

A wolf called Wander

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What makes a good sentence?

Big Question: Why vary sentence length? How does it affect flow, and tone?

Use this lesson to get students critically analyzing sentence lengths, thinking about and discussing how sentences create cadence and feeling in a paragraph.

Quick write



1. 60 seconds to create a list of people the students care about.
2. 5 minutes to write about one of those people.
3. "Describe everything about them, how they act, their personality, how they're similar and different from you".
4. Give an opportunity to share their writing.

Collab-Thinking Option: After sharing, groups can work at whiteboards to guess the character traits of wolves in the book based on their names: Swift, Wander, Wag, Song, Pounce, Sharp, Warm, Night, and Growl.

Fluency Routine

Use the first page of the book.
If you are pointing out spelling:

- **Bigger, Smaller** (noticing how big has a second G added to it)
- **Wrestle** (silent T after an S)

If you are pointing out vocabulary:

- While the others **Drowse**

Collab- Thinking Option: Have groups come up with the next three sentences.



Craft Moves

Have groups discuss the effect of sentence length.
Give groups questions like:

- Why is one sentence only one word, "Sharp"?
- What do you think of the sentence "I have sisters".
- How would you describe the cadence of the first page?
- Why would an author mix short and long sentences?

Group work

Have students re-read the page to notice the verb 'nose'. "As a group create 5 sentences where someone is guided by smell". (eg. I stumble from bed to the bitter sweet steam floating from my coffee.)

Modeled writing

Show students how you plan to describe someone you care about using similar descriptions to those in the mentor text.

"My sister talks with her paintbrush".

"My brother is all noise, his energy filling a room".

Then have students write a one page character study using the mentor text.

Extending

Some options to initiate recall and transference of the learning:

- Have students rewrite an essay or story that they have already written and submitted, to include more variety in sentence length, strengthening the original piece.
- Divide students into groups that will look at a specific genre. Have each group look at several books, noticing sentence lengths and variety of sentence length. Bring the groups together to discuss and share their findings.

