

# Cumulative, Periodic, and Inverted Sentences (pg 895)

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# Cumulative Sentences

- The cumulative sentence begins with a standard sentence pattern and adds multiple details after it
- These details can take the form of subordinate clauses or different kinds of phrases
- These details pile up, hence the name cumulative

# Effect of Cumulative Sentences

- These type of sentences make writings seem more informal, relaxed, and conversational
- These sentences are also used to avoid lack of variety

# Cumulative Sentences (examples)

- “It is a wilderness that is beautiful, dangerous, abundant, oblivious of us, mysterious, never to be conquered or controlled or second-guessed, or known more than a little.”
  - The independent clause here focuses on one word: wilderness. The sentence then accumulates a string of modifiers that describe nature’s ambiguity. It is “beautiful” and “abundant” but also “dangerous” and “mysterious”. The author ends with phrases that emphasize nature’s independence: “never to be conquered or controlled or second-guessed, or known more than a little.” Using a cumulative sentence allows the author to include all of these modifiers in one smooth sentence, instead of using a group of shorter sentences that repeat “wilderness”.
  - Basically, it’s smoother and makes things less repetitive.

# Periodic Sentences

- The periodic sentence begins with multiple details and holds off a standard sentence pattern until the end
- A periodic sentence emphasizes its main idea by placing it at the end

# Effect of Periodic Sentences

- These type of sentences are used for emphasis and can be persuasive by putting reasons for something at the beginning before the final point is made
- It can also create suspense or interest for the reader

# Periodic Sentences (examples)

- “Crossing a bare common, in snow puddles, at twilight, under a clouded sky, without having in my thoughts any occurrence of special good fortune, I have enjoyed a perfect exhilaration.”
  - The author demonstrates how nature can ascend from the physical (“snow puddles,” “clouded sky”) to the psychological (“without...thoughts of...good fortune”), and to the spiritual (“perfect exhilaration”). Whether you choose to place detail at the beginning or end of a sentence depends on the surrounding sentences.
  - Unless you have a good reason, you probably should not put one cumulative sentence after another or one periodic sentence after another. Instead, by shifting sentence patterns, you can vary sentence length and change the rhythm of your sentences.

# Inverted Sentences

- Usually in standard sentence patterns the noun comes before the verb, but in inverted sentences the **verb** comes **before** the noun

# Effect of Inverted Sentences

- These types of sentences are used to create emphasis or meter, as well as to control sentence rhythm and pattern

# Inverted Sentences (examples)

- “Everywhere was a shadow of death.”
- “Under them are evergreen thickets of rhododendron.”
  - In both of these we can see that the verb comes before the noun and that it allows for more pattern in each sentence