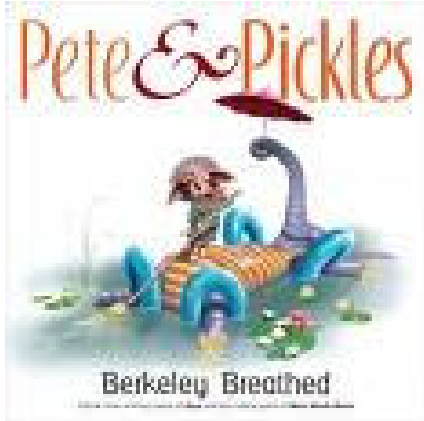# Writing Trait: Sentence Fluency

Learning Intention: develop an understanding that writing should contain a mixture of short, medium and long sentences;
practice writing and self assessing sentence length variation

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By Berkeley Breathed

Before Reading
Learning Outcomes: A1, A4, A6, A9, B5,

Ask students to use the cover picture and title to predict what this story might be about. Listen for predictions that hint at a problem/solution. If they are not offered, ask students what they think the problem of this story might be. Also ask how it might be resolved.

During Reading
Learning Outcomes: B6, B8, B9, B11

This book is best read without interruption, but pause a few times to ensure full comprehension and to allow students to predict and make connections.

- At the end of the first page, ask students to predict what the author might say about something pigs do well in water.
- Ask why Pickles always seems to smile when things are difficult for her.
- Why do you think predictable Pete decided to go for a longer walk when he saw the circus tent?
- Why do you think the policeman suggested dinner? What was he asking?
- Are there any connections to snoring or pajamas that are far too tight?
- Who can explain why they were swan diving in a fountain when they said they would be swan diving off Niagra Falls?

After Reading
Learning Outcomes: A10, A11, B7, B10, B11, C5, C6, C7

Co-create criteria with students by asking them what they already know about sentences. Encourage all their responses by writing a complete list with everything they say. Once they have run out of ideas, try to prompt a few more by offering clues. You may end up with a list similar to this:

start with a capital	end with a . ? or !	they make sense
have lots of details	begin in different ways	use interesting words

Don't worry if they don't offer any thoughts about sentence length variety. Read a page of two from Pete and Pickles in which there are sentences of varying lengths (examples enclosed). Ask students to carefully listen and examine these sentences to see if they can figure out something else about sentences that helps them sound great when read aloud.

The next morning, Pete was disinfecting his house when he noticed his midnight visitor had left behind a gift. Dandelions.

Ridiculous, thought Pete as he scrubbed.

Now free and outside, Pickles dove to hide while a panicked Pete whispered, "TEA was on my schedule today! NOT elephants!"

Being a practical pig, however, he knew they needed a disguise. Something! Anything! Pete thought fast . . .

It worked! Too well! A policeman suggested dinner.

And they did. Sort of.

On Tuesday, they sledded down the Matterhorn in
Switzerland. Sort of.
    Pete was learning that Pickles had *lots* of plans.

Something broke! A pipe gushed water in a
spewing torrent! The house filled while a panicky
Pete screamed. "Pickles!
                    The mop!
                        Buckets!
                            Sponges!
                                Never mind!

                    HEAD UP FOR HIGH GROUND!"

Walt

We Are Learning to:

I can write with a mixture of short, medium and long sentences.

Once you have been able to prompt students to discuss the variety of sentence lengths used by Berkley Breathed, challenge them to do a quick write about a food they love or hate.

Before writing, brainstorm words that might be used as short sentences.

Foods I Love:	Foods I Hate:
Yum!	Yuck!
Delicious!	Gross!
My lucky tummy!	Not for me!
Chow down!	I'll pass!
It's all mine!	No way Jose!

Share the learning intention on the following page before students write. Don't worry if the quality of their work slides a bit while they are trying this new skill. In time and with practice, they will become more aware and write with a variety of sentences and quality will return.

After writing, have students self assess using a rubric with a single target of sentence length variety.
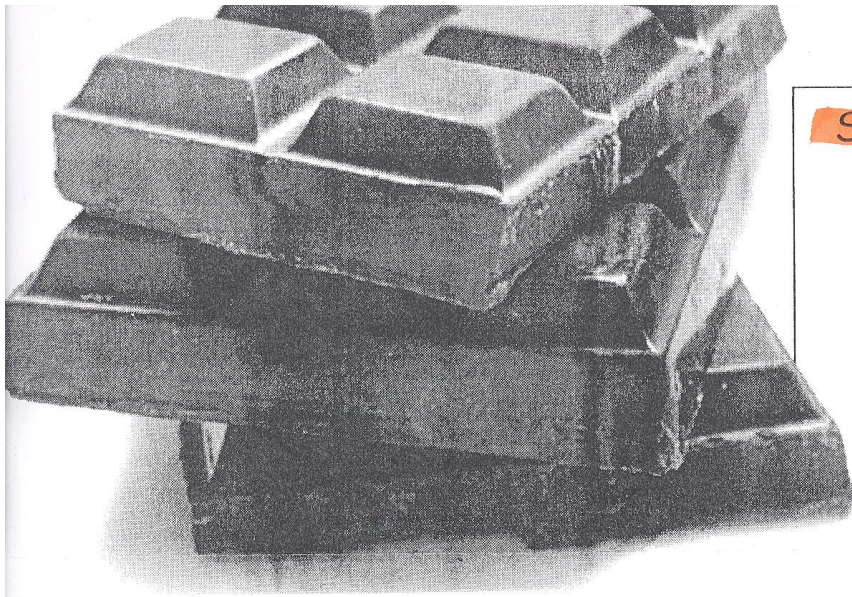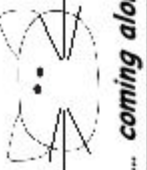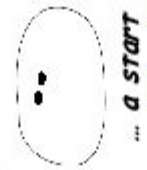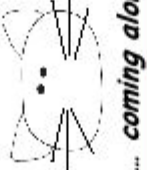
Short, Medium and Long Sentences

By: Mrs. Walte

Date: March 1,

Did someone say chocolate? I love that creamy stuff! Yum, yum. All types of chocolate are good, but my favourite is milk chocolate. I wish I liked dark chocolate more because it's actually good for you, but milk chocolate is a creamy wonderland. What kind of chocolate do you like?

The Traits of Writing

... a start

... coming along

... that's it

... Wow!

Sentence Fluency
- sentences are all the same length; a mixture of short, medium and long ones would make this writing better
- mostly short, simple sentences. Adding a mixture of sentence lengths would make this sound better when read aloud.
- this has a mixture of short, medium and long sentences that create flow
- this flows smoothly because sentences are of different lengths and types

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Pete & Pickles

Berkeley Breathed

Short, Medium and Long Sentences

By: _____

Date: _____

Short, Medium and Long
Sentences

By: _____

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Short, Medium and Long
Sentences

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