

BUILD STRONGER SENTENCES

Do not just write more.

Write STRONGER.

The boy ran.

That sentence is correct.

But we can make it much stronger.

The frightened boy ran quickly towards the school gate when he heard the loud explosion.

A SENTENCE NEEDS A COMPLETE IDEA

A sentence normally needs:

SUBJECT + VERB + COMPLETE IDEA

Example:

The girl laughed.

Subject: The girl

Verb: laughed

Because the girl was tired. (DEPENDANT CLAUSE)

It begins with **because**, but we are waiting for the rest of the idea.

Because the girl was tired, she went home.

The dog barked.

STRONGER:

The large dog barked loudly.

EVEN STRONGER:

The large, frightened dog barked loudly at the stranger outside the gate.

Ask yourself:

WHO? The dog.

WHAT DID IT DO? Barked.

HOW? Loudly.

WHY/AT WHAT? At the stranger.

WHERE? Outside the gate.

ADDING DETAILS

When you have a basic sentence, ask:

WHO?

WHAT?

WHERE?

WHEN?

HOW/WHY?

The girl walked.

WHO? The girl

WHAT? walked

Now add information.

WHERE? The girl walked **to the shops**.

WHEN? The girl walked to the shops **after school**.

HOW? The tired girl walked slowly to the shops after school.

WHY? The tired girl walked slowly to the shops after school **because she needed to buy food**.

Notice what happened.

- We did not simply make the sentence longer by adding random words.
- Every added detail gives the reader useful information.
- That is the difference between **a longer sentence** and **a stronger sentence**.

DO NOT JUST ADD WORDS.

ADD MEANINGFUL INFORMATION.

The boy ran very, very, very fast.

The frightened boy sprinted towards the gate.

The second sentence gives us more information and uses stronger vocabulary.

CHOOSE STRONGER WORDS

Some words are correct but very basic.

walked:

strolled

marched

hurried

wandered

limped

crept

looked:

stared

glanced

gazed

watched

peered

said:

whispered

shouted

replied

complained

explained

demanded

went:

rushed

travelled

hurried

wandered

marched

- You do not need to use difficult words simply to impress the reader.
- Choose a word that accurately describes the action.
- For example:
- The frightened child **crept** into the dark room.
- "Crept" gives us a much clearer picture than simply saying "went".

COMPARE

BASIC: The girl went into the room.

STRONGER: The nervous girl slowly entered the dark room.

Which sentence creates a clearer picture?

The second one.

Why?

Because we know:

- what the girl felt;
- how she moved; and
- what the room was like.

DO NOT WRITE LIKE THIS:

The boy was tired.

The boy continued running.

The boy wanted to win.

These are three correct sentences.

But they can be **combined**. Try to write like this:

The boy was tired, but he continued running because he wanted to win.

Sentence Length

- If all your sentences are the same length, your writing sounds like a robot.
- You need a mix of short, sharp sentences and longer, descriptive sentences.
- I walked home. It was dark. I heard a noise. I ran fast.
- As darkness fell, I walked home. Suddenly, a strange noise pierced the quiet night. I ran.

AVOID REPETITION

Thabo woke up early. Thabo got dressed. Thabo ate breakfast. Thabo went to school.

Notice the repetition of:

Thabo... Thabo... Thabo... Thabo...

Let us improve it.

Thabo woke up early, got dressed and ate breakfast before leaving for school.

USE DIFFERENT SENTENCE BEGINNINGS

Do not begin every sentence with:

I...

I woke up early. I got dressed. I ate breakfast. I walked to school.

Early that morning, I woke up and got dressed. **After eating breakfast**, I walked to school. **As I approached the school**, I noticed that something was different.

This creates variety.

THE STRONG SENTENCE CHECKLIST

- Is my sentence complete?
- Have I used the correct tense?
- Have I added useful detail?
- Can I replace a weak word with a stronger one?
- Can I combine two short sentences?
- Have I used different sentence beginnings?
- Have I avoided unnecessary repetition?
- Have I used correct punctuation?

WRITE BETTER.

WRITE CLEARLY.

WRITE WITH PURPOSE.



Activities

ACTIVITY 1: UPGRADE YOUR VOCABULARY

Some words are correct but too basic. Replace the underlined word with a stronger, more precise word from the box.

Word bank:

exhausted | furious | enormous | terrified | delighted | whispered | sprinted | glanced | ancient | miserable

1. The athlete ran towards the finish line.
2. The little boy was very scared when he heard the noise.
3. My grandmother was very happy when she received the gift.
4. The angry customer was very angry with the manager.
5. The elephant was very big.
6. After walking for six hours, we were very tired.
7. The old building was very old.
8. She looked quickly at the clock.
9. The boy **spoke very quietly** because he did not want anyone to hear him.
10. After losing the competition, the learner felt **very unhappy**.

ACTIVITY 2: SYNONYMS

A **synonym** is a word with the same or a similar meaning.
Choose the best synonym for each word.

1. RAPID

- A. slow
- B. quick
- C. weak
- D. quiet

2. ANGRY

- A. furious
- B. cheerful
- C. nervous
- D. tired

3. BRAVE

- A. frightened
- B. courageous
- C. careless
- D. confused

4. DIFFICULT

- A. simple
- B. easy
- C. challenging
- D. comfortable

5. BEAUTIFUL

- A. attractive
- B. unpleasant
- C. dirty
- D. ordinary

6. BEGIN

- A. finish
- B. start
- C. stop
- D. continue

ACTIVITY 3: ANTONYMS

An **antonym** is a word with the opposite meaning.

Write an antonym for each word.

1. generous
2. ancient
3. confident
4. noisy
5. narrow
6. victory
7. increase
8. polite

ACTIVITY 4: REPLACE THE WEAK WORD

Improve each sentence by replacing the **bold word** with a more precise word.

Example:

The boy **went** quickly to the classroom.

The boy **rushed** to the classroom.

1. The girl **looked** at the beautiful sunset.
2. The man **said** something quietly.
3. The dog **went** through the narrow opening.
4. The learners were **happy** when they heard the results.
5. The storm was **bad**.

Challenge yourself:

Try to learn **5 new words every week**.

Do not only memorise the definition.

KNOW IT → USE IT → REMEMBER IT

MEMORANDUM

Grade 9 EFAL – Building Stronger Vocabulary

ACTIVITY 1: UPGRADE YOUR VOCABULARY

1. sprinted
2. terrified
3. delighted
4. furious
5. enormous
6. exhausted
7. ancient
8. glanced
9. whispered
10. miserable

ACTIVITY 2: SYNONYMS

1. B – quick
2. A – furious
3. B – courageous
4. C – challenging
5. A – attractive
6. B – start

ACTIVITY 3: ANTONYMS

Accept any suitable correct antonym.

Word	Answer
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1. generous	selfish / stingy / mean
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2. ancient	modern / new
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3. confident	insecure / uncertain / timid
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4. noisy	quiet / silent
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5. narrow	wide / broad
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6. victory	defeat / loss
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7. increase	decrease / reduce
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8. polite	rude / impolite
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ACTIVITY 4: REPLACE THE WEAK WORD

Answers may vary. Accept any appropriate, contextually suitable vocabulary.

Possible answers:

1. The girl **gazed at** the beautiful sunset.
2. The man **whispered** something quietly.
3. The dog **crept** through the narrow opening.
4. The learners were **delighted/thrilled** when they heard the results.
5. The storm was **severe/destructive/terrible**.