



# Suggestions for Using *Sound Writing* at the Sentence Level

Class session on sentence-level issues

- Assign sections from the “[Writing at the Sentence Level](#)” chapter of *Sound Writing* for students to read before class.
- In class, ask students to explain the concept or to ask questions about things they don’t understand.
- Have students swap papers and look for the concept in a peer’s draft and, if relevant, suggest revisions.
- If there’s time and if the revisions are digital, have students email revisions to you, and post a few especially good/interesting/discussion-worthy ones on the overhead projector for class viewing.

Using *Sound Writing* as an oral presentation opportunity

- Identify sentence-level topics that warrant attention (either topics that students identify as being troublesome or that you have noticed in student papers from the class).
- Have students read a specific subsection that you assign or that they locate themselves from the “[Writing at the Sentence Level](#)” chapter of *Sound Writing*.
- Have students work in groups to prepare short, fun oral presentations (perhaps two minutes long) on the sentence-level topic.

Using *Sound Writing* while commenting on student papers

- After reading the entire paper and making comments related to content, identify 2-3 specific sentence-level areas for improvement (e.g., comma splices, parallelism, subject-verb agreement) OR identify a small section (a paragraph or two) for more intensive sentence-level comments.
- Focusing on just those 2-3 concepts or on just the small section, correct one or two examples of variants from the preferred usage or suggest stylistic revisions.
- Have students identify other, related sentences in their own paper for revisions.
- Have students report back to you on their revisions, perhaps
  - for the next class session as a sentence log, with the original sentence, a revised sentence, and the section of the handbook they consulted.
  - in a cover letter for the next major assignment, identifying sentence-level aspects of the paper to which they gave particular attention.

Helping students use word processing tools to help with proofreading

- Have students identify ways to search for sentence-level issues in their own papers; often there are words or punctuation marks associated with sentence-level issues that can be searched so that students can individually look at examples and think about those examples out of context. For instance
  - homophones like to/too/two
  - apostrophes
  - commas
- Have students send their suggestions to [soundwriting@pugetsound.edu](mailto:soundwriting@pugetsound.edu) to be added to the “[Using Technology](#)” chapter.

Having students create personal proofreading checklists

- Before the first paper, or after you have returned feedback on a paper in the class, have students identify sentence-level issues with which they personally grapple. (If students don't know what those issues are, they might need to look at graded papers they have received in the past, perhaps in other classes.)
- Have the students proofread their own work, focusing especially on those issues.
- When grading papers, pay special attention to those issues and, perhaps, if there are no problems with those issues, identify but do not penalize students for those issues.

Using Sound Writing to help students read course reading assignments more carefully

- Have students read a specific section Chapter 7, "[Writing at the Sentence Level](#)" of *Sound Writing*.
- Have students find a few examples of that topic or concept in the reading assignment for the day.
- Have a discussion in class about anything that might be surprising, for instance,
  - that there are typos in published work (a good opportunity to talk briefly about information literacy and publishing processes).
  - that published writers use sentence fragments and break "rules."

Contributing to *Sound Writing*

- Have students submit suggestions for corrections, revisions, and additions to *Sound Writing*, using the form at [pugetsound.edu/soundwritingresources](http://pugetsound.edu/soundwritingresources), or have them send general comments by email to [soundwriting@pugetsound.edu](mailto:soundwriting@pugetsound.edu).
- Have students use the addresses above to send example sentences from their own papers to be incorporated into examples in the handbook or in (perhaps) exercises.