Use Sentence Structure for Effect

1. Focus

**Explain Using Sentence Structure for Effect**

**Say:** When you write a persuasive essay, you want to engage readers and get them on your side. In general, it’s a good idea to vary sentence structures when you write. Using some short sentences and some long ones, writing some simple sentences, and some compound or complex ones, and starting sentences with different words are all ways to help keep the reader’s interest. But sometimes you can bend the rules to create a certain effect or to emphasize a point. Today I’m going to show you how using a series of sentences of the same length, and starting sentences with the same word, can actually make your persuasive essay stronger.

**Model Using Sentence Structure for Effect**

Display the modeling text on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources. Read the text aloud.

**Modeling Text**

| Of course, not every child goes to camp. Many teens work during the summer. Some do this by choice. Some work out of necessity. For them, a summer income makes the difference between their family paying the bills or not. |

**Say:** The first four sentences of the paragraph are all about the same length. Isn’t that a mistake? In this case, I think the writer used a somewhat choppy sentence structure to good effect. The writer is making a point about the importance of having summer vacation. The short, punchy sentences deliver several related ideas quickly, which emphasizes the overall idea that many teens need summer vacation so they can earn money. Did you notice that the writer starts two sentences with the same word, Some? Again, I think this was a deliberate choice to strengthen the point that while teens may have different reasons for working, many of them work during the summer. The last sentence is long and complex. It’s quite a change from the first four sentences. It adds variety and allows the writer to give more detailed evidence supporting the idea that summer vacation is important.

**Objectives**

In this mini-lesson, students will:
- Learn how to use sentence structure for effect.
- Practice using sentence structure for effect.
- Discuss how they can apply this strategy to their independent writing.

**Preparation**

**Materials Needed**
- Chart paper and markers
- Interactive whiteboard resources

**Advanced Preparation**

If you will not be using the interactive whiteboard resources, copy the modeling text and practice text onto chart paper prior to the mini-lesson. If necessary, copy the sentence frame from “Strategies to Support ELs” onto chart paper.
2. Rehearse

Practice Using Sentence Structure for Effect

Display the practice text on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources.

By summer’s end, they have gained a new sense of independence, and have learned so many new and exciting things, such as how to swim, canoe, and cook over a campfire.

Practice Text

Ask students to work with partners to revise the sentence using sentence structure for effect. Remind students that they can write several short sentences, and start sentences with the same word. Pairs should write down their sentences and be prepared to read them to the class.

Share Practice Sentences

Bring students together and invite partners to read aloud their sentences and explain their revisions and what effect they were trying to create. Discuss students’ choices and whether they achieved the desired effect. Record students’ sentences and post these as models for students to use as they draft or revise their persuasive essays.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: We learned that to create a certain effect, we can sometimes bend the guidelines about varying sentence structures. We can use several sentences of the same length and start sentences with the same word. This can create interest and engage readers, but must be done carefully and thoughtfully. Remember to always make deliberate choices about sentence structure when you write.

Encourage students to use sentence structure for effect in a section of their persuasive essays. During student conferences, reinforce students’ use of this and other strategies using the prompts on your conferring flip chart.

4. Share

Bring students together. Invite volunteers to share examples of how they used sentence structure for effect in their persuasive essays.

Strategies to Support ELs

Beginning
While other students work with partners, or during independent writing time, work with beginning ELs to write simple sentences that begin with the same words. Use a sentence frame such as the following:

*The kids ______.*

Model for students an example of how they may finish the sentence. For example: *The kids are tall. The kids are short. The kids draw pictures.* Then invite students to complete the sentence. Write their sentences on chart paper and reread them together.

Intermediate and Advanced
Pair ELs with fluent English speakers during the partner activity.

All Levels
If you have ELs whose first language is Spanish, share this English/Spanish cognate: *persuasive/persuasivo(a).*