

Grammar for Middle School

A Sentence-Composing Approach— A Student Worktext

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A review of the fourteen sentence-composing tools in the writing of J. K. Rowling, author of the Harry Potter novels. After reviewing the tools, you will use a variety of those tools to revise a paragraph and then to write an original episode for the Harry Potter story.	

Acknowledgments

As you work through this worktext, you will learn grammatical tools of professional writers. As a result, you will create your own toolbox for composing sentences, develop your own writing style, and discover your own voice as a writer, while lastingly hearing the whispering of other voices—Michael Crichton’s, J. R. R. Tolkien’s, C. S. Lewis’, J. K. Rowling’s—and the hundreds of others on the following pages.

We thank all those writers whose model sentences transform literature into a legacy of lessons, providing for you voices of enduring value, voices that will help you discover your own.

Imitating the Grammar of the Greats

Why are the sentences of great authors more interesting, more memorable than the sentences of most people? One big reason is that their sentences are not monotonously built alike. Great authors and not-so-great writers use the same grammar—just in different ways. A huge difference is in the way those authors build their sentences. Authors build their sentences in lots of different ways. The purpose of this worktext is to learn those ways by acquiring the grammatical tools of authors and using those tools to build better sentences.

Look at the varied ways these sentences are built by J. K. Rowling, author of the Harry Potter novels:

1. He raised the wand above his head and brought it swishing down through the dusty air as a stream of red and gold sparks shot from the end like a firework, throwing dancing spots of light onto the walls.

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone

2. Fifty years before, at daybreak on a fine summer's morning, when the Riddle House had still been well kept and impressive, a maid had entered the drawing room to find all three Riddles dead.

Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets

3. Harry paced the bedroom waiting for Hedwig to come back, his head pounding, his brain too busy for sleep even though his eyes stung and itched with tiredness.

Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix

In the pages of this worktext, you will analyze, study, and then imitate the sentences of J. K. Rowling and many other authors of books often read by students in the middle grades—including Michael Crichton (*Jurassic Park*), J. R. R. Tolkien (*The Lord of the Rings*), C. S. Lewis (*The Chronicles of Narnia*)—to learn and practice and use in your writing fourteen grammatical tools for building your own sentences in better ways. With the many practices in *Grammar for Middle School: A Sentence-Composing Approach*, you can create your own personal toolbox of sentence-composing tools.

And guess what? By the end of the worktext, if you learn the fourteen magical tools covered, you will be able to write sentences built just like ones by J. K. Rowling! How? The secret is learning to imitate the grammatical tools of authors for building good sentences. In the following pages, you'll learn how.

Okay, let's get started on your way to building better—*much better*—sentences. All you need to succeed is your determination to learn to build sentences the way authors like Michael Crichton, J. R. R. Tolkien, C. S. Lewis, and J. K. Rowling build theirs.

Imitating the Grammar of the Greats

Chunking to Imitate

In these exercises you will become aware of meaningful divisions within sentences, an awareness you'll need to imitate model sentences. You will learn that authors compose their sentences one "chunk" or meaningful sentence part at a time.

Directions (Part One): From each pair of sentences below, select the sentence that is divided into meaningful chunks and copy it on your paper.

1a. He was still there / in front of the window, / staring at the saddle, / when two cowhands / came out / of the nearest saloon.

1b. He was / still there in front of / the window, staring at / the saddle, when two / cowhands came out of the / nearest saloon.

Hal Borland, *When the Legends Die*

2a. Then she turned away / from my curious stare / and left the room, / crying.

2b. Then she turned / away from my curious / stare and left the / room, crying.

Christy Brown, *My Left Foot*

3a. Shiloh's under the / sycamore, head on his paws, just / like the day he followed me home.

3b. Shiloh's under the sycamore, / head on his paws, / just like the day he followed me home.

Phyllis Reynolds Naylor, *Shiloh*

Directions (Part Two): Copy each model sentence below and then copy the sentence that can be divided into chunks that match the chunks in the model.

1. MODEL: I decided / not to open my eyes, / not to get out of bed.

Rosa Guy, *The Friends*

a. Running to catch the bus, I fell and dropped my books.

b. I wanted only to get the best grade, only to be the best in the class.

2. MODEL: Soon a glow began / in the dark, / a tiny circle barely red.

Joseph Krumboltz, *Onion John*

Imitating the Grammar of the Greats

- a. Then a sound came through the night, a small rustle hardly heard.
 - b. We planned carefully for the party, wanting it to be a success.
3. MODEL: Finally, / I sit on a log, / put my gun at my feet, / and wait.

Phyllis Reynolds Naylor, *Shiloh*

- a. Wondering what to do next, I just lean against the wall and stare into the sky.
- b. Occasionally, I walk down the path, carry my camera around my neck, and look.

Directions (Part Three): Copy the model and then copy the sentence that imitates it. Then chunk both the model and the sentence that imitates it into meaningful sentence parts, using a slash mark (/).

1. MODEL: His face was bloody, his shirt torn and bloody down the front.

Hal Borland, *When the Legends Die*

- a. The day was perfect, the sky blue and perfect in the heavens.
 - b. His sister married someone they didn't know, a stranger to the family.
2. MODEL: Big, rough teenagers jostled through the crowd, their sleeves rolled high enough to show off blue and red tattoos.

Robert Lipsyte, *The Contender*

- a. An old, large man reached for the available chair and sat down, huffing and puffing, before I could get there.
- b. Silent, silver fish moved through the tank, their bodies sleek enough to suggest larger and more dangerous predators.

Directions (Part Four): Match the model with the sentence that most closely imitates it. Copy both sentences. Then chunk both, using a slash (/) between sentence parts. Finally, write your own imitation of each model.

1. MODEL: Then, stomach down on the bed, he began to draw.

Katherine Paterson, *Bridge to Terabithia*

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

Betsy Byars, *The Summer of the Swans*

Imitating the Grammar of the Greats

IMITATIONS

- a. Carefully, embarrassed by her mistake, she had repeated the process and done it correctly.
- b. Later, knapsack high on his back, he ran to catch up.

Unscrambling to Imitate

The unscrambling of sentence parts helps you see how those parts are connected within the model sentence. As a result, you will glimpse the mind of an author composing a sentence so you can go through a similar process when you compose sentences.

Directions: Unscramble the sentence parts to imitate the model. Then write your own sentence that imitates the model.

1. MODEL: When I awoke, there were snowflakes on my eyes.

Charles Portis, *True Grit*

- a. in the sky
- b. there was a rainbow
- c. after the rain stopped

2. MODEL: Drawn by the scent of fish, the wild dogs sat on the hill, barking and growling at each other.

Scott O'Dell, *Island of the Blue Dolphins*

- a. yelping and trembling with delight
- b. covered with mud from the yard
- c. the frisky puppy rolled on the carpet

3. MODEL: Then she swung the switch five more times and, discovering Little Man had no intention of crying, ordered him up.

Mildred D. Taylor, *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*

- a. one more time and
- b. walked away
- c. then he checked the crime scene
- d. finding the suspect had been telling the truth

4. MODEL: The girls of her class nearly fought to hang out around her, to walk away with her, to beam flatteringly, to be her special friend.

Katherine Mansfield, *The Doll House*

Imitating the Grammar of the Greats

- a. really tried to make his best effort with the team
- b. to keep up with the them
- c. to be his absolute best
- d. the boy of smallest size
- e. to work tirelessly

Combining to Imitate

These exercises ask you to combine a series of plain sentences into just one varied sentence by changing the plain sentences into sentence parts resembling the model sentence. As you do these exercises, you'll become aware that plain sentences can easily be changed into sentence parts of better, more varied sentences.

Directions: Combine the sentences below to create a single sentence that has the same order of sentence parts as the model. You may eliminate some words to do so. Then write your own imitation of the model.

1. MODEL: The children, shouting and screaming, came charging back into their homeroom.

Rosa Guy, *The Friends*

- a. The ponies were neighing.
- b. The ponies were pawing.
- c. The ponies came bolting out of their stalls.

2. MODEL: As Seabiscuit broke from the gate, he was immediately bashed inward by Count Atlas, a hopeless long shot emerging from the stall on Seabiscuit's right.

Laura Hillenbrand, *Seabiscuit: An American Legend*

- a. Something happened as the car backed out of the space.
- b. What happened was that it was suddenly hit sideways.
- c. The hit was by an oncoming truck.
- d. The truck was a delivery pickup.
- e. The pickup was coming from the alley behind the market.

3. MODEL: A light kindled in the sky, a blaze of yellow fire behind dark barriers.

J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*

- a. A noise erupted.
- b. The noise erupted from the forest.
- c. The noise was a screech.
- d. The screech was of angry ravens.
- e. The ravens were in decaying trees.

Imitating the Grammar of the Greats

4. MODEL: He knew the bears would soon be leaving their winter dens, to travel, to claim their old ranges, to challenge intruders, and to fight their fearful battles among themselves.

Hal Borland, *When the Legends Die*

- a. She knew something about the students.
- b. She knew they would soon be entering their new classrooms.
- c. The students would be entering the classrooms to learn.
- d. They would also be entering them to take new courses.
- e. They would also be entering them to make new friends.
- f. And they would be entering them to discover their identities as young adults.

Imitating the Grammar of the Greats

Imitating Alone

Once you have learned how to imitate professional sentences, you will be able to easily imitate almost any professional sentence just by seeing how the model is built and then building your own sentence in a similar way.

Directions: Choose one of the models and write an imitation of the entire sentence, one sentence part at a time. See if your classmates can guess your model.

Models:

1. He was white and shaking, / his mouth opening and shutting / without words.
Leslie Morris, "Three Shots for Charlie Beston"
2. Now, / leaning his head out of the window / of the pickup, / he thought he would die of thirst.
Katherine Paterson, *Park's Quest*
3. Hobbling on one foot, / Wanda opened the closet door / and turned on the light.
Betsy Byars, *The Summer of the Swans*
4. Propped on her elbows / with her chin in her fists, / she stared at the black wolf, / trying to catch his eye.
Jean Craighead George, *Julie of the Wolves*

Using the Sentence-Composing Toolbox

The sentence-composing toolbox on the following pages is the heart of this worktext. It provides instruction in and varied practices with tools that professional writers use in their sentences so that you can learn to use those tools within your own writing. No tool is more difficult than the others. Although some may be new to you, all of them are easy to learn.

Format for Each of the Tools

Definition—A concise, clear grammatical description of the tool, often presented with tips to identify the tool.

Examples—Professional sentences containing the tool in **bold type**.

Sentence Bank—A list of six model sentences: three with a single example of the tool, three with multiple examples.

Varied Practices—After an introductory matching exercise, the sentence-composing techniques—unscrambling, combining, imitating, expanding—vary the ways in which the tool is practiced.

Creative Writing—Designed to improve paragraphs through building better sentences, this activity applies the new tool and others you’ve already learned within your own writing, without imitating. Previous practices in imitating will help because you can use tools like the ones in the professional models you imitated.

Imitating Sentences of the Pros

In the following practices, through imitating professional sentences you’ll build your sentences to resemble sentences of published authors, using the “grammar of the greats.”

Prewriting

As you plan your sentences, jot down several ideas for interesting content, maybe something from a book, movie, TV show, current or historical event, or a topic from a piece of writing you are working on in school.

Rewriting

Another possibility is to revise something you’ve already written for any class or something you wrote on your own. To revise, compose a sentence imitation to include in that piece.

Using the Sentence-Composing Toolbox

Becoming a Pro

When you decide what to write about, consider yourself a professional author, a pro! Through several revisions, make the content as “professional” as the structure you’re imitating. Compose a memorable sentence to share with your classmates!

Sentence-Composing Tools: Opening Adjective

DEFINITION

An adjective at the opening of a sentence. The adjective may be a single adjective or the first word in an adjective phrase. A comma follows an opening adjective.

Single adjective: **Comfortable**, I lay on my back and waited for sleep, and while waiting I thought of Dill.

Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird*

Adjective phrase: **Able to move now**, he rocked his own body back and forth, breathing deeply to release the remembered pain.

Lois Lowry, *The Giver*

Single Opening Adjectives:

1. **Rigid**, I began climbing the rungs, slightly reassured by having Finny right behind me.

John Knowles, *A Separate Peace*

2. **Hungry**, Thomas ate two portions of meat, nothing else.

Hal Borland, *When the Legends Die*

3. **Always meticulously neat**, six-year-old Little Man never allowed dirt or tears or stains to mar anything he owned.

Mildred D. Taylor, *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*

Multiple Opening Adjectives:

4. **Slow and lumbering**, he looked as if he had slept in his clothes, and in fact he often did, after a marathon programming session.

Michael Crichton, *Prey*

5. **Rain-drenched, fresh, vital, full of life**, spring enveloped all of us.

Mildred D. Taylor, *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*

Using the Sentence-Composing Toolbox

6. **Certain of herself, certain of her friends in the house, certain of her voice and her success,** Carlotta flung herself into her part without restraint of modesty.

Gaston Leroux, *The Phantom of the Opera*

PRACTICE 1: MATCHING

Match the opening adjectives at the caret (^) with the sentences. Write out each sentence, inserting and underlining them.

Sentences:

Opening Adjectives:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. ^ the boy leaped forward and grabbed the ball from Charles Wallace's hand, then darted back into the shadows.
Madeleine L'Engle, <i>A Wrinkle in Time</i> | a. Prissy like a girl, |
| 2. ^ he was seated upon a throne which was at the same time both simple and majestic.
Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, <i>The Little Prince</i> | b. Clad in royal purple and ermine, |
| 3. ^ Romey folded his hands in his lap and closed his eyes.
Bill and Vera Cleaver, <i>Where the Lilies Bloom</i> | c. Deeper and deeper, darker and darker, |
| 4. ^ they sloshed through the cavernous sewer.
Sid Fleischman, <i>The Whipping Boy</i> | d. Quick as a flash, |
| 5. ^ the rabbit paddled and struggled, got his head up and took a breath, scrabbled his claws against rough bricks under water and lost them again as he was dragged on.
Richard Adams, <i>Watership Down</i> | e. Full of fear, |

Using the Sentence-Composing Toolbox

PRACTICE 2: UNSCRAMBLING TO IMITATE

In the model and the scrambled list, identify the opening adjective. Next, unscramble and write out the sentence parts to imitate the model. Finally, write your own imitation of the model and identify the opening adjective.

MODEL: Desperate, Frodo drew his own sword, and it seemed to him that it flickered red, as if it were a firebrand.

J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*

- a. that the board shook violently
- b. and it appeared to him
- c. as if it were a trampoline
- d. nervous
- e. Jackson walked the diving board

PRACTICE 3: COMBINING TO IMITATE

In the model, identify the opening adjective. Next, combine the list of sentences to imitate the model (you may omit some words). Finally, write your own imitation of the model and identify the opening adjective.

MODEL: Curious, Captain Cook started walking round and round the tripod, until the clothesline, the penguin, Mr. Popper and the tripod were all tangled up.

Richard and Florence Atwater, *Mr. Popper's Penguins*

- a. Lewis was late.
- b. Lewis began running faster and faster to homeroom class.
- c. This continued until something happened.
- d. What happened was that the vice principal, the hall duty teacher, and his homeroom teacher were all summoned there.

Using the Sentence-Composing Toolbox

PRACTICE 4: IMITATING

Identify the opening adjectives in the models and sample imitations. Then choose one of the models and write an imitation of the entire sentence, one sentence part at a time. See if your classmates can guess your model.

Models:

1. Cheerful and exuberant, he was the kind of fellow to slap a man on the back with a greeting.

Oscar Hijuelos, *The Fourteen Sisters of Emilio Montez O'Brien*

Sample: Lighthearted and optimistic, she was the sort of child to spread sunshine in a gathering through her smile.

2. Numb of all feeling, empty as a shell, still he clung to life, and the hours droned by.

Armstrong Sperry, *Call It Courage*

Sample: Full of vivid colors, vibrant as a rainbow, soon the garden burst into bloom, and the visitors lined up.

3. Arrestingly handsome, George had dark blonde hair that cruised back from a part he kept just a nudge off center, as was the fashion.

Laura Hillenbrand, *Seabiscuit: An American Legend*

Sample: Disturbingly quiet, Sarah had large somber eyes that looked out from a face she left unadorned every day, as was her habit.

PRACTICE 5: EXPANDING

Below are sentences with the opening adjectives omitted at the caret mark (^). For each caret, add an opening adjective (word or phrase), blending your content and style with the rest of the sentence.

1. ^, now soaked all down her front, Tisha pushed onward.

Stephen King, *The Girl Who Loved Tom Gordon*

Using the Sentence-Composing Toolbox

2. ^, Roger sought a way out.

Tom Wolfe, *A Man in Full*

3. ^, they jumped first on Teft.

Glendon Swarthout, *Bless the Beasts and the Children*

CREATIVE WRITING

Composing a paragraph—Pretend that you are one of the professional writers listed below who has written the first sentence of a long story. Use one of the sentences as the first sentence in a paragraph that will begin that story. Create the rest of the paragraph. Just as the writers' sentences use opening adjectives, within your paragraph use opening adjectives and other sentence-composing tools you've learned to make your paragraph memorable.

Reminder: Don't try to write a complete story. Write only the first paragraph of that story. (Maybe later you'll want to write the entire story!)

1. **Rigid with fear**, sitting up in bed, I stared helplessly as a face rose up in the moonlit window.

R. L. Stine, *Ghost Beach*

2. **Deep in the forest**, there was a green lawn, and on the lawn stood a miserable little hut on hen's legs, where lived Baba-Yaga, an old witch grandmother.

Post Wheeler, *Vasilissa the Beautiful*

3. **Full of fear**, the rabbit paddled and struggled, got his head up and took a breath, scabbled his claws against rough bricks under water and lost them again as he was dragged on.

Richard Adams, *Watership Down*

Sentence-Composing Tools: Delayed Adjective

DEFINITION

An adjective placed after the word described. The adjective may be a single adjective or the first word in an adjective phrase. Commas punctuate and separate the delayed adjectives or adjective phrases from the other parts of the sentence: one comma if the delayed adjective ends the sentence, two if it occurs earlier.

Single adjective: He paused in his humming song, and the bear's ears stiffened, **alert**.

Hal Borland, *When the Legends Die*

Adjective phrase: Gwydion sat upright, **tense as a bowstring**.

Lloyd Alexander, *The Book of Three*

I stared at the trees, **aware of an eerie silence descending over the forest**.

Mildred D. Taylor, *Song of the Trees*

Single Delayed Adjectives:

1. A woman of fifty or so, **plump with frizzy gray hair**, came toward them.

Katherine Paterson, *Park's Quest*

2. A circle of grass, **smooth as a lawn**, met her eyes, with dark trees dancing all round it.

C. S. Lewis, *The Chronicles of Narnia*

3. Jonas felt more and more certain that the destination lay ahead of him, **very near now in the night that was approaching**.

Lois Lowry, *The Giver*

Multiple Delayed Adjectives:

4. The Indian lay there on the floor of the cupboard, **stiff and stark**.

Lynne Reid Banks, *The Indian in the Cupboard*

5. A voice suddenly shouted at me, **loud and strong and angry**, although I couldn't understand the words.

Robert Cormier, *Take Me Where the Good Times Are*

Using the Sentence-Composing Toolbox

6. The first thing Rainsford's eyes discerned was the largest man Rainsford had ever seen, a gigantic creature, **fierce as a tiger, strong, but actually gentle as a baby**.

Richard Connell, *The Most Dangerous Game*

PRACTICE 1: MATCHING

Match the delayed adjectives with the sentences. Write out each sentence, inserting the delayed adjectives at the caret (^) and underlining them.

Sentences:

1. Her eyes glared, ^, from beneath arched black wings of brows.

Lois Duncan, *A Gift of Magic*

2. Sitting beside the tree, Millie opened her packages slowly, ^.

Jean Fritz, *Homesick: My Own Story*

3. Harry looked at his mother, who had her back to him, ^.

Norman Katkov, "The Torn Invitation"

4. He surveyed the roof carefully, ^, indicating the places where it would have to be repaired.

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

5. He ate while his blanket, ^, steamed in front of the fire.

Hal Borland, *When the Legends Die*

Delayed Adjectives:

- a. still damp

- b. sharp and bright

- c. aware from the markings that someone had surveyed it before him

- d. busy at the stove

- e. careful to untie the ribbons, careful not to tear the paper

PRACTICE 2: UNSCRAMBLING TO IMITATE

In the model and the scrambled list, identify the delayed adjectives. Next, unscramble and write out the sentence parts to imitate the model. Finally, write your own imitation of the model and identify the delayed adjectives.

Using the Sentence-Composing Toolbox

MODEL: The swift-flowing clouds lifted and melted away, and the sun came out, pale and bright.

J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*

- a. opened and filled fast
- b. and the new Jaguar
- c. sleek and shiny
- d. the long-awaited car show
- e. stood out

PRACTICE 3: COMBINING TO IMITATE

In the model, identify the delayed adjectives. Next, combine the list of sentences to imitate the model. Finally, write your own imitation of the model and identify the delayed adjectives.

MODEL: She sat there, very still and white and thoughtful.

Roald Dahl, *Matilda*

- a. The cat jumped up.
- b. The cat was very silent.
- c. And the cat was black.
- d. And the cat was creepy.

PRACTICE 4: IMITATING

Identify the delayed adjectives in the models and sample imitations. Then choose one of the models and write an imitation of the entire sentence, one sentence part at a time. See if your classmates can guess your model.

Models:

1. Through her tears she could see Charles Wallace standing there, very small, very white.

Madeleine L'Engle, *A Wrinkle in Time*

Sample: Near the door he could hear the puppy whimpering outside, very softly, very sadly.

Using the Sentence-Composing Toolbox

2. The door swung wide then, and an elderly woman, frail and toothless, stepped out.

Mildred D. Taylor, *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*

Sample: The bus pulled up outside, and a small child, confident and independent, got off.

3. Jemmy gorged himself, anxious to be off and not certain when he would eat again.

Sid Fleischman, *The Whipping Boy*

Sample: Shea admired herself, careful to check everything and absolutely sure that she could look no better.

PRACTICE 5: EXPANDING

Below are sentences with the delayed adjectives omitted at the caret mark (^). For each caret, add a delayed adjective (word or phrase), blending your content and style with the rest of the sentence.

1. The raft continued on, and they smelled a peculiar odor, ^.

Michael Crichton, *Jurassic Park*

2. At one point a raven, ^, came flapping out from a bush and flew alongside us, his hoarse “tok, tok” weird and hollow.

Bill and Vera Cleaver, *Where the Lilies Bloom*

3. Laughter, ^, filled the room.

Rosa Guy, *The Friends*

CREATIVE WRITING

Revising a paragraph—To revise the plain paragraph below, at the caret marks (^) add delayed adjectives or other sentence-composing tools you’ve already learned.

“The Oldest Toy”

1. Rachel stared at her ruined doll, ^.
2. ^, she had played with that toy every day.
3. Her parents had given her other toys, ^, but she always loved this doll the most.
4. ^, she looked down at the broken doll, ^.

Using the Sentence-Composing Toolbox

5. ^, the doll lay there, and, ^, she wiped her tears away, ^.
6. Rachel knew that birthdays would bring her more presents, ^, and new toys to play with, ^, but none could replace her doll.

Write out your revision like a paragraph, not a list of sentences. Present your revised paragraph to your class to see the various effective ways you and your classmates revised the same plain paragraph to make it memorable.

Tip for Better Revising: Always, when you revise something you've written, look for places to use delayed adjectives and other sentence-composing tools to add detail, interest, and professional style to your writing.

Sentence Composing Tools: Opening Adverb

DEFINITION

An adverb at the beginning of a sentence. A comma follows an opening adverb. All adverbs give information about an action.

Adverbs that tell *how* an action happened (*quickly, slowly, rapidly*) always end in *ly*. Other adverbs tell *when* an action happened (*now, then, yesterday*), or *where* an action happened (*overhead, nearby, underneath*).

How: **Quickly**, they flung a rope with a hook towards him.

J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Hobbit*

When: **Overnight**, Jem had acquired an alien set of values and was trying to impose them on me.

Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird*

Where: **Outside**, beyond the low, white fence, a wagonette with a pair of cabs was waiting.

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

Single Opening Adverbs:

1. **Reluctantly**, the boy fastened the collar on the bear cub.

Hal Borland, *When the Legends Die*

2. **Soon**, he reached the thicket of pepper trees.

Carl Hiassen, *Hoot*

3. **Slyly**, I tried to check my teammates for any sign that they recognized the wrongness of the movement.

Pat Conroy, *My Losing Season*

Multiple Opening Adverbs:

4. **Quickly and quietly**, over the guard's head, George walked away.

Hans Augusto Rey, *Curious George*

5. **On and on**, they walked, but the view did not vary.

J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*

Using the Sentence-Composing Toolbox

6. **Instantly, obediently**, Jonas had dropped his bike on its side on the path behind his family's dwelling.

Lois Lowry, *The Giver*

PRACTICE 1: MATCHING

Match the opening adverbs with the sentences. Write out each sentence, inserting the opening adverbs at the caret (^) and underlining them.

Sentences:

1. ^ the branches rustled.

Lloyd Alexander, *The Book of Three*

2. ^ I climbed over the scraggly rocks, slippery from the evening dew.

R. L. Stine, *Ghost Beach*

3. ^ like a mother with a little child, she led the heartbroken old man out of the watchers' line of vision, out of the circle of lamplight.

F. R. Buckley, "Gold-Mounted Guns"

4. ^ the snake raised its head until its eyes were on a level with Harry's.

J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*

5. ^ she limped across the room and sat in her chair by the window.

Eleanor Coerr, *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes*

Opening Adverbs:

- a. Gently,

- b. Overhead,

- c. Slowly, very slowly,

- d. Unsteadily,

- e. Up, up,

PRACTICE 2: UNSCRAMBLING TO IMITATE

In the model and the scrambled list, identify the opening adverb. Next, unscramble and write out the sentence parts to imitate the model. Finally, write your own imitation of the model and identify the opening adverb.

Using the Sentence-Composing Toolbox

MODEL: Slowly, she slid the rest of the way down, and vanished.

Michael Crichton, *Prey*

- a. she washed the grease from the plate
- b. carefully
- c. and rinsed

PRACTICE 3: COMBINING TO IMITATE

In the model, identify the opening adverbs. Next, combine the list of sentences to imitate the model. Finally, write your own imitation of the model and identify the opening adverbs.

MODEL: Up, up, Icarus went, soaring into the bright sun.

Olivia Coolidge, *Daedalus*

- a. Around, around, Rex chased.
- b. He was circling around his own tail.

PRACTICE 4: IMITATING

Identify the opening adverbs in the models and sample imitations. Then choose one of the models and write an imitation of the entire sentence, one sentence part at a time. See if your classmates can guess your model.

Models:

1. Twice, when the train lurched, he sat up, looking around fiercely.

Robert Lipsyte, *The Contender*

Sample: Sometimes, when the sun dazzled, she went outside, playing outdoors joyfully.

2. Later, when it was time for the smaller children in the cabin to go to bed, Sounder's master got up, put on his overall jacket, and went outside.

William Armstrong, *Sounder*

Using the Sentence-Composing Toolbox

Sample: Sometimes, after it had been repeatedly announced for students to put their books away, the teacher walked forward, picked up the chalk, and wrote down names.

3. Further south, they saw the graceful necks of the apatosaurs, standing at the water's edge, their bodies mirrored in the moving surface.

Michael Crichton, *Jurassic Park*

Sample: Once daily, Jenny picked an armful of lovely flowers, strolling throughout the garden, her smile lit by the sun.

PRACTICE 5: EXPANDING

Below are sentences with the opening adverbs omitted at the caret mark (^). For each caret, add an opening adverb, blending your content and style with the rest of the sentence.

1. ^, Jonas concentrated on the screen, waiting for what would happen next.

Lois Lowry, *The Giver*

2. ^ and ^, they drove through the darkness, and though the rain stopped, the wind rushed by and whistled and made strange sounds.

Frances Hodgson Burnett, *The Secret Garden*

3. ^, ^ and ^, he got up.

Lynne Reid Banks, *The Indian in the Cupboard*

CREATIVE WRITING

Composing a paragraph—Pretend that you are one of the professional writers listed below who has written the first sentence of a long story. Use one of the sentences as the first sentence in a paragraph that will begin that story. Create the rest of the paragraph. Just as the writers' sentences use opening adverbs, within your paragraph use opening adverbs and other sentence-composing tools you've learned to make your paragraph memorable.

Reminder: Don't try to write a complete story. Write only the first paragraph of that story! (Maybe later you'll want to write the entire story!)

Using the Sentence-Composing Toolbox

1. **Outside**, she saw only a calm, beautiful night.

Walter Lord, *A Night to Remember*

2. **Suddenly**, coming out of Turn 5 on the fifth lap, the race again became a contest instead of a Sunday drive.

Gene Olson, *The Roaring Road*

3. **Then**, as quickly as it had become a tiger, the specter changed into a man with the face of a rat.

Walter Dean Myers, *Legend of Tarik*

Sentence-Composing Tools: Delayed Adverb

DEFINITION

An adverb placed after and away from the action described. All adverbs give information about an action.

Adverbs that tell *how* an action happened (*quickly, slowly, rapidly*) always end in *ly*. Other adverbs tell *when* an action happened (*now, then, yesterday*), or *where* an action happened (*overhead, nearby, underneath*).

How: The hand of the dinosaur pushed aside the ferns, **slowly**.

Michael Crichton, *Jurassic Park*

When: When I was safe in bed, I'd peek, **sometimes**.

Mercer Mayer, *There's a Nightmare in My Closet*

Where: Their path wound, **in** and **out**, through the scrub, around palmetto clumps, over trunks of fallen trees, under dwarf pines and oaks.

Lois Lenski, *Strawberry Girl*

Single Delayed Adverbs:

1. The three clouds rose up together, **smoothly**.

Michael Crichton, *Prey*

2. For a long time, Muley looked at him, **timidly**.

John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*

3. Jem opened the gate, **slowly** as possible, lifting it aside and resting it on the fence.

Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird*

Multiple Delayed Adverbs:

4. After ten minutes or so we got back in the car and drove out to the main road, **slowly** and **carefully**.

Stephen King, *Everything's Eventual*

Using the Sentence-Composing Toolbox

5. The gigantic snake was nearing Frank, and then, **incredibly, miraculously**, it passed him, following the spitting, hissing noises made by the cold voice beyond the door.

J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*

6. If Sam had looked back, he might have seen not far below Gollum turn again, and then with a wild light of madness glaring in his eyes come, **swiftly but warily**, creeping on behind, a slinking shadow among the stones.

J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*

PRACTICE 1: MATCHING

Match the delayed adverbs with the sentences. Write out each sentence, inserting the delayed adverbs at the caret (^) and underlining them.

Sentences:

Delayed Adverbs:

1. In the fishpond, the hippo belched, ^.

- a. high and sweetly

Hugo Leon, "My Father and the Hippopotamus"

2. She watched the children troop in, ^, an ancient nursery rhyme running through her head.

- b. noiselessly and smoothly

Mary Elizabeth Vroman, "See How They Run"

3. His body glided quietly across the room, ^.

- c. not softly

John Steinbeck, *The Pearl*

4. Someone was humming under her breath, ^.

- d. suddenly and grimly

Ray Bradbury, *The Martian Chronicles*

5. Jonas, ^, remembered the time in his childhood when he had been chastised for misusing a word.

- e. very noisily

Lois Lowry, *The Giver*

Using the Sentence-Composing Toolbox

PRACTICE 2: UNSCRAMBLING TO IMITATE

In the model and the scrambled list, identify the delayed adverb. Next, unscramble and write out the sentence parts to imitate the model. Finally, write your own imitation of the model and identify the delayed adverb.

MODEL: Alfred moved on, quickly, angry at the sudden sting in his eyes, and the sudden emptiness in his stomach.

Robert Lipsyte, *The Contender*

- a. cautiously
- b. and her status with the class
- c. the new student walked in
- d. uncertain about her admission to the school

PRACTICE 3: COMBINING TO IMITATE

In the model, identify the delayed adverb. Next, combine the list of sentences to imitate the model. Finally, write your own imitation of the model and identify the delayed adverb.

MODEL: When the bell rang for recess, he put on his red jacket and walked alone, outside.

Louis Sachar, *There's a Boy in the Girl's Bathroom*

- a. This happened after his mother called her son for dinner.
- b. What happened was Patrick put away his bicycle.
- c. And Patrick came inside.
- d. He came inside eagerly.

PRACTICE 4: IMITATING

Identify the delayed adverbs in the models and sample imitations. Then choose one of the models and write an imitation of the entire sentence, one sentence part at a time. See if your classmates can guess your model.

Using the Sentence-Composing Toolbox

Models:

1. He barked once, severely.

Stephen King, *Needful Things*

Sample: He turned away, guiltily.

2. He spoke on, firmly and clearly, with such joyful enthusiasm that Eilonwy had no heart to stop him.

Lloyd Alexander, *The High King*

Sample: Sammy edged forward, slowly and reluctantly, with such awful dread that his dad had no desire to encourage him.

3. Griffin was light and fast, his gloves a red blur tapping away at Alfred's face, easily and steadily as rain on a roof.

Robert Lipsyte, *The Contender*

Sample: The painting was striking and quirky, its colors a kaleidoscope bursting off of the canvas, raucously and dramatically as art in your face.

PRACTICE 5: EXPANDING

Below are sentences with the delayed adverbs omitted at the caret mark (^). For each caret, add a delayed adverb, blending your content and style with the rest of the sentence.

1. As the bull reached the cape, the man swung it alongside, ^.

Maia Wojciechowska, *Shadow of a Bull*

2. The tyrannosaur's head moved close to the car, ^, and peered in.

Michael Crichton, *Jurassic Park*

3. Finally, when he stood up, ^ and ^, his face was as hard and tight as wood, and his eyes were hard.

John Steinbeck, *Of Mice and Men*

Using the Sentence-Composing Toolbox

CREATIVE WRITING

Revising a paragraph—To revise the plain paragraph below, at the caret marks (^) add delayed adverbs or other sentence-composing tools you’ve already learned.

“The Corner”

1. Jason, ^, raced out of the house into the rain, ^.
2. ^, the school bus was approaching his corner.
3. Other children, nearer the bus stop, were strolling, ^, toward that corner.
4. Under umbrellas, children huddled, ^, as they waited for its arrival.
5. The bus, ^, finally pulled up and stopped, ^.
6. ^, Jason got there just in time before it pulled away.

Write out your revision like a paragraph, not a list of sentences. Present your revised paragraph to your class to see the various effective ways you and your classmates revised the same plain paragraph to make it memorable.

Tip for Better Revising: Always, when you revise something you’ve written, look for places to use delayed adverbs and other sentence-composing tools to add detail, interest, and professional style to your writing.

Using the Sentence-Composing Toolbox

REVIEWING THE TOOLS: MICHAEL CRICHTON'S *JURASSIC PARK*

Directions: Using these abbreviations, identify the underlined tools. If you need to review the tool, study the pages listed below.

Words	Review These Pages
opening adjective = OADJ	pages 12–16
delayed adjective = DADJ	pages 18–22
opening adverb = OADV	pages 24–28
delayed adverb = DADV	pages 30–37

REVIEW 1: IDENTIFYING

Directions: Write the abbreviation of the underlined tool. Each sentence illustrates either an opening adjective (OADJ) or an opening adverb (OADV).

1. Immediately, the little lizard sprang up, leaping over Grant's head into Tim's arms.
2. High in the branches, he had a good view of the forest, the tops of the trees extending away to his left and right.
3. Nervous at most times, Arnold was especially edgy now.
4. Outside, lightning flashed, and there was the sharp crack of thunder.
5. Then, they smelled the odor of the dead goat, a garbage stench of putrefaction and decay that drifted up the hillside toward them.

Directions: Write the abbreviation of the underlined tool. Each sentence illustrates either a delayed adjective (DADJ) or a delayed adverb (DADV).

6. Amid the ferns, Grant saw the head of an animal, motionless, partially hidden in the fronds, the two large dark eyes watching him coldly.
7. The head of the tyrannosaur pulled away, abruptly.
8. The tyrannosaur's head moved close to the car, sideways, and peered in.
9. She was walking along, just looking around, calmly.
10. Moving slowly among the orderly green rectangular tables, silent as a ghost except for the hissing of its breath, was a velociraptor.

Using the Sentence-Composing Toolbox

REVIEW 2: IMITATING

The model sentences below contain the four tools you just reviewed—*opening adjective*, *opening adverb*, *delayed adjective*, *delayed adverb*—as well as other kinds of sentence-composing tools. For each model sentence, write the letter of the sentence below that imitates it. Then write your own imitation of each model.

Model Sentences:

1. He stretched out his hands, blindly, frantically, waving them in the air to ward off the attack from the dinosaur he knew was coming.
2. Big lizards like the five-foot Komodo dragons of Indonesia have been clocked at thirty miles an hour, fast enough to run down a man.
3. Ahead, Grant saw an island, rugged and craggy, rising sharply from the ocean.
4. The sound floated toward them again, soft as a sigh.
5. Abruptly, with a metallic scraping shriek, the car fell from the tyrannosaur's jaws, sickeningly, and Tim's stomach heaved in the moment before the world became totally black, and silent.

Imitations:

- A. Outside, Maura heard a sound, high-pitched and shrill, coming apparently from the yard.
- B. Kowalski reached for the baseball bat, uncertainly, nervously, taking it into his hands to thwart the victory of the opponents he felt was nearing.
- C. Certain antique cars like the model-T Fords of Detroit have been restored at great expense to their owners, expensive enough to buy three brand-new automobiles.
- D. Then, with a frenzied whirling motion, the leaves blew through the front yard, haphazardly, and Bud's conscience stirred with the thought of more work after he was so tired, and lazy.
- E. The moonlight appeared on their bed nightly, lovely as candlelight.

REVIEW 3: CREATING

The paragraph below is based upon an incident in *Jurassic Park*: a tyrannosaur terrifies two children, Timmy and Lex, who have locked themselves in a Jeep.

At the caret (^), use your imagination to add opening adjectives, opening adverbs, delayed adjectives, delayed adverbs to make the paragraph good enough to appear in the original novel!

Using the Sentence-Composing Toolbox

“The Terror of the Tyrannosaurus”

(1) ^, down the hill roared the tyrannosaur, ^. (2) ^, Timmy and Lex ran toward the Jeep, jumped in, shut and locked the doors, ^. (3) ^, the beast pursued them, nearing the car that imprisoned them, then pausing at the sound of Lex, Timmy’s little sister, crying inside, ^. (4) ^, thunder sounded amid the downpour, echoing the sudden ferocious high-pitched snarls of the animal. (5) With its snake-like eyes in its sinister head, the animal glared at the children through the windshield of the Jeep, ^, and Timmy and Lex, ^, screamed at the hideousness of those green slit-eyes and the sharpness of its jagged, knife-like teeth, inside its grinning mouth.

**Add a few more spectacular sentences,
with lots of sentence-composing tools!**



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