooked* to perfection, my father's meal beckoned us to eat.

*Walking* to the door, I ventured inside the room.

*Strolling* through the park, he noticed the sign.

Have a go at moving the verb to the beginning of the following. Underline the main verb (doing word) first. Don't forget to use the comma to mark your clause.

*E.g I ran through the forest in search of an escape .....would become Running through the forest, in search of an escape.*

Try the following:

1. I walked over to the window and looked inside the room.
2. I yelled at the boy to some back and then followed him down the alleyway.
3. I hoped that someone would find me and lay down on the pile of leaves to rest.
4. I entered the building in attempt to find the lost puppy.



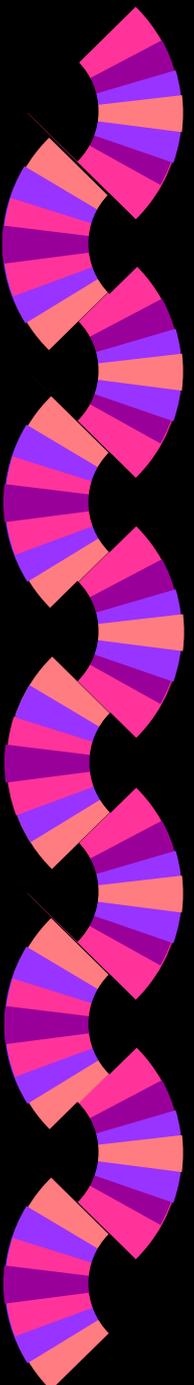
## Start with Adjectives or Adverbs

*Deep green, and shiny,* the emerald sparkled in the jeweller's case. (adjectives - describing words)

*Loudly and insistently,* my mother called me to dinner. (adverbs - describe a verb)

Using a thesaurus, come up with as many sentences using adjectives and adverbs.

*Points for the most ambitious vocabulary and correct punctuation*



## START WITH A PREPOSITION

Prepositions tell the reader the position of something

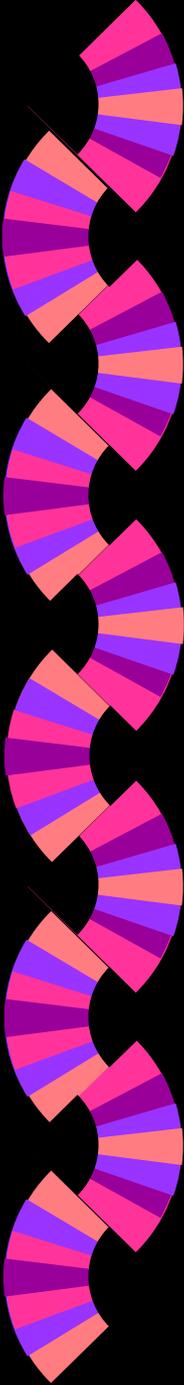
For example

*During* rush hour, I avoid the motorway.

*Over* in the corner stood a small child.

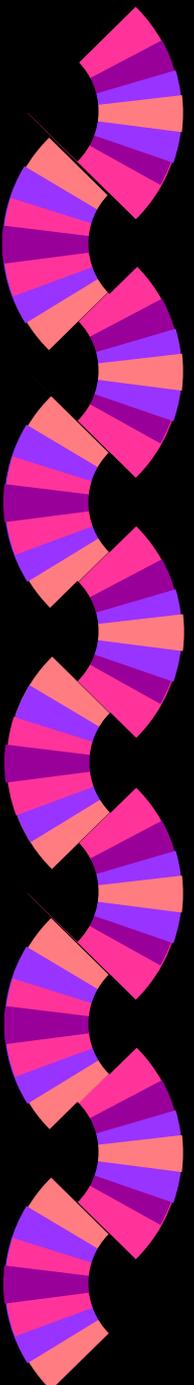
*Under* the bridge was dark and cold.

How many other prepositions can you come up with?



# *Prepositions*

Around the .....Over by .....On top of.....After .....  
Before.....In ...Outside.....Later.....Under.....Between



## *Test yourself*

Have a go at the following paragraph and improve it by adding prepositions, adverbs, verbs, adjectives and perhaps an absolute phrase.

As I wandered outside the theatre, the air was chilly. I glanced back quickly and wondered if the tall stranger was still following me. I tried to see what he was carrying but could not make it out in the thick blanket of darkness. I looked down nervously at the round stone that lay in my hand and saw that it was glowing blue and clear like glass. It started to feel incredibly hot in my grasp and I pushed it inside my pocket. I knew that if I did not hurry then all would be lost and the plan would fail. Safety lay around the next corner and I realised it was up to me alone to save the day!