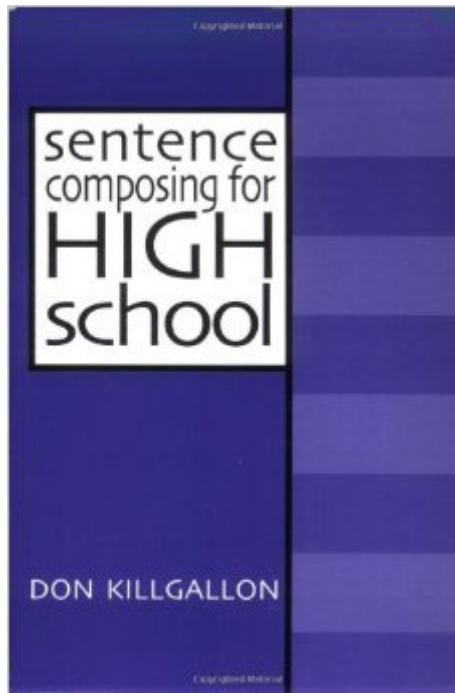


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# Sentence Composing For High School: A Worktext On Sentence Variety And Maturity



## Synopsis

With the original publication of his sentence composing series, Don Killgallon changed the way thousands of high school English teachers and their students look at language, literature, and writing by focusing on the sentence. In this expanded series, Killgallon presents the same proven methodology but offers all-new writing exercises for middle school, high school, and college students.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

My experience has been that 9th and 10th grade students are engaged by the lessons in this book. The examples come from both popular and literary works. The exercises build logically. Most students can do the work without questions, allowing time to work one-to-one with struggling students. Using these lessons gave the class a common language around creating complex sentences, which helped in the transfer of skills from the writing exercises to the use of complex sentences in essays and other written work.

Though a late learner in my forties, I bought this book in order to study sentence variety. I find that this book is replete with examples of stunning sentences. A great book that should not be overlooked by many adult learners, who see it as a book written for teenage students. This book is fantastic not just for teenage learners, also for adults, for any aspiring writer or student, even for those who suffer from Writer's Block. If you love this book and are keen on studying sentence variety, then you will love the other books of same kind, those of the following below, all with my

five-star ratings: The first two must-buy books by the same authors 1. "Grammar for High School: A Sentence-Composing Approach" 2. "Sentence Composing for College: A Worktext on Sentence Variety and Maturity" 3. "The Art of Styling Sentences" by K.D. Sullivan (Author). A must-have book for all aspiring writers and students. This book teaches sentence variety and has examples of stunning sentences. To say how great this book was for me, the pages have gone all dog-eared from much reading and is well-thumbed. 4. "Sentence Combining: A Composing Book" by William Strong (Author) A very charming book with sparkling examples of sentences. Great exercises for brainstorming. I often bring this lightweight book with me into cafes. Great readings with my teas and lattes.

This guide provides many sentence revisions for the working English classroom. It is an excellent choice for the beginning teacher and can be used as a standby for the master teacher. Useful at all high school levels. I highly recommend this text for any high school English curriculum!

I like Killgallon's basic approach: students learn grammar and sentence fluency best by imitating the sentence structures of professional writers. I question, however, his focus on categorizing sentence parts and his use of these categories as the organizing principle for the book. Will a student really benefit from knowing the difference between an appositive phrase and an absolute phrase? Why is this distinction important? If we take a purely functional approach to this material, why split hairs over the different types of phrases and clauses? This seems counterproductive to me. I'm not even convinced it's important to teach students the difference between a phrase and a clause, if our goal is not grammar for grammar's sake but grammar for the sake of improved writing. On the other hand, I love Killgallon's very simple, useful distinction between sentence openers, subject-verb splits, and sentence closers. His choices of professional writers' sentences are also excellent, as is his series of sentence combining exercises. I will make use of this textbook in class, but will condense and adapt it to fit what I see as my students' needs as developing writers.

I wish that I had learned to write in middle and high school using the sentence composing technique, which the Killgallon series (including sentence composing books for elementary through college levels) presents in a very usable format. As a tutor of homeschoolers, I wish that I had known of these books years ago because they help students understand how to put together very sophisticated sentence structures through imitation of great writers, without having to explain the labyrinth of participial grammar. (The materials of the Institute for Excellence in Writing also use the

same approach, but require much more "teacher education" to use the curriculum.) Moreover, the hundreds of model sentences selected for imitation are typically very engaging to the target age groups of the books, unlike the soporific sentences found in the average textbook. I highly recommend that parents begin to use these books with their elementary-age children in order to develop a keen sensitivity to effective expression in both their reading and writing.

Don Killgallon's unassuming book *Sentence Composing for High School: A Worktext on Sentence Variety and Maturity* is a gold mine. As a high school teacher of eleventh-graders at all levels, I find that sentence composing is in critical need of attention. Students at this stage of development are ready to express themselves in more nuanced ways, but they often don't have the sentence-structure know-how to do so. Less confident students, who have come to see writing as a collection of impossible rules, may not venture beyond simple sentences. And even some of the more confident writers will write sentences that are impossibly tangled; they perceive that such writing will look intelligent and be rewarded. Killgallon uses, as his models, clear and elegant sentences that are professionally written. The exercises connected to the sentences are fun to do, as well as empowering. I have had a copy of *Sentence Composing for High School* for many years, and I love it. I also have a class set of *Grammar for High School*. I like the concept of these books, the idea that we can become better writers not through some esoteric idea of what "good" looks like, but through methodical imitation of the sentences of the professionals.

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