**Writing Strategies**

**Easy Ways to Vary a Sentence**

**(adapted from Dorothy Chegwidden)**

1. **Write in an inverted order.**

Down the street came the circus. The facts I now present to the jury. An interested person was Mrs. Sweeney. Up the corridor came the principal.

1. **Write a sentence with an adverb clause.**

Before you come to work, you must park in the appropriate lot. When he decided on a major, he signed up for his courses. (Adverb clauses usually begin with when, if, since, as whenever, whereas, etc.)

1. **Write with a prepositional phrase.**

From the top of the hill, we could see the city lights. Since 1902, he has been a patron of the arts. Across the bay, we sailed on smooth seas.

1. **Combine sentences by using an appositive.**

Mr. Martin spoke to the class. He is the principal.

Mr. Martin, the principal, spoke to the class.

1. **Write an appositive (adjectives) before or after a noun.**

Tall and aggressive, he was able to lead the team to the state tournament.

The area, grassy and hilly, beckoned us to the picnic.

1. **Start with a gerund or gerund phrase.**

Evaluating a play takes skill and time.

Biting your tongue will stop you from saying things you shouldn’t.

Watching her play ball was a wonderful experience.

1. **Start with a participial phrase.**

Hearing her scream, the policeman ran up the stairs to the apartment.

Running down the parkway, he couldn’t see the rock in front of him and tripped.

1. **Use a participial phrase or participle after the word modified.**

The cheerleader, thinking of all the routines, became confused and did the wrong cheer.

Julie, dreaming, woke up crying.

1. **Write an exclamatory sentence.**

How wonderful the music was tonight!

What you did was fantastic!

1. **Write a sentence with a compound subject.**

The students and teachers demanded that the administration leave the vocational courses.

The mother and child appeared on the news channel.

1. **Write a sentence with a compound verb/predicate.**

She whined and fussed over the grade on her paper.

Mother listened and praised her children on their behavior in the restaurant.

1. **Write an interrogative sentence.**

Could the city handle the problems with a hurricane?

Should you travel to the mountains with the snowstorm being predicted?

1. **Negotiate a parenthetical expression or transition.**

To say the least, I am impressed.

To tell the truth, I lost the money.

(For instance, For example, However, Therefore, On the other hand,)

1. **Begin with an adverb.**

Actually, I like the children’s music.

Carefully, I packed grandmother’s clothes.

1. **Start with an introductory word.**

No, you may not go to the theatre with your friends.

Oh, I thought he graduated.

Maybe, you should ask for an extension on the deadline.

Yes, you may go.

1. **Write an imperative sentence with “you” understood.**

Consider the consequences.

Let me explain.

1. **Begin the sentence with a noun clause.**

Before you come to work, you must park in the appropriate lot.

How you handle yourself shows your manners.

Whether you buy this car or that one will be a decision made on your financial abilities and choice of design.

That you have spent little time on this assignment is obvious to me.

1. **Write a sentence with an adjective clause modifying the subject (so it’s at the beginning).**

The church, which was built in 1910, has not been restored.

A student who studies is apt to do better in school.

This DVD that I just bought has a scratch on it.

1. **Write a sentence with a nominative absolute.**

The night being foggy, we cancelled our trip.

My cousin having been ill, we decided not to go to the reunion.

The symphony having cost so much, she decided to go without her husband.

1. **Start with an infinitive or infinitive phrase.**

To finish the paper is a great relief!

To conclude this project, I plan to have it bound.

“To be or not to be, that is the question.”