

Sentence structure and punctuation

Opening

Text structure and organisation

Mac's Short Adventure

Winston watched rain pelt down the window panes in icy cold needles. He sighed.

"This is just typical! School holidays and it rains!"

His younger sister, Hannah, didn't answer and carried on rolling around the floor with Grandma's dog, Mac, barking excitedly at her ankles.

A moment later, a key turned in the latch, the door opened and 16-year-old Sophie, headphones glued as usual to her ears, bounded upstairs shouting as she went, "Stay at the door, Trace, right."

Mac certainly needed no second chance and was out of the lounge and into the garden before Hannah could get to her feet.

"You idiot, Sophie!" Winston yelled pointlessly at the retreating figure. "We're supposed to keep him in. He doesn't know his way around this end of town."

Commas separating names

Complex sentence containing short phrases and clauses to indicate Sophie's speed of movement. Clause, marked by commas, dropped into sentence to provide quick picture of Sophie

Vocabulary — verbs and adverbs — (shaded) chosen to describe actions precisely

Story opening: setting
Such a boring setting suggests that something might be going to happen

Characters quickly established:
Winston by his words, and the two girls by their actions

Phrase connecting the two paragraphs

Plot gets under way. Dilemma introduced. Reason for problem

Composition and effect

Colloquial speech to portray character of teenager in a hurry commanding a close friend and to indicate the relationship of Winston with his sister.

Spelling

certainly — 'c' and 'ai'
doesn't — contraction of 'not'
answer — 'w'
excitedly — 'x' and 'c'

Sentence structure and punctuation

Subordinate clause opening sentence, reducing action to 3 succinct words to create effect of speed. Comma between clauses

Subordinate clause opening sentence for emphasis. Comma between clauses

Use of subordinate clause to relate two simultaneous actions. Comma between clauses

Vocabulary — verbs and adverbs — (shaded) chosen to describe actions precisely

Composition and effect

Reader's attention held by the chase. Implicit, rather than overt, time-consuming references, to remind the reader of the unpleasant weather. Overall impression of action built up through the vocabulary, e.g. raced, puffed, pursuers, vigorously, wagging

Build-up — the chase

Grabbing two coats, Hannah joined her brother on the step, just in time to see the black and white dog squeeze through an impossibly small gap in the hedge and start an easy amble up the road.

"No time to leave a note to Mum," Winston decided, taking charge. "Let's get him. The last thing Grandma needs to know when she's in hospital is that we've lost her dog. Blasted thing!" he added under his breath. "Tell Sophie," he ordered a surprised looking Tracey. "And tell her it's all her fault!"

Splashing through puddles, the two children rushed towards Mac. That was probably the worst thing to do because he decided they had come out to play a game. Wagging his tail (vigorously) and sending sprays of water onto the legs of a passer-by, he (raced) off towards the park.

"We'll get him," Hannah said confidently. "He's only got little legs."

"He's doing all right on them, though," Winston (puffed), rounding the corner to see Mac turn down yet another street. "I just wish it would stop raining. My glasses are covered. I can't see properly."

Mac led his pursuers towards the gateway to the town park and set off at once towards the duck pond. He'd not had so much fun for years.

Text structure and organisation

The plot has moved on without describing every small incident — reader knows Winston has followed the dog to the door

More information provided to indicate importance of the dog and heightens tension

Characters developed through their speech

Spelling

worst — 'w' special relates to word, worm, world, work though — in the 'ough' family grabbing and wagging — double the consonant after a short vowel pursued — 'ur'. Not to be confused with persuade vigorously and confidently — polysyllabic words can be segmented; 'or' not 'our' even though vigour is spelled with a 'u'

Sentence structure and punctuation

Interrupts sentences with a single word — graphically emphasises the dilemma

Series of short sentences indicates a dialogue without using speech and following complex sentence shows simultaneous action — speech and change of setting

Vocabulary — verbs, adjectives and adverbs — (shaded) chosen to describe actions precisely

Sentence starts with a subordinate clause for emphasis

Composition and effect

Implicit, rather than overt, time-consuming references, to remind the reader of the unpleasant weather.

Dilemma

Winston and Hannah were close behind but **cannoned** round the corner straight into a woman pushing a pram.

"Watch where you're going," she yelled, **(stumbling)** but **(grabbing)** the handle.

"Sorry," they mumbled. Hannah got up and examined her cut knee. She looked as if she was going to cry.

"I can't see Mac any more," Winston announced when the woman had gone on her way. "I thought we'd catch up with him by the ducks."

A few minutes of racing along the **(sodden)** paths in the park, finally convinced the children that they had lost Mac. But they could not give up yet.

Hannah wanted to report him missing to the police. They both wished their Mum was with them. While arguing about the best course of action, they left the park and made their way up the High Street.

"We're never going to find him by ourselves," Hannah persisted. "I bet he's frightened now, poor little thing."

"I should hope he is!" Winston said, rather unkindly. "Look at the trouble he's put us to! Oh look," he yelled. "A bus! Come on! Let's go home and phone Mum." Before Hannah could argue, he had pulled his sister onto the bus and paid their fares.

Text structure and organisation

Heightening the dilemma by creating an event which causes the children to lose sight of the dog — pram incident

Characters continue to develop

Spelling

grabbed and *slipped* — double the consonant after a short vowel

woman — 'wo' before the word *man*

straight — in the 'ight' family.

arguing — loses the 'e' before adding 'ing'

Sentence structure and punctuation

Use of comma to separate phrase containing additional information

Events

Later, Hannah did try to tell him that she had said the bus was going the wrong way but by then it was much too late. They both realised they were going east instead of west, miles away from their own estate.

Hannah burst into tears. "I'm SO fed up," she sobbed. "AND I'm cold. AND I'm scared because we'll be in REAL trouble now. We've lost Mac!" Winston tried to cheer her up but he'd never been very good at that anyway! The bus turned a corner into a small estate of retirement bungalows.

"Oh look," said Winston. "Grandma's house. Oh –" and his voice trailed off as he gazed in amazement at a small, very wet and bedraggled black and white dog sitting on the doorstep, waiting patiently.

Two-item list of actions of the dog separated by a comma — 'sitting on the doorstep, waiting patiently'

Text structure and organisation

*Implies a conversation that was not written down
Dilemma morsens*

Further character development

Composition and effect

Capitals to emphasise how Hannah speaks these words.

Spelling

too – double letter as opposed to to and two
patiently – 'tien'

Sentence structure and punctuation

*(Vocabulary — verb —
skated.) chosen to describe
actions precisely*

*Use of dashes instead of
commas for emphasis*

*Short sentences creating
effect of quick decision*

Resolution and ending

The children tumbled off the bus at the next stop and charged back up the road.

"Mac!" shrieked Hannah, "we found you! You clever old thing. You came home."

"I suppose he cut along by the old canal,"

Winston said, "and that's how he got here so quickly. Poor Mac. He must miss Grandma. Let's get him home and dry him off."

They didn't have to wait long for another bus — this time going the right way — and were in the kitchen rubbing Mac dry when the phone rang. It was Grandma.

"They let me have the trolley phone by my bed," she explained. "I just had to ring and see if poor old Mac is alright. I'm so worried about him."

Winston and Hannah looked at each other.

Winston shook his head. Hannah nodded.

"Oh you mustn't worry, Grandma," Hannah said brightly. "He's had a lovely day. No trouble at all!"

Text structure and organisation

Dilemma resolves when the children collect the dog. The phone call at the end reinforces the relief felt by the children

Cuts out detail of return home — no need to spin this out — find satisfying conclusion i.e. phone call

Composition and effect

Adaptation

Simple plot builds by each section being set up by the previous one — cause and effect, e.g. it is wet and slippery and they can't see, so they bump into someone, have to apologise and therefore lose the dog. Coincidence is a traditional feature of narrative. Dog has gone back to its own house — so how does the author get the children there to find it? — they jump on the wrong bus.

Viewpoint

Simple narrative approach taken through narration and dialogue through which character development can be traced.

Style

Effects created through choice of vocabulary, sentence structure and variation.

Spelling

shrieked — 'ie'

rubbing and nodded — double the consonant after a short vowel