

Write Powerful Sentences

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To learn more, read...

How to Write a Sentence by Stanley Fish
(HarperCollins, 2011).

Create a sentence with several sections.

All the sections - or clauses - must be organized so readers can tell how they are related.

Clauses can be related in three ways:

1. how something causes something else;
2. how something happens before or after something else;
3. how something is more important than something else.

The sun shone.

1. **Show something that causes something else:** The sun shone, bringing smiles to the faces of the winter-weary students.
2. **Show something that happened earlier:** After months of cold cloudy weather, the sun shone, bringing smiles to the faces of the winter-weary students.
3. **Show something that happens afterwards:** After months of cold cloudy weather, the sun shone, bringing smiles to the faces of the winter-weary students who rushed outdoors after school.

The cat fell asleep.

1. **Show something that happens before something else:** The cat - after running through the house, up and down the stairs and in and out of all the rooms - fell asleep.
2. **Show something that happens before something else:** The cat - after running through the house, up and down the stairs and in and out of all the rooms - curled up in a soft chair and fell asleep.
3. **Show something that causes something else:** The cat - after running through the house, up and down the stairs and in and out of all the rooms, waking up everyone still asleep in bed - curled up in a soft chair and fell asleep.

He read the book.

1. Show something is more important than something else:

He read the book, ignoring his sister who wanted him to go outside and play basketball with her.

2. Show something that happened before something else:

As soon as he got home, he read the book, ignoring his sister who wanted him to go outside and play basketball with her.

3. Show something that happened before something else:

As soon as he got home, he read the book, ignoring his sister who wanted him - who always wanted him - to go outside and play basketball with her.

After training hard, after playing my best, after scoring the last goal, I won! (Larissa)

Bored from listening to the lecture, he twirled his pencil, accidentally flinging it across the room, hitting another student in the back of her head. (Breanne)

As the stranger approached the door, the dog barked, waking up everyone in the house. (Brenna)

After being drafted for the team, after weeks of practices, after a hard fought game, I won the soccer tournament.
(Michael)

After I qualified for the show, after I groomed my horse, after I flew over the last jump, I won! (Kia)

After buying new running shoes, after intense training, after weeks of eating healthily, I won the race! (Dana)

After the refreshing shower, he ate breakfast while talking to his friend - the one who always played basketball with him - on the phone. (Agnes)

When I crashed into the wall, the painting - the very expensive painting - fell down, breaking the frame and shattering the glass. (Keeva)

After I accidentally agitated my best friend, I ran. (Aria)

Now write your own subordinate sentences!

Remember to show how the clauses are related:

1. how something causes something else;
2. how something happens before or after something else;
3. how something is more important than something else.