



Using Sentence Length For Effect Teaching Ideas

Learning Objective:

To understand how writers use sentence length for effect.

Success Criteria:

- To identify short sentences in a text and discuss why they are effective.
- To punctuate a piece of writing to include long and short sentences to create effect.
- To produce your own piece of creative writing making good use of long and short sentences for effect.

Context

This is the first lesson of the new topic and introduces pupils to using sentence lengths to achieve a particular effect. Pupils are asked to analyse an existing text before producing an example of their own. This lesson can be used in isolation; the worksheets mentioned can be used for the entirety of the lesson if workbooks aren't available.

Video Disclaimer

This resource contains links to external video websites which often have autoplay features - you should disable this feature before using the video in any classroom setting. Twinkl assumes no responsibility for the contents of linked websites. The inclusion of any link in this resource should not be taken as an endorsement of any kind by Twinkl of the linked website. We have no control over the availability of linked pages and cannot assume responsibility for links that are not working.

Starter

Put the PowerPoint **Varying Your Sentence Structure Using Sentence Length for Effect** on the board and show the image of an approaching tsunami.

- Ask students to write down what thoughts and feelings they might experience if they were on the beach watching it approach.
- A video clip would also work well here to show students what a tsunami looks like and the devastation they can cause. There are some good examples available on YouTube, such as:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oWzdgBNfhQU&t=48s>
(please check the content of this link prior to teaching).

Main Activities

Identify the Short Sentences

This task would work best in pairs, but could also be done individually. Students could just read and copy from the PowerPoint, or they could write directly onto the **Using Sentence Length for Effect 1 Worksheet**. Students read the short extract, which describes an approaching tsunami and copy down the short sentences used for effect. In pairs, they should discuss the effect of these sentences and how they create a sense of panic, fear and shock.

Short Sentences for Effect

This task would work best as an individual task, but could be done in pairs with less able students.

Students choose one of the short sentences they have identified and write a PEE chain explaining why it is effective. An example has been provided on the PowerPoint and a structure for writing is provided further down on the **Using Sentence Length for Effect 1 Worksheet**. Students can copy from the PowerPoint or write directly onto the worksheet.

More able students could extend their PEE chain to include more of the sentences with explanations of how the individual examples are effective.

Punctuate for Effect

This activity would work best as an individual task, but could be done in pairs. Students are presented with the next part of the narrative, but with the punctuation removed. Students need to add punctuation to create a mixture of long and short sentences for effect. The text can be copied from the PowerPoint or, again, be found on the **Using Sentence Length for Effect 1 Worksheet**. There are several possibilities for this, but one has been included in the PowerPoint as an example – it could be useful to discuss any variations. More able students could continue the narrative at this point making use of a variety of sentence lengths for effect.

The Effect of Longer Sentences

This would work best as an individual task, but could be done in pairs. The PowerPoint has three longer sentences underlined. Students should write a PEE chain explaining the effect of any two of these longer sentences and how they create the sense of things being out of control, the sense of time dragging and the narrator's suffering being prolonged. This can be copied from the PowerPoint or written directly onto **Using Sentence Length for Effect 1**.

Your Turn

This would be best done as an individual task, but could be done in pairs with less able students. This is an opportunity to recap the effect of long/short sentences in a piece of writing. Students then need to apply this knowledge to a piece of creative writing of their own where they are being chased by a hungry, flesh-eating zombie. In this piece of writing, students should aim to use a variety of long and short sentences for effect at various points. The task could be completed in students' books or on the **Using Sentence Length for Effect 2 Worksheet**. More able students could aim to use a variety of different sentence beginnings for effect too, such as: starting with an ...ly word, and ...ed word or an ...ing word.

Plenary

Students should swap books/activity sheets with a partner. They should identify one long sentence used for effect and one short sentence used for effect. More able students may be pushed to write a PEE chain explaining what effect one of these sentences has on the reader.