

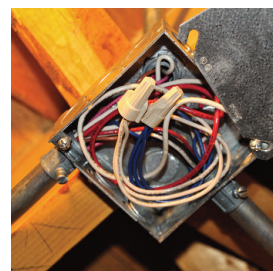
LISTS TO SENTENCES — a Gradebooster

what's the
POINT?

You can take bullet-pointed items, words, or phrases (groups of words) and convert them to well-written sentences in a few short steps.

WHY?

List items by themselves aren't enough to show how things are related to each other. Look at these pictures of a **bulb**, **electrical panel**, **switch**, **wire stripper tool**, and **junction box**. What story do they tell?



They tell no story by themselves. But what about this:

NOW it
makes
sense!

When I turned on the **switch**, the **bulb** didn't light up. I checked the **electrical panel**, and the circuit breaker was on, so I checked the wiring in the **junction box** and found a loose connection. I used the **wire stripper tool** to fix the bad connection, and now the bulb lights up!

How to
DO IT:

After you take notes, make them into a series of sentences by following these four steps:

1. Group your notes or list items logically
2. Put them in time order (if you need to)
3. Make sentences out of each list item
4. Use transition words to help everything flow

#1: Group items logically

Grouping things logically means putting related items next to each other.

Let's say that you wrote down notes about your black dog Molly and your yellow parakeet Mike, and here's what you have:

<i>Molly & Mike: my pets!</i>			
<i>likes seeds</i>	<i>sits on finger</i>	<i>has fur</i>	
	<i>brown</i>	<i>red spots on face</i>	<i>sings</i>
<i>wet nose</i>	<i>wags tail</i>	<i>has feathers</i>	
<i>snores</i>	<i>barks</i>	<i>bought as a puppy</i>	<i>licks face</i>
<i>yellow</i>	<i>tweets</i>	<i>chases sticks</i>	<i>chirps at you</i>
	<i>has a tail</i>	<i>tries to fly</i>	

The notes are hard to read because they're all over the place; they're not grouped logically. To fix this, rewrite them like this, so you've grouped them logically:

<i>Molly the dog</i>		<i>Mike the bird</i>	
<i>has fur</i>	<i>has a tail</i>	<i>has feathers</i>	<i>likes seeds</i>
<i>brown</i>	<i>wags tail</i>	<i>yellow</i>	<i>sings</i>
<i>wet nose</i>	<i>licks face</i>	<i>red spots on face</i>	<i>tries to fly</i>
<i>snores</i>	<i>barks</i>	<i>sits on finger</i>	<i>chirps at you</i>
<i>bought as a puppy</i>		<i>tweets</i>	
<i>chases sticks</i>			

#2: Put items in time order

Class-ical! Class-ical music! Get it? Funny, right? Oh, I forgot: What's a teacher's favorite music?

The joke was ruined. Why? Because the set-up and the punchline weren't in the right order. When you write, try to put first things first.

Read these notes. If they make any sense to you at all, you deserve a prize.

Nightmare date

went to Mama Leone's

her plans got cancelled

she said she's available

Jenny said she can drive

her brother said she's busy

pissed off - NO CAR!

*depressed, so I let my
brother borrow my car*

sudden text from Jenny

*called Teresa's house
date over: Jenny got a text:
her mom is sick*

got paid\$\$\$ - date time :-)

Now they're in the right order. Read them now. See how they make sense?

Nightmare date

got paid\$\$\$ - date time :-)

called Teresa's house

*her brother said she's busy
depressed, so I let my
brother borrow my car*

sudden text from Jenny

her plans got cancelled

she said she's available

pissed off - NO CAR!

Jenny said she can drive

*went to Mama Leone's
date over: Jenny got a text:
her mom is sick*

Remember: read what you write. Is it clear what's first, what's next, and what's last? If not, rewrite your notes so things flow better.

Continue on to step #3...

#3: Create sentences from your list items

A sentence is a series of words with a **subject** (who or what the sentence is about) and a **predicate** (the rest of the sentence).

For more information about sentences, see the Brainsheet called *Sentences* on the web site. Search for **sen28**.

Sentences

- ✓ LaRue and Michael walked for over two hours in the rain.
- ✓ Dogs and cats both have four paws.
- ✓ The sun emerged from the clouds and melted the blanket of snow on the meadow.

NOT sentences

- ✗ LaRue and Michael, for over two hours, ← no predicate
- ✗ Have four paws. ← no subject
- ✗ Dogs and cats usually. ← no predicate
- ✗ The sun. ← no predicate
- ✗ Melted the blanket of snow. ← no subject

Take each item you have in your notes, and add a subject or a predicate to make it a sentence. Try to put related items into one longer sentence.

Let's say that you took notes on this picture, and here are your notes:



Summer Garden -
notes

blue flowers white fence

moose on tree stump

lattice fence

moose: blue bird on head

plants by fence

wooden moose

red flowers

Here's how to convert those notes into sentences. First, group them logically. (It doesn't make sense to put them in time order, so we'll skip that part.)

<i>Summer Garden - notes (grouped logically)</i>
<i>blue flowers red flowers</i>
<i>wooden moose</i>
<i>moose on tree stump</i>
<i>moose: blue bird on head</i>
<i>white fence</i>
<i>lattice fence</i>
<i>plants by fence</i>

Try to combine items if you can. For example, for these two items, you could write two sentences:

*There are blue flowers.
There are red flowers.*

But, combining them sounds better:

There are blue and red flowers.

Now, add words to each item in your list to make it a sentence. There isn't one right or wrong way to do it. Try to do your best, and then read what you wrote so you're sure it makes sense and sounds good.

<i>Summer Garden - rough draft</i>
<i>The picture shows blue and red flowers. There is a wooden moose on a tree stump. The moose has a blue bird on his head.</i>
<i>There is a white lattice fence, and there are plants by the fence.</i>

#4: Add transition words to help your writing flow

Transition words are words that help explain how things relate to each other. They make your writing flow more smoothly and they help to put a clearer picture into the mind of the reader.

Here's a story with transition words and the same story without them. (The transition words are underlined.) Do you see the difference in quality between the stories?

Transition words

✓ A long time ago, Jack and Jill went up a hill to fetch a pail of water.

Suddenly, Jack fell down and bumped his head on a large rock. A minute later, Jill came tumbling down the hill and also suffered injury. Next, Jack went home and his father cleaned up his bloody scalp. Later, at dinner, his father warned him about the dangers of rock climbing.

As a result of the accident, Jill was hospitalized for an acute pulled back muscle, which caused her to miss a lot of work. Because of the pain in her back, she was quite angry at Jack for leading her on such a dangerous expedition to obtain water when each of their homes had two working faucets.

Eventually, they became friends again.

NO transition words

✗ Jack and Jill went up a hill to fetch a pail of water.

Jack fell down and bumped his head on a large rock. Jill came tumbling down the hill and suffered injury. Jack went home and his father cleaned up his bloody scalp. His father warned him about the dangers of rock climbing.

Jill was hospitalized for an acute pulled back muscle. She missed a lot of work. She was quite angry at Jack for leading her on such a dangerous expedition to obtain water when each of their homes had two working faucets.

They became friends again.

See how transition words help? When you write, don't just write what happened:

Called Mike - went to Susan's party - she was sick - now she's better - party was fun - went home early.

Write **why** things happened, **when** they happened, and **how** they happened:

Last Saturday, my buddy Mike called me and said he needed a ride to his cousin Susan's party. I told him, "No problem," because Susan is really nice and she has funny friends. He told me Susan had an awful case of the flu, but now she's better. The party was loads of fun, but we had to leave early because I had to be at work at 6 o'clock Sunday morning.

Name: _____

Date: _____

5
tasks

SHOW THAT YOU KNOW

Complete all five tasks and show that you know how to make sentences out of lists of words and phrases.

15

Circle True/False

- | | | | | | |
|---|------|-------|---|---|----------------------|
| 1 | True | False | Bullet-pointed lists are just as good as sentences for describing how things relate to each other. | 1 | <input type="text"/> |
| 2 | True | False | People organize things in their mind so well that you don't have to put things in logical order when you write. | 1 | <input type="text"/> |
| 3 | True | False | A series of well-written sentences with transition words can explain cause and effect (how one thing results in another). | 1 | <input type="text"/> |

In the gray box, write 5-7 words (or groups of words) to describe your home.

4	<input type="text"/>	2	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------	---	----------------------

5	Now take those words and make them into a paragraph that makes sense and flows well.	10	<input type="text"/>
---	--	----	----------------------



Stuck? Begin with: "My house is" or "My apartment has"



Handwriting practice area with blue horizontal lines and a vertical pink margin line.

more space



Rubric - paragraph from groups of words

Your total score: out of 10. Here's why:

This score	6	7	8	9	10
Equals a %	60	70	80	90	100

0 **1** **2** **3** All sentences grammatically correct

0 **3** **6** **7** Wrote a logical paragraph that included all words written in the gray box on page 7

impressive: You did an excellent job, making few mistakes. Keep up the high-quality work.

adequate: You did it. Keep working to improve accuracy and quality. Check your work more carefully.

attempted: You tried to do it. You need more practice. Work with your teacher to get better at it.

nonexistent: You didn't do it. Were the directions unclear? Did you forget to do it? Talk with your teacher.

Additional comments: