

On the Job **WRITING**



BASIC EDITION

Lesson 11

In this lesson, you will learn to:

- Write complete sentences
- Use vivid, vibrant words in sentences

WRITING STRONG SENTENCES

Lily sits at her computer trying to find the right words to describe the type of apartment she wants. She is moving to the city to start her new job as technology coordinator for Lakely Industries. She will be expected to keep up on the latest efficiencies in communications technology.

She starts her email by writing: *Apartment needed in a good neighborhood near downtown and not too far from a bus or train. More than one bedroom and at least one bathroom would be nice. A small kitchen will be okay, as I don't cook much. My budget is limited so I am not looking for an expensive apartment. It does not need to be furnished, as I will bring a few things. Thank you for searching apartments for me.*

After reading the email, Lily realizes she hasn't given the realtor enough specific details. She needs to rework her sentences so they give the realtor clear, vivid and specific details. After revising her email, she thinks it is improved.

Apartment needed in a safe neighborhood near downtown, one that is no more than a block from the train or a bus. I prefer two bedrooms, two baths and a small kitchen with stove, refrigerator, sink and microwave. A monthly rental of no more than \$1,800 is my limit. Thank you for searching apartments for me.



DEFINE IT! Vague

Vague refers to anything that is indefinite, unclear, indistinct or hazy.

SENTENCES BECOME PARAGRAPHS

When writing a document, you can imagine it as a string of sentences that are organized into paragraphs. Each sentence has a role to play in making the paragraph easy to understand.

Sentences serve two purposes: (1) To point out the main idea in a paragraph and (2) to support the main idea. You should evaluate each of your sentences to confirm that it serves its purpose.

DESCRIPTIVE, PICTURE-DRAWING SENTENCES

By writing sentences made up of descriptive, clear words, you will draw a word picture for your reader. To communicate clearly, you must use complete sentences.

A complete sentence requires only two words, although additional words are usually included to add to the sentence's meaning. These two words represent the subject of a sentence and its verb.

(First word)	(Second word)
SUBJECT →	VERB
He	ran
She	spoke
I	did

Notice how using descriptive words in the sentences adds meaning.

He	ran quickly to get away from the intruder.
She	spoke so loudly I had to cover my ears.
I	did go to a movie Saturday night.

THREE TYPES OF SENTENCES

You may choose between three types of sentences. Each is used for its own special reason.

Simple sentence

This sentence is about one idea. It is concise.

The three examples shown to the left all are simple sentences.

Compound sentence

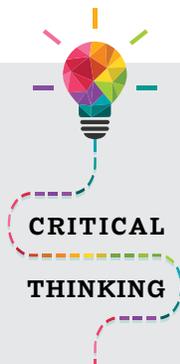
Two equally important thoughts can be bound together to show their relationship. This is called a compound sentence. The two equal thoughts are separated by a comma and a connecting word such as *and*, *but*, *or*, *for*, *nor*, *either*, *neither*, *therefore*, *however* and *others*. They may also be joined by a semicolon without a connecting word.

The meeting will be held at 10 a.m., and I plan to attend.

Complex sentence

This sentence lives up to its name *complex* because it contains two types of thoughts—one that could be a simple sentence by itself and another that can't stand alone. It must be connected to the first simple sentence in order to make sense.

If you plan to attend the meeting, please let me know.



Think about the last conversation you had. Did you speak in simple, compound or complex sentences? When you write, do you tend to use simple, compound or complex sentences?

WRITE SHARP, CRISP SENTENCES

Have you ever bitten into a handful of potato chips, expecting them to be crisp and crunchy, but discovered they were stale and soft? Chances are the chips were not appetizing, and you trashed them.

This is the feeling readers have when your sentences are vague and without details. The sentences are unappealing, so readers scan them instead of paying close attention.

To make your writing interesting and compelling, pay attention to their crispness. You can do this in several ways:

- Make the adjectives lively, rich and vivid
- Use verbs that speak action
- Combine compound thoughts in one sentence.
- Explain with details
- Appeal to the senses

TECHNOLOGY CONNECTION



Can't come up with the word you want? Use a thesaurus. Most word processing programs provide their thesaurus in the Tools menu. A paperback thesaurus is indispensable when a computer is not available.

Sentences that fail to capture a reader's attention usually contain vague, non-specific words. That makes them boring.

Vague sentence

Master chefs prepare a wide range of dishes.

Detailed sentence

Master chefs prepare delicious dishes, ranging from old-fashioned family favorites, like pot roast and fried chicken, to gourmet vegetarian meals of quinoa and kale.

Vague sentence

Criminologists use many techniques to prevent crime.

Vivid sentence

Criminologists use body scanners, radar guns and digital fingerprinting to identify crooks.

Vague sentence

Viruses can damage computer systems.

Rich details sentence

Computer viruses maliciously invade computer systems, erase hard drives and delete files.

LESSON 11 ACTIVITY



Rewrite these vague sentences to create lively, energetic sentences.

Video game addiction impairs the addict's social life.

Drivers should avoid road rage.

Some students do not eat a healthy diet.