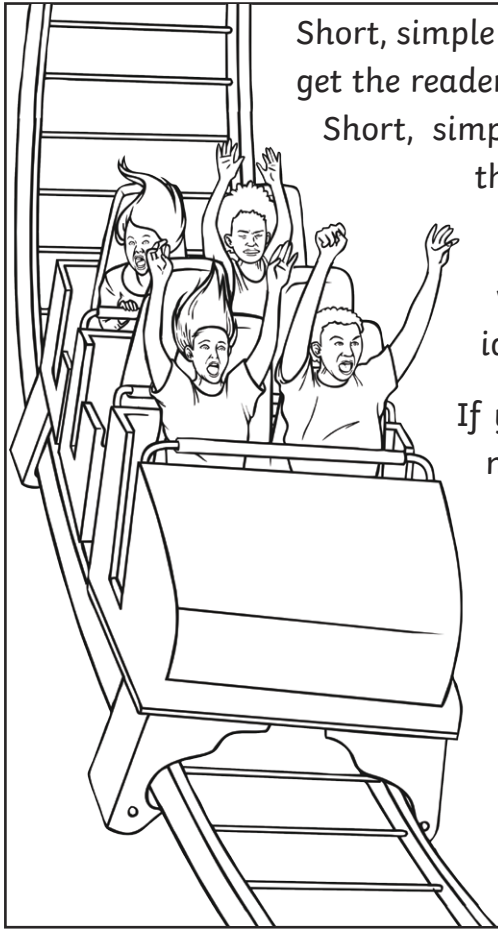


Wonderfully Varied Sentences

The best authors, like RJ Palacio, vary their sentences according to their purpose.



Short, simple sentences tend to be used to increase pace, to make a point, to get the reader's attention or to show that a character is feeling emotional.

Short, simple sentences tend to grab you, because they're short and there's a natural pause afterwards to let the words sink in.

Longer (compound or complex) sentences add detail and variety to sentences. They allow you to explain or explore ideas in depth and tend to slow the pace of your writing down.

If you think of your writing as being like a roller coaster, you need exciting bits but you also need sections to allow you to recover and get ready for the exciting bits. If everything on the ride was exciting all the time, you'd actually become bored. It's the same with sentences.

Varying your sentences is also like having an interesting meal, with different types of food. You wouldn't eat just chips for tea, would you? (Well...).

By the way, it's not recommended to eat chips on a rollercoaster!

Part A

Turn these three simple sentences into a varied paragraph with a simple, compound and complex sentence. Give your paragraph to a couple of partners to check over, then add further sentences to the paragraph, ensuring you have a mix of sentences.

- I went straight to room 301.
- Some kids were staring at me.
- I pretended not to notice.

Part B

The paragraph below isn't a bad paragraph, it has plenty of detail but it doesn't have much variety – all the sentences are complex ones. Turn it into a varied paragraph with at least one simple, compound and complex sentence, while including speech. Give your paragraph to a couple of partners to check over. Once checked, add further sentences to the paragraph, ensuring you have a range of sentences. Can you add more speech?

Mom, eager as ever to offer advice, whispered to me, “Honey, you do know, don't you, that everyone's just as nervous as you are although they might not show it on the surface?” Distracted by the presence of other kids, I nodded politely and pretended to listen until I was sure she was convinced I'd understood. Once the bell rang, I didn't stick around to make polite conversation with anyone and made a beeline for room 301, my home room, where I knew the first lesson was.

★ **Challenge Task** ★

Reread p. 49 Lunch. Write a paragraph, containing speech, describing the scene and conversation at another table in the lunch room. You should include a range of sentences and a mix of speech, action and description sentences.
