

LEARNING STRATEGIES:
Rereading, Marking the Text,
Graphic Organizer, Revising

My Notes

Learning Targets

- Develop stylistic options by analyzing and emulating a writer’s style.
- Develop strategies for revision of future writing.

Language and Writer’s Craft: Review of Syntax

“**Syntax** refers to the way words are arranged within sentences. How writers control and manipulate the sentence is a strong determiner of voice and imparts personality to the writing.” Nancy Dean

Some of the elements of syntax are word order, sentence length, and punctuation. Punctuation can reinforce meaning, create a particular effect, and express the writer’s voice. Look at the purpose of three stylistic techniques that manipulate syntax for effect:

- Simple sentences can create dramatic contrasts with longer sentences and can convey information in tones that vary from blunt to simplistic.
- The dash marks a sudden change in thought or tone, sets off a brief summary, or sets off a parenthetical part of the sentence. A dash often conveys a casual tone.
- The ellipsis usually represents words omitted from a quote or a pause.

Before Reading

1. Fulghum’s credo is memorable and effective, not just because of the ideas, but because of his syntax. How does syntax help create memorable writing?

During Reading

2. Reread Fulghum’s text, this time annotating it for stylistic choices—his syntax and punctuation, in particular—that you find particularly effective. In the My Notes section, explain the effect of the choices.

After Reading

3. Now use the graphic organizer that follows to explore how sentence length and punctuation contribute to Fulghum’s tone or theme. Find specific examples of sentences that contain the element of syntax listed in the first column. For each example, explain its function in the credo and how it advances the tone or theme of the text. In the last column, use the examples to guide a revision of a sentence in the draft of your credo.

Element	Examples and Function of Fulghum's Syntax	Revision of Your Sentence
Imperative Sentence		
Compound Sentence with Parallel Structure		
Dash		
Ellipsis		
Polysyndeton		

Check Your Understanding

Annotate your revised draft to identify revisions you have made and what the intended effect of these changes is for your reader.

My Notes
