

Working with SENTENCE DRAFTS

Occasionally, ask students to bring a rough draft in "sentence-draft" format. This means that they begin each sentence on a new line and they number each sentence. They might also double space between paragraphs so that paragraph breaks are clear.

With a sentence draft, your students can more easily look for style issues like sentence variety. It's much easier to see repetition of sentence beginnings or overuse of certain sentence patterns when the sentences are lined up in rows, rather than in paragraph format. Use *A Writer's Ref* tab S for ideas on improving style at the sentence level.

With a sentence draft, students can also more easily look for sentence boundary problems. Have them read their sentences from the bottom up to see if they can spot run-ons or fragments. (See yellow box G6-b, 213, and surrounding lessons on run-ons; see yellow box G5-a, 206, and surrounding lessons for fragments.)

With a sentence draft, students can also locate thesis statements and topic sentences. They can evaluate their inclusion of adequate support for a topic sentence. They can look for adequate use of transition or for cohesiveness. They can look for correct insertion of quotations or for overuse of quotations. They can look for overuse or repetition of certain words or phrases. They can look for overuse of be verbs. They can check for shifting verb tenses. Many writing problems might be detected by looking at sentence drafts and using the writing handbook to develop ways to improve the writing.