

Jurassic Park by Michael Crichton

**Key Processes:**

- Use imaginative vocabulary and varied linguistic and literary techniques to achieve particular effects
- Vary sentence structure for interest, effect and subtleties of meaning

**Assessment Focuses:**

- AF1 Write imaginative, interesting and thoughtful texts
- AF5 Vary sentences for clarity, purpose and effect

**Class Writing Tasks**

This unit focuses on narrative writing and features an extract from the novel *Jurassic Park* by Michael Crichton. Students examine how the author creates and maintains tension through his use of sentence types and structures. They also analyse how the author's use of language enriches his writing. Their learning is then applied to a writing task which challenges them to 'imagine, explore and entertain'.

**1. Jurassic Park**

Display **Screen 1.1** and print out individual copies for the students. (Copies may be printed from the CD-ROM, or photocopies made from the Extracts section at the back of this book.)

- Before you start reading the extract as a class, ask students to pay particular attention to how the author uses different sentence types and lengths.
- Once you have read the text, highlight some of the different sentence types and lengths on screen.
- Take initial ideas from the students about *why* the author varies the sentences. What effect does it have?

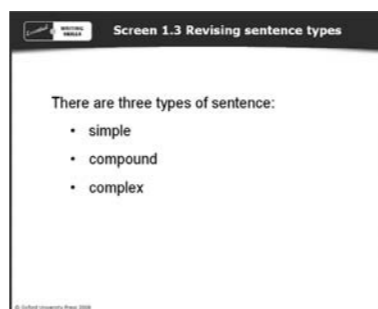
**2. Language techniques**

Display **Screen 1.2**. Explain to the students that this task explores how the writer uses language to enrich the text and to create various effects.

- Encourage the students to match each literary technique to an appropriate example from the text, using the drag and drop facility.
- Take feedback, ensuring that the students understand *how* and *why* each technique has been used. (With less able students, you may need to revise the meaning of the terminology.) Elicit the answers below:
  - Simile – compares the pain with something that we know would be extremely painful
  - Onomatopoeia – echoes the actual sounds so makes the text more immediate and realistic
  - Active verbs – build drama and tension; show how things are happening quickly
  - Noun phrase – builds up the detail and makes it easier for us to picture the scene
  - Repetition – adds impact and drama; makes an idea stand out
  - Present tense – suggests it is happening now; allows us to feel what a character feels
  - Ellipsis – open-ended pause builds tension and leaves the reader's imagination to leap ahead, without being too explicit.

**3. Revising types of sentence**

Display **Screen 1.3**. Explain to the students that they are going to revise the three different types of sentence: simple, compound and complex. Invite definitions and examples, then show the slides to reinforce students' understanding.

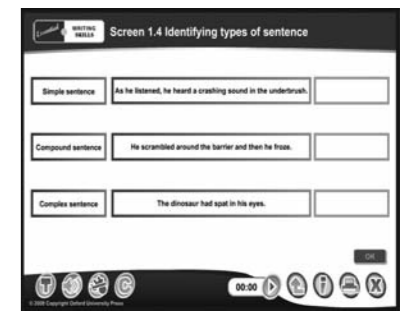


**4. Identifying types of sentence**

Display **Screen 1.4**. Explain to the students that the task is to drag and drop examples from the passage to appropriate types of sentence. Ensure that in feedback, students explain how they knew which was which.

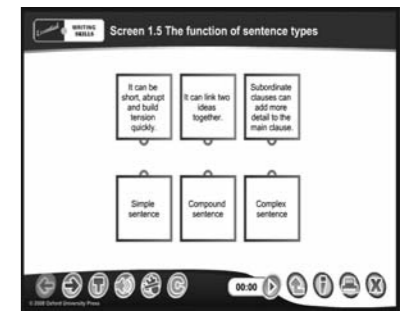
Elicit the following:

- Simple – 'The dinosaur had spat in his eyes.' (It contains one clause.)
- Compound – 'He scrambled around the barrier and then he froze.' (It contains two clauses connected by 'and'.)
- Complex – 'As he listened, he heard a crashing sound in the underbrush.' (It contains a subordinate clause at the start that does not make sense on its own but adds more detail to the main clause which comes after the comma.)



**5. The function of sentence types**

Display **Screen 1.5**. Explain to the students that in this activity they will need to think about the different functions of the different sentence types. Encourage them to read the statements about the effects and functions of sentences and to link them with the correct sentence types. Explain that they need to link the boxes by clicking and dragging lines between them.



When the activity is complete and correct, ask the students why a mix of sentence types is important in a piece of writing. Draw out the idea that it varies the pace and tension. Point out that some sentence types are more suitable for conveying information, others for increasing drama and others for relaying complex ideas.

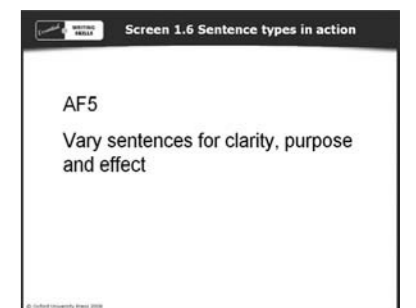
**6. Sentence types in action**

Display **Screen 1.6**, showing Version 1 of the extract.

- Read Version 1 with the students. Ask them how effective they think this ending is in terms of sentence types. Draw out the fact that it uses simple sentences repetitively (and rather tediously, despite the disturbing content).
- Ask students to work in pairs. Their task is to rewrite the extract using a variety of sentence types for maximum effect.
- If necessary, model rewriting the first sentence. For example 'And there was a new pain in his belly which caused Nedry to stumble.'
- Allow pairs about five minutes to restructure the extract.
- Invite students to share their rewrites and discuss their strengths and weaknesses.

Click to reveal Version 2 of the extract, explaining that it is the original extract written by Michael Crichton.

- Analyse the sentence types in the paragraph, with the students. (There are three sentences in total: The first is complex; the second and third are simple.)
- Discuss the effect of using these sentence types. Draw out that the long complex sentence delays the reader finding out what the dinosaur has done to him and builds the suspense. The final two sentences are short, sharp and dramatic. They shock the reader, creating an arresting, memorable ending.



### Focus on Creativity

- Students compare the extract on Screen 1.1 with the same episode in the film version of *Jurassic Park*. Which version do you think is most effective and why?
- Students design a film poster for a new film about dinosaurs or other monsters taking over the earth. Try to include:
  - a striking image
  - a title for the film
  - a brief blurb about the film
  - a mention of the main star of the film.

### Beyond the Classroom

Students write a proposal for a new computer adventure game. It can be set on earth or another planet and should focus on some sort of combat – between monsters or aliens, and humans.

In their proposal, students should aim to:

- focus on the content of the game – what will it be about?
- indicate what the combat will be
- explain why they think the game would be popular
- show how it will appeal to a wide audience of game players.

**Students are now ready to begin a writing task independently. The Core level of support is provided here but the CD-ROM also contains Foundation and Extension level support.**

### Student Writing Tasks Core Questions

#### Longer writing task

- AF1 Write imaginative, interesting and thoughtful texts      AF5 Vary sentences for clarity, purpose and effect

#### Question 3

Create the next part of the story where the dinosaur attacks Nedry. Use the plan below to help you think of ideas and to structure them.

#### Structure

Longer sentences to build detail and delay the action:	Shorter sentences to add shock:
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#### Language

Similes to compare one thing with another:	Onomatopoeia to add sound effects:
Active verbs to make it dramatic:	Repetition to build tension:
Noun phrases to add detail:	

#### Shorter writing task

#### Question 4

Retell the events of the extract as a newspaper report.

#### Structure

Catchy and lively headline:	
Topic sentence – in bold covering who/what/where/when/why:	
Longer sentences to add detail:	
Shorter sentences to create tension:	

#### Language

Use a range of techniques from this unit to make your writing interesting.

1	2
3	4