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Hi everyone. I'm Mackenzie, and today we're learning about sentences and style. Have you ever felt like your writing was too plain or too boring? In this tutorial, we'll learn about sentences and style. We'll discuss sentence variety, and we'll look at active and passive voice. We'll begin by discussing the connection between sentences and style. Sentence structure is a big part of style. And when we're constructing sentences, we have to keep in mind our genre, our intended audience, and the goals or the purpose of our piece of writing to structure sentences to best fit the style for that piece of writing.

For example, if we're communicating a rather complex idea in a sentence, the tendency is to use a complicated complex sentence. This isn't the best option though. If we have a complex idea, we should use one clear, simple sentence so that we maximize the clarity and the understanding of the reader in that particular sentence. Using sentence structure and using style is part of what we call syntax, which is the particular order of words in a sentence. Syntax can also refer to the study of how words are ordered within a sentence. Syntax is key to understanding how sentences function, how they're structured, and therefore, understanding the style of a sentence.

When thinking about the style of our sentences, we need to make sure that we're writing our sentences in a variety of different ways. This includes having different numbers and different types of clauses. Having different lengths of sentences, and using different types of beginnings in our sentences. This is important because it adds interest to the writing, and makes the writing more readable. If you feel like you don't have enough variety in your sentences, some of your options are to combine shorter sentences if you feel like you have too many short sentences. Combine them into a longer sentence, or if you have too many long sentences, break them up into shorter sentences.

We can also reorganize the sentences, so that we don't have too many of the same type of sentence in one area. And we can change the beginnings of sentences so that they don't all sound the same. Here's an example of a paragraph that's written using very little sentence variety. You will notice that each of these sentences is rather short. Each of them sounds rather choppy. And each sentence is one single independent clause. We don't have a lot of variety here. If we were to read this paragraph out loud, we would see that it sounds sort of awkward to read because it doesn't flow very naturally either.

Here is a different paragraph written about the same subject, but this time there is sentence variety. We have different types of sentences, different lengths of sentences, and the beginnings of the sentences all sound a little different. It makes the paragraph much more readable. If we were to read this paragraph out loud, it would not sound awkward, it would flow naturally. Sentences can be written using active voice or passive voice, both of

which influence the style of the sentence.

Active voice is when a sentence is written with emphasis on the subject of the sentence. The subject is the thing doing the action in the sentence. Passive voice is when the sentence is written with an emphasis on the object of the sentence. The object is the thing that receives the action. Active voice is oftentimes a better choice, because it tends to be clearer, stronger, more specific, and creates shorter sentences. While passive voice is generally viewed as weaker, less clear, and less interesting.

There are, however, a few situations in which passive voice could be most effective. The famous example is the sentence, mistakes were made. But we also have instances in which the subject of the sentence isn't important, such as the statement corn is grown in Iowa. It really depends on the style you're trying to communicate in your writing. Here are some examples of active versus passive voice.

Our first example reads, studying is done in the library. And this is passive voice because the emphasis is on studying. Studying is done. But we don't know who's actually doing the studying, it's rather unclear. Instead we could say, students study in the library. Next chicken Alfredo is enjoyed by my sister. This sentence, written in passive voice, is a little too lengthy. We could say this in a much more concise way. We could say, my sister enjoys chicken alfredo.

We eliminated the words, is enjoyed by. We made the sentence more concise by eliminating the passive voice, and writing it using active voice. Next, the kitchen was cleaned by Angelo. This is passive voice, because instead of focusing on Angelo, the subject who cleaned the kitchen, were focusing on the kitchen itself, which is the object. We need to reverse that to create a more active voice. Instead we'll say, Angelo cleaned the kitchen. And our last example. Directions will be given to you by the instructor.

The focus here is on the directions, but the instructor is the one doing the action, that's the subject. So instead we should say, the instructor will give you directions. Notice that this sentence is shorter, it's more concise. In this tutorial, we learned about sentences and style. We discussed sentence variety, and we took a look at active and passive voice. Don't let your sentences be boring. I'm Mackenzie. Thanks for listening.