

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Scavenger Hunt: Sentence Variation

**Directions:** Review the note about sentence variation below. Then complete the scavenger hunt that follows. You'll be hunting through the May 2018 issue of *Scope*.

### Note on Sentence Variation

**Sentences vary in length, rhythm, and structure. For example:**

- Some sentences are short. Some are long.
- Some sentences contain just one idea. Some contain more than one idea.
- Some sentences are statements. Some are questions.
- Some sentences have punctuation—commas, dashes, semicolons, colons, and parentheses. Some don't.

Sometimes one type of sentence is better for expressing the particular idea that a writer wants to express. In general, though, one type of sentence is not better than another. However, if a writer uses the same type of sentence over and over again in a piece of writing, the writing tends to be boring or choppy. Good writers mix things up—they vary the length, rhythm, and structure of their sentences to keep the story flowing and interesting.

**1.** Go to the article "What I Really Want for My Birthday" on page 26.

**A.** Read the first paragraph of the article.

**B.** Now read this version of that paragraph:

Abbie Wallace was celebrating her 11th birthday. She was celebrating with a unicorn-themed pool party at her house. She lives in San Diego, California. Aqua-colored decorations hung from every corner of her yard. Giant pink unicorns floated in the pool. The savory scents of teriyaki chicken and fried rice wafted through the air. Those are Abbie's favorite foods. A DJ spun Abbie and her friends' favorite songs. Abbie and her friends danced in the pool. A vanilla cake smothered in buttercream frosting sat in the kitchen. The cake was waiting to be devoured.

**C.** Below, jot down some notes on how the two versions of the paragraph are different in terms of sentence variation. Be sure to note which version you think is better and why.

**2.** Go to page 20 in the article "What If This Was Your Water?"

**A.** Read the section "What Happens Now?"

**B.** Now read this version of that section:

Imagine if you couldn't drink the water from your kitchen faucet. Imagine if you couldn't take a bath in your tub. Imagine if you couldn't brush your teeth at the bathroom sink. Imagine if you couldn't take a refreshing gulp from your school's drinking fountain.

The people of Flint were in this situation.

The city stopped using water from the Flint River in the fall of 2015. It was too late because thousands of pipes had already been damaged. Lead was going to continue to leach into any water that flowed through the pipes.

The crisis in Flint was dominating national headlines by then. Americans across the country were outraged by what was happening. Many in Flint felt ignored and misled though. They held protests. They held marches. They demanded to know how the crisis had happened. They demanded to know how the crisis would be fixed.

**C.** Below, jot down some notes on how the two versions of the paragraph are different in terms of sentence variation. Be sure to note which version you think is better and why.

**3.** Go to Paige's letter in "Should Students Wear Uniforms?" on page 24.

**A.** Go down to the fifth paragraph. (Do not count the salutation, "Dear Lucas," as a paragraph.) Write the first sentence of that paragraph on the lines below:

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**B.** Now write a different version of that sentence. You can break it into shorter sentences or add details to make it longer. You can also move parts of the sentence around. You can turn the second part of the sentence into a statement. Feel free to add or change words.

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# Vary Your Sentences

When every sentence in a paragraph is the same length, the reader gets bored. When every sentence in a paragraph starts with the same words, the reader gets bored. When every sentence in a paragraph has the same rhythm, the reader gets bored. When every sentence . . . well, you get the point. To add some pizzazz to your writing, you need to mix things up!

**Here are four ways to add variety to your sentences:**

**1**

**Add an adverb to the beginning of a sentence.**

Eli picked his clothes off the floor and threw them in the closet.

*Hurriedly, Eli picked his clothes off the floor and threw them in the closet.*

**2**

**Move a prepositional phrase to the beginning of a sentence.**

Grace mixed the batter with a large wooden spoon.

*With a large wooden spoon, Grace mixed the batter.*

**3**

**Link two sentences to form a compound sentence.**

The water was freezing cold. Seth and Pete dove in anyway.

*The water was freezing cold, but Seth and Pete dove in anyway.*

**4**

**Combine two or more sentences.**

Siberian tigers are the world's largest cats. Siberian tigers are among the most-endangered species.

*Siberian tigers, which are the world's largest cats, are among the most-endangered species.*

My brother Don and I made a pizza. We made the dough. We measured out the flour. We measured the salt. We measured the yeast. We measured the water. We measured the olive oil. We combined the ingredients. We made a ball of dough. Don kneaded the dough. A few hours passed. I rolled out the dough. We put sauce on the pizza. We put toppings on the pizza. I put pepperoni on the pizza. Don put mushrooms on half the pizza. I don't like mushrooms. We covered it all with cheese. We baked it in the oven. We ate the whole thing in 15 minutes.

[illegible]