**OPENER Note-Taking Guide (*Adding Detail and Dazzle*)**

*Authors vary where they put tools, those important sentence parts that add dazzle and detail to sentences. Those tools—whether words, phrases, or dependent clauses—can be moved around within sentences.*

*With sentences, you have three choices for placing sentence parts: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Good writers use all three places. You can, too.*

**THE OPENER**

*Sometimes, authors use tools at the front of the sentence to provide information immediately because it’s important.*

EX.

I went to sleep again.

**After a bit, lulled by the bobbing of the raft and by the soft, pleasant sounds of the sea agaist the oil barrel floats,** I went to sleep again.

Theodore Taylor*, The Cay*

EX.

He began to wonder if he should give up and go home.

**About midnight, huddled shivering under his blankets in the darkness,** he began to wonder if he should give up and go home.

Thomas Rockwell, *How to Eat Fried Worms*

**An opener is any tool at the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the sentence. Openers can be**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, or \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

**COMBINING SENTENCES**

**Two Sentences**

He pitched the call high enough to make it sound like a young turkey gobbling. He did this whilecupping his hands tightly around his lips.

**One Sentence with Opener**

Cupping his hands tightly around his lips**,** he pitched the call high enough to make it sound like a young turkey gobbling.

Virginia Hamilton, *M.C. Higgins, the Great*

STUDENT ACTIVITY

*Combine each pair of sentences by making the underlined part an opener for the other sentences. The result is the sentence the author wrote—one sentence instead of two to say the same thing! Don’t forget the comma after the opener.*

**WORDS**

1. I felt the fur at the back of my neck prickle and rise. I felt uneasy. -Maggie Stiefvater, *Forever*

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2. He released the tension from his bow and moved forward. He did this cautiously.

-Christopher Paolini, *Eragon*

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3. The clouds were thick and dark, giving warning that this is monsoon season, when follods of rain could fall from the sky in a matter of minutes. The clouds were overhead.

-Libba Bray, *A Great and Terrible Beauuty*

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4. He really felt as if the whole car were moving beneath him. He was dizzy and nauseous.

-Michael Crichton, *Jurassic Park*

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5. He wandered about the many tents, only to find that one place was as cold as another. He was miserable and disconsolate**.**

-Jack London, *Call of the Wild*

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**PHRASES**

6. Warriors on high stilts beat upraised swords against their shields. This happened around the fiery circle.

-Lloyd Alexander, *The Book of Three*

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7. I went to sleep again. I had been lulled by the bobbing of the raft and by the soft, pleasant sounds of the sea against the oil barrel floats.

-Theodore Taylor, *The Cay*

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8. The wolves trotted away. The wolves were drooping their tails and glancing warily at her.

-Jean Craighead George, *Julie of the Wolves*

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9. Spencer V. Silverthorne, a young buyer for Nuget’s department store, slumbered. Spencer was buried in a nearby leather armchair.

-Walter Lord, *A Night to Remember*

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10. On the floor lay an old white English bull terrier. The terrier had his scarred, bony head resting on one of the man’s feet.

-Sheila Burnford, *The Incredible Journey*

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**CLAUSES**

11. A fuzzy spider paced across the room. This happened while she sat there.

-Lloyd Alexander, *The Book of Three*

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12. Angus Phail died. He died before little Ramona was a year old.

-Helen Hunt Jackson, *Ramona*

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13. His wife came to meet him at the door. She did this as he drew near to the cottage.

-Daphne du Maurier, “The Birds”

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14. We were let out into the playground twice a day for a short recess and at lunchtime. This occurred if the weather cooperated.

-Keith Donohue, *The Stolen Child*

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15. Cass whacked me across the face with a plastic shovel at our neighborhood park. This happened when I was four and when Cass was six.

-Sarah Dessen, *Dreamland*

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**EXPANDING SENTENCES**

*As you’ve seen, there is more than one way to open a sentence.*

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, he limped carefully around the snake.

**WORD:** Nervous, he limped carefully around the snake.

**PHRASE:** His feet moving slowly and gently to avert its attention, he limped carefully around the snake.

**CLAUSE:** Although he was fairly sure that the injured reptile would not strike, he limped carefully around the snake.

STUDENT ACTIVITY

*For each sentence add a* **word***, then a* **phrase**, *then a* **dependent clause***.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. **WORD**:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **PHRASE:**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **CLAUSE**:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | …the rain was falling in relentless icy sheets.  Suzanne Collins, *The Hunger Games* |
| 2. **WORD**:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **PHRASE:**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **CLAUSE**:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | …the six students fell silent and edged away from one another.  Stephenie Meyer, *The Host* |
| 3. **WORD**:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **PHRASE:**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **CLAUSE**:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | …there came a soft sound, a yelp of a hound puppy nipped on the ear by his mama.  Virginia Hamilton, *M.C. Higgins, the Great* |
| 4. **WORD**:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **PHRASE:**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **CLAUSE**:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | …I heard a car’s tires echo through the neighborhood.  Maggie Stiefvater, *Forever* |
| 5. **WORD**:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **PHRASE:**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **CLAUSE**:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | …the wind blew.  Dorothy M. Johnson, *The Day the Sun Came Out* |
| 6. **WORD**:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **PHRASE:**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **CLAUSE**:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | …the little lizard sprang up, leaping over Grant’s head into Tim’s arms.  Michael Crichton, *Jurassic Park* |
| 7. **WORD**:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **PHRASE:**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **CLAUSE**:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | …the snake raised its head until its eyes were on a level with Harry’s.  J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone* |
| 8. **WORD**:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **PHRASE:**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **CLAUSE**:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | …I went on up the mountain, following the stone walls, discovering many things about my property.  Jean Craighead George, *My Side of the Mountain* |
| 9. **WORD**:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **PHRASE:**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **CLAUSE**:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | …he laughed at his fears.  W.W. Jacobs, “The Monkey’s Paw” |
| 10. **WORD**:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **PHRASE:**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **CLAUSE**:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | …a boy and a yearling ran side by side, and were gone forever.  Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, *The Yearling* |

**BUILDING STRONGER PARAGRAPHS**

***YOUR TURN:*** *Authors pepper their sentences with tools to increase interest, content, and style. In the following paragraph, partner with Wilson Rawls from his novel Where the Red Fern Grows. Add sentence openers to the author’s paragraph. Insert an opener at each has tag (#). For your openers, use at least one word, one phrase, one dependent clause, and for some openers, us a combination of types. Create openers that, in style and content, match the style and content of the rest of the author’s paragraph—so good that the author would be proud to have you as a partner.*

**Author’s Paragraph: *A man witnesses a vicious attack of several dogs on an old hound, and comes to its aid.***

(1) #, I could tell there were quite a few dogs mixed up in it. (2) They boiled out of an alley, turned, and headed toward one hound-dog. (3) #, they caught him and down he went. (4Up out of that snarling, growling, slashing mass reared an old redbone hound. (5) #, he fought his way through the pack and backed up under the low branches of a hedge. (6) #, they formed a half-moon circle around him. (7) #, a big bird dog, darted in. (8) The hedge shook as he tangled with the hound. (9) He came out so fast he fell over backwards. (10) His right ear was split wide open. (11) It was too much for him and he took off down the street, squalling like a scalded cat. (12) A big ugly cur tried his luck. (13) He didn’t get off so easy. (14) He came out with his left should laid open to the bone. (15) #, he let the world know that he had been hurt. (16) #, I didn’t have much effect, but the swinging coat did. (19) The dogs scattered and left. (20) #, I peered back under the hedge. (21) #, I started talking to the redbone hound. (22) It’s all right. (23) I’m your friend. (24) Come on now.” (25) The fighting fire slowly left his eyes. (26) He bowed his head and his long, red tail started thumping the ground. (27) I kept coaxing. (28) #, he came to me and laid his head in my hand.

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**TIP:** For better revising, look for places to use openers to add substance, savvy, and style to your writing.