WR115
Sentence Play

**Vocabulary:** Sentence, Clause, Phrase, Coordination, Subordination, coordinating conjunctions, subordinating conjunctions

**Directions:** In groups of up to four, read the following sentences out loud. Appreciate the rhythm as you read. Then use these examples as models to collaboratively write a sentence of your own for each of the sentence types.

**Coordination/Balance:** A compound sentence composed of a pair of clauses of roughly equal length joined by a semicolon.

\[
\text{Independent clause + semicolon + independent clause}
\]

“Words themselves are innocuous; it is the consensus that gives them true power.”

Gloria Naylor

**Subordination:** A compound sentence with a dependent clause and an independent clause.

\[
\text{Dependent clause + comma + independent clause}
\]

“Although English language offers opportunities for clichés, language users should be responsible in shattering these clichés.”

Amy Tan

**Series:** A string of grammatically identical elements, such as nouns, verbs, or adjectives.

\[
\text{Independent clause + series (verbal phrases)}
\]

“This was the language that helped shape the way I saw things, expressed things, made sense of the world.”

Amy Tan

**Cumulative Sentence:** Most sentences can be classified as cumulative. They begin with a subject and gather both force and detail as one reads, beginning to end. The advantage of a cumulative sentence is that it directly and emphatically announces its business by beginning with its subject.

\[
\text{Independent clause(main idea) + dashes + dependent clause + independent clause}
\]

“Most people may never see a coyote – especially if they go looking for one – but everyone can hear them at night.”

James Baldwin

**Periodic Sentence:** A periodic sentence delays the subject and verb in an effort to pique the reader’s interest. Information placed at the head of the sentence draws readers in, creating a desire to find out what happens. Emphasis is given to the final part of the sentence, where the readers’ need to know is satisfied.

“Now, if this passion, this skill, this (to quote Toni Morrison) ‘sheer intelligence,’ this incredible music, the mighty achievement of having brought a people utterly unknown to, or despised by ‘history’ – to have brought this people to their present, troubled, troubling, and unassailable and unanswerable place – if this absolutely unprecedented journey does not indicate that black English is a language, I am curious to know what definition of languages it to be trusted.”

James Baldwin