

Connecting “claims, evidence, and reasons”: an advanced thesaurus

Goal of this guide:

Our core writing skill for this year is to learn and apply the tools of grammar and the structure of English sentences to be able to link our ideas. Our most important challenge? Connect the “evidence” (the facts and details that give rise to our interpretations and generalizations,) our “claims” or interpretations of the significance of these ideas, and the connecting “reasons” (also called “warants”) of how the evidence shows what we say it does and supports our claims.

To do this, we freely use all the options that English provides to create logical links between ideas so that it's always clear which idea is which and how they connect. The challenge is that English provides so many options, a prospect which can make “where to start” daunting. Assuming that we start with three parts, the evidence (“Show”), Claim (“Tell”), and reason (“Explanation”), we have these options:

- Make the entire idea (or “meme”) a single sentence, two sentences, or three separate ones.
- If the idea is two sentences, we can choose which two ideas get joined in a single sentence and which stays in its own sentence joined by a transition phrase.
- We can put the parts in 6 entirely usable orders: STE, SET, TES, TSE, EST, ETS
- We can choose to turn the separate ideas into phrases, or preserve some of their original sentence structure by keeping them clauses. (this creates 7 different grammatical structures just for the 1-sentence memes); and
- Finally, for any given order and basic sentence structure, we can create many stylistic variations by choosing which types of phrases (appositive, prepositional phrases, infinitives, absolutes, participles) or clauses (adverb, non-restrictive adjective, restrictive adjective, and noun clauses) to use.

The point? We actually have many options to connect ideas, but doing the math, the plausible solutions are still within manageable bounds--somewhere around 200 plausible possibilities for a single idea. This guide takes one such example and works it through about 75 variations just to show that not only is this possible, but that any number of solutions may provide us with an elegant, clear, and fluent solution that avoids disconnected non-sequiturs and reliance on any one formula to connect ideas.

Finally and perhaps most importantly, this list can help demystify something that's often been *assumed* to be magic, but can actually be very down-to-earth: the development of individual style. In effect, the hundreds of possibilities here are all in their own way “correct” and all are logically valid. Still, with so many to choose from, some just “feel right,” “sound better,” or “fit with what we're *exactly* trying to say.” Learning through reading and writing which ones **we** actually prefer and which we avoid? **This** is “individual style!”

So, as the year goes on, never forget that the only real reason to learn techniques (like grammar concepts) or really any technical element in your art form, is that knowing these gives us tools, choices, and options that **we can choose from** as we develop a mature style not simply based on whatever we've done in the past, but on what we know helps us express creatively exactly *what we meant to say!*



How to use this resource:

Do not use this as a “how to”! No one thinks through 75 (much less 200) variations of a sentence before they write it. Instead, think of it as an experiment--as we begin our sentence-combining skill unit, let’s see what happens when we apply as many different variations as possible to the same content. We can logically work through the possibilities, then look at examples of all the various structures that could connect our ideas. Once we’ve seen them in action, we can notice the distinct flavor of each, identify the phrases and connectors used, and even notice how the specific wordings of each idea can change and shift to make the most of each structure to make the resulting meme “work.”

Start by simply reading through the examples that follow, noting the abbreviations and trying to identify where each phrase stops and starts, as well as how we’ve maintained the same logical connections between ideas, even as we change the wording. Notice that because we’re “forcing” some of these combinations, some seem awkward, others more fluent. The variations below work in reverse order from the list above:

- first, we look only at one order of a one-sentence meme (we’ll start with evidence, claim, and explanation--aka, Show—> Tell, Explain--and simply look at different types of structures we can use.
- Then, we’ll do the same thing less exhaustively with the different orders of parts.
- Finally, we’ll consider different sentence structures entirely, as we try all the types of variations, while still knowing that many specific sub-variations by phrase and clause type exist within each set.

Again, notice which ones sound best to you and notice how they sound and flow--choosing which way to express a given idea is of course the basis of developing your own style. At the same time, notice that all, to some degree “work”--the takeaway should be that with so many good ways to connect ideas, we should never settle for disconnected ideas, nor should we robotically reuse the same connecting “formulas” just to make sure we’ve connected them.

We’ll base all the memes that follow on this sample content, from the beginning of Chapter 2 of *Ethan Frome*:

Concrete Detail/Evidence: Ethan’s education “had fed his fancy and made him aware of huge cloudy meanings behind the daily face of things.”	Interpretation: just enough knowledge to unsettle him	Explanation: His insights neither clear nor tangible.
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1. **One-sentence-memes: let's start with the possibility that the entire meme can be connected by combining it into a single, complex sentence. First, notice that we will try six basic orders of the three parts of the meme (1.1-1.6): STE, SET, TSE, TES, EST, ETS**

1.1 STE: for this first section, we'll go really in-depth, as we consider all the types of phrases or clauses that we can use in each portion of the sentence. We'll put them in sub-groups (note the nested numbering) by *grammatical structure*, depending on whether the independent (primary) clause of the sentence comes at the beginning, middle, or end:

First sub-group: Independent clause (IC) first, followed by two dependent phrases

- 1.1.1. IC, partic, Abs: Ethan's education "fed his fancy," making him aware of "cloudy meanings" behind the daily face of things, these unsettling meanings apparently neither clear nor tangible.
- 1.1.2. IC, part, app: Ethan's education "fed his fancy," of "cloudy meanings," unsettling and nebulous "behind the daily face of things."
- 1.1.3. IC app part: Ethan's education "fed his fancy," of "cloudy meanings," unsettlingly unclear and intangible, hidden "behind the daily face of things."
- 1.1.4. IC partic Abs: Ethan's education "fed his fancy," making him aware of "cloudy meanings behind the daily face of things," these meanings unsettlingly unclear and intangible.
- 1.1.5. IC pp app pp : Ethan's education "fed his fancy," with "cloudy meanings behind the shapes of things," sufficiently unsettling without clearer implications.
- 1.1.6. IC abs, pp: Ethan's education "fed his fancy," making him aware of "cloudy meanings behind the daily face of things," these meanings apparently unsettling without clear or tangible implications.
- 1.1.7. IC, app, NR adjCl: Ethan's education "fed his fancy," about concealed truths of his life, unsettlingly unclear, which loom intangibly "cloudy" "behind the daily face of things."
- 1.1.8. IC, ADvC, Abs: Ethan's education "fed his fancy," as he felt sensitive to only the "cloudy meanings" behind the daily face of things, these meanings likely unsettling him without clearer or more-tangible implications for his life.
- 1.1.9. IC, AdvC, RajC: Ethan's education "fed his fancy," as he felt sensitive to only the unsettling "cloudy meanings behind the daily face of things" whose implications seem barely clear or tangible.

**Second sub-group: still STE, but using the sentence structure:
Phrase, IC, Phrase**

- 1.1.10. Prep, ic, abs: With an education that “fed his fancy” to the “cloudy meanings behind the daily face of things,” Ethan seems unsettled, the implications of his musings seeming barely clear or tangible.
- 1.1.11. App, IC, abs: “Cloudy” in its view “behind the daily face of things,” Ethan’s education may have left him unsettled, the implications of his dawning awareness seeming barely clear or tangible.
- 1.1.12. Part, IC, app: Obscuring clearer meanings beyond a “cloudy” view “behind the daily face of things,” Ethan’s education may have left him unsettled in his reflections, neither clear nor tangible.
- 1.1.13. Abs, IC, app: His dawning awareness emerging from “cloudy meanings” “behind the daily face of things,” Ethan’s education may have left him unsettled in his reflections, neither clear nor tangible.
- 1.1.14. AdvCl, IC, abs: As his dawning awareness summons “cloudy meanings” “behind the daily face of things,” Ethan’s education may have left him unsettled, the implications of his dawning awareness seeming barely clear or tangible.
- 1.1.15. AdvCl, IC, abs: As his dawning awareness summons “cloudy meanings” “behind the daily face of things,” it seems that Ethan’s education may have left him unsettled, the implications of his dawning awareness seeming barely clear or tangible.
- 1.1.16. Prep, ic, abs: Under his apprehension of “cloudy meanings” “behind the daily face of things,” Ethan seems unsettled by his education, the implications of his dawning awareness seeming barely clear or tangible.
- 1.1.17. App, IC, abs: “Cloudy” and uncertain,” Ethan’s observations of his life may have been unsettling by just enough education to see something missing in his life,” these implications seeming barely clear or tangible to him.
- 1.1.18. Part, IC, app: Apprehending only “Cloudy meanings” “behind the daily face of things,” Ethan seems unsettled by an education that has brought him only confused thoughts, neither clear nor tangible.
- 1.1.19. Abs, IC, app: His apprehension of “Cloudy meanings” offering him barely a glimpse “behind the daily face of things,” Ethan seems unsettled by his education that has brought him only confused musings, neither clear nor tangible.
- 1.1.20. Prep, IC, NR Adj Cl: Under an apprehension of “Cloudy meanings” “behind the daily face of things,” Ethan seems unsettled in these dawning musings, which thus seem neither clear nor tangible enough to provide him further understanding.

These last few follow the order of Phrase, Phrase, IC. These are fewer in variety and number than the preceding group, mainly because English sentences simply *sound better* when the independent clause comes in the first half of a long sentence. Notice that for those in this group to “work” at all, both

the first two phrases are shortened, and in some, bits of content from the first two parts help “extend” the length of the Independent clause to keep the sentence in balance.

- 1.1.21. Partic, Abs, IC: Apprehending only “cloudy meanings” “behind the daily face of things,” his education apparently unsettling, Ethan has found only confusion in his unclear, intangible musings.
 - 1.1.22. Prep, R adj Cl, IC: With only a sense of the “Cloudy meanings” “behind the daily face of things” that seem unsettled by his beginnings of an education, Ethan has found only confusion in his unclear, intangible musings.
 - 1.1.23. App, partic, IC: Uncertain beyond “Cloudy meanings” “behind the daily face of things” and unsettled by his cursory education, Ethan has found only confusion in his unclear, intangible musings.
 - 1.1.24. Partic, PP, IC: Gazing indecisively on only the “Cloudy meanings” “behind the daily face of things,” probably with some uneasiness, Ethan has seemingly found only confusion in his unclear, intangible musings.
- 1.2. **That’s 24 different variations on one order of STE! (and we didn’t do ALL the possibilities, either!) Does this mean that for all the other orders (SET, TSE, TES, EST, ETS) we could also find at least 24 ways to combine the three parts in one sentence?** Basically, yes; Mercifully, however, we won’t worry about exhausting every one of these **96 other one-sentence variations**. Instead, we’ll focus in the examples that follow to only ONE single variation on each grammatical substructure. (e.g., clause, phrase, independent clause) rather than running through every single variation of each. That way, we’ll see the variety of “shapes” and structures, while realizing that there remain multiple different grammatical options to choose when finding the precise wording of each structure.) **For the first group, we’ll do some variations on SET: Note: I haven’t specifically labeled which phrase or clause types are used here--see if you can identify them all!**
- 1.2.1. IC, Phrase, Phrase: Ethan took from his education only a sense of “cloudy meanings” he sees “behind the face of things,” however unclearly, his tenuous grasp likely unsettling rather than enlightening.
 - 1.2.2. Phrase, IC, Phrase: Taking from his education only a sense of the “cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things,” Ethan seems to find his awakened, but tenuous grasp of something beyond his life problematic, unsettling rather than enlightening.
 - 1.2.3. Phrase, IC, Clause: His education awakening only a sense of the “cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things,” Ethan seems to find his awakened, but tenuous grasp of something beyond his life problematic, as it seems unsettling rather than enlightening.
 - 1.2.4. Clause, IC, Phrase: If Ethan takes from his education only a sense of the “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things,” he likely finds his

awakened, but tenuous grasp of something beyond his life problematic, unsettling rather than enlightening.

- 1.2.5. Phrase, Phrase, IC: Taking from his education only a sense of the “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things,” with his awakened, but tenuous grasp of something beyond his life, the narrator seems to observe that Ethan’s education has unsettled rather than enlightened him

1.3. **TES**

- 1.3.1. IC, Phrase, Phrase: Ethan seems troubled rather than enlightened by his education, the experience benefitting him with only tenuous, uncertain glimpses into the “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things.”
- 1.3.2. Phrase, IC, Phrase: Troubled rather than enlightened by his education, Ethan gets only tenuous, uncertain glimpses of the “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things” for all his elevated sympathies.
- 1.3.3. Phrase, IC, Clause: Seemingly troubled by the sensitivities aroused by his education, Ethan seems troubled rather than enlightened by his education, which has given him only tenuous, uncertain glimpses of the “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things.”
- 1.3.4. Clause, IC, Phrase: When the narrator describes Ethan, seemingly troubled by his education, he implies that Ethan has been troubled rather than enlightened by his tenuous, uncertain glimpses of the “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things.”
- 1.3.5. Phrase, Clause, IC: Seemingly troubled by his education, if Ethan appears troubled rather than enlightened in his musings, it is evident in his tenuous, uncertain glimpses of the “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things.”
- 1.3.6. Phrase, Phrase, IC: Seemingly troubled by his education, appearing troubled rather than enlightened in his musings, Ethan can gain only tenuous, uncertain glimpses of the “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things.”

1.4. **TSE**

- 1.4.1. IC, Phrase, Phrase: Ethan seems troubled rather than enlightened by his education, his uncertain glimpses into the “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things” providing him only a tenuous, uncertain understanding of his situation.
- 1.4.2. Phrase, IC, Phrase: Troubled rather than enlightened by his education, Ethan gains only uncertain glimpses into the “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things,” at best a tenuous, uncertain understanding of his situation.
- 1.4.3. Clause, IC, Phrase: If Ethan seems troubled rather than enlightened by his education, he seems, through uncertain glimpses into the “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things” to have gained only a tenuous, uncertain understanding of his situation.

- 1.4.4. Phrase, IC, Clause: His life unsettled rather than enlightened by his education, Ethan has gained only glimpses into the “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things” that betray his tenuous, uncertain understanding of his situation.
- 1.4.5. Phrase, Phrase, IC: Unsettled and far from enlightened, by gaining mere glimpses into the “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things,” Ethan betrays his tenuous, uncertain understanding of his situation inspired by his education.

1.5. EST

- 1.5.1. IC, Phrase, Phrase: Ethan shows a tenuous, uncertain understanding of his life in the “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things,” hinting at the the troubling effects of his education.
- 1.5.2. Phrase, IC, Phrase: With a tenuous, uncertain understanding of his life, Ethan sees only “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things,” hints of the unsettling effect of his education.
- 1.5.3. Phrase, IC, Clause: Coming to only a tenuous, uncertain understanding of his life, Ethan barely makes out “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things,” which suggest that education has troubled rather than enlightened him.
- 1.5.4. Clause, IC, Phrase: Given that he gains only a tenuous, uncertain understanding of his lot, Ethan barely makes out “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things,” his education thus seeming to have troubled rather than enlightened him.
- 1.5.5. Phrase, Clause, IC: With only a tenuous, uncertain understanding of his lot, through which he has barely made out “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things,” Ethan’s education thus seems to have troubled rather than enlightened him.
- 1.5.6. Phrase, Phrase, IC: His realizations tenuous and uncertain about the “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things,” Ethan’s education thus seems to have troubled rather than enlightened him.

1.6. IC, Phrase, Phrase:

- 1.6.1. Ethan shows a tenuous, uncertain understanding of his life, essentially troubled by the meagre benefits of his education, his insights barely grasping “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things.”
- 1.6.2. Phrase, IC, Phrase: Tenuous and uncertain in his understanding, Ethan seems essentially troubled by the meagre benefits of his education, insights that barely apprehend the “cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things.”
- 1.6.3. Phrase, IC, Clause: Showing a tenuous, uncertain understanding of his life, Ethan’s education seems only to have unsettled him if his insights barely grasp “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things.”
- 1.6.4. Phrase, Clause, IC: Tenuous in his uncertain understanding of his life that a troubled Ethan barely understands, his education seems only to have

given him glimpses into the “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things.”

- 1.6.5. Phrase, Phrase, IC: Tenuously uncertain, and barely understandable to a seemingly troubled Ethan, Ethan’s education seems only to have given him glimpses into the “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things.”

2. **Multiple-sentence memes:** That was quite a few variations, but we’re not done yet. For all these so far, we’ve been trying to stuff all three parts into a single sentence. Instead of combining so many parts into just one sentence, though, let’s consider two possibilities, namely that these parts could be combined into two sentences or independent clauses, or that each part could have its own sentences, with all the connection being accomplished by transition phrases. This creates more types than you might think: 6 basic orders (STE, SET, TSE, TES, ETS, EST) are possible with the content, as we’ve already seen. Now, just with deciding how many parts to put into each sentence, and the order of dependent and independent phrases within each sentence, it’s clear that there are 5 different basic structures possible: dependent phrase=IC+ IC, IC=Dependent phrase +IC, IC+ Dependent phrase=IC., IC+ IC=Dependent phrase; and finally, IC+IC+IC. Keep in mind, that’s just the order and structure--take a look at part one at the top as we remember that within each structure, we could easily find at least 20-30 really specific variations if we change what type of sentence-combining phrases or clauses we choose. For the sake of clarity and brevity, I’ll create just one example for each of the 30 basic *orders* of elements, which are listed in bold below:

2.1. STE

- 2.1.1. **Dependent Phrase/IC +IC:** His education having “fed his fancy,” Ethan is aware of only “cloudy meanings” about his life; hidden “behind the daily face of things,” these unsettling meanings seem neither clear nor tangible.
- 2.1.2. **IC/Dependent phrase+IC:** His education may have “fed his fancy” Yet only supplied “cloudy meanings” “behind the daily face of things,” an unsettling prospect: after all, these cursory messages thus seem neither clear nor tangible beyond this limited uneasiness.
- 2.1.3. **IC+ Dependent phrase/IC:** His education certainly “fed his fancy” while supplying only “cloudy meanings” “behind the daily face of things”: an apparently unsettling prospect, these cursory messages thus seem neither clear nor tangible beyond Ethan’s uneasy musings.
- 2.1.4. **IC+ IC/Dependent phrase:** His education certainly “fed his fancy” but gave him barely “cloudy meanings” “behind the daily face of things;” This prospect thus seems to have unsettled Ethan, these cursory messages neither clear nor tangible.
- 2.1.5. **IC+IC+IC:** His education may have “fed his fancy” yet only supplied “cloudy meanings” “behind the daily face of things.” This, unfortunately, seems an unsettling prospect to Ethan: after all, these cursory messages in effect seem neither clear nor tangible beyond this limited uneasiness.

2.2. SET

- 2.2.1. **Dependent Phrase/IC +IC:** Taking from his education only a sense of the “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things,” Ethan seems to find his awakened, but tenuous grasp of something beyond his life problematic: In effect, the narrator notes, Ethan’s education has unsettled him rather than providing him answers.
 - 2.2.2. **IC+ Dependent phrase/IC:** Through his modest education Ethan has begun to grasp a sense of “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things”: In finding his awakened, but tenuous grasp of something beyond his life problematic, the narrator notes that Ethan’s education seems to have unsettled rather than enlightened him.
 - 2.2.3. **IC+ IC/Dependent phrase:** A sensitive Ethan is barely able to make sense of the “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things”: in effect, Ethan seems to find his awakened, but tenuous grasp of something beyond his life problematic, his education unsettling rather than enlightening him.
 - 2.2.4. **IC+IC+IC:** Despite having more education than most in Starkfield, Ethan takes from his education only a sense of the “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things.” By the narrator’s estimation, Ethan thus seems to find his awakened, but tenuous grasp of something beyond his life problematic—it’s as if his education has unsettled rather than enlightened him.
- 2.3. **TSE**
- 2.3.1. **Dependent Phrase/IC +IC:** Troubled rather than enlightened by his education, Ethan can make only uncertain glimpses into the “cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things; it’s as if his education has given Ethan only a tenuous, uncertain understanding of his situation.
 - 2.3.2. **IC/Dependent phrase+IC:** Ethan seems troubled rather than enlightened by his education, as he can make only uncertain glimpses into the “cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things; his reaction reinforces this sense, in that he shows only a tenuous, uncertain understanding of his situation.
 - 2.3.3. **IC+ Dependent phrase/IC:** Ethan seems troubled rather than enlightened by his education: Given that he can make only uncertain glimpses into the “cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things,” his reaction reinforces this sense, in that he shows only a tenuous, uncertain understanding of his situation.
 - 2.3.4. **IC+ IC/Dependent phrase:** Ethan seems troubled rather than enlightened by his education: Unfortunately, he can make only uncertain glimpses into the “cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things,” his reading of his circumstances showing only a tenuous, uncertain understanding of his situation.
 - 2.3.5. **IC+IC+IC:** Ethan seems troubled rather than enlightened by his education: Unfortunately, he can make only uncertain glimpses into the

“cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things.” In effect, his reading of his circumstance, providing him only a tenuous, uncertain understanding of his situation, underscores the narrator’s reading.

2.4. TES

- 2.4.1. **Dependent Phrase/IC +IC:** Troubled rather than enlightened by his education, Ethan gets only tenuous, uncertain glimpses into his life. In fact, he sees only the “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things” for all his elevated sympathies.
- 2.4.2. **IC/Dependent phrase+IC:** Ethan seems troubled rather than enlightened by his education, as he gets only tenuous, uncertain glimpses into his life. In fact, he sees only the “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things,” whatever his elevated sympathies.
- 2.4.3. **IC+ Dependent phrase/IC:** Ethan seems troubled rather than enlightened by his education: with only tenuous, uncertain glimpses into his life, he sees only the “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things” for all his elevated sympathies.
- 2.4.4. **IC+ IC/Dependent phrase:** Ethan seems troubled rather than enlightened by his education: Indeed, he gets merely tenuous, uncertain glimpses into his life, able to see only the “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things” despite his sensitivity.
- 2.4.5. **IC+IC+IC:** The narrator notes that Ethan seems troubled rather than enlightened by his education: after all, Ethan gets only tenuous, uncertain glimpses into his life. As the narrator notes, In fact, Ethan sees only the “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things” for all his elevated sympathies.

2.5. EST

- 2.5.1. **Dependent Phrase/IC +IC:** As if to underscore his tenuous, uncertain understanding of his life, Ethan sees only the “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things:” Essentially, notes the narrator, his education has unsettled rather than enlightened him.
- 2.5.2. **IC/Dependent phrase+IC:** The narrator underscores Ethan’s tenuous, uncertain understanding of his life, with Ethan able to see only the “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things:” Essentially, notes the narrator, his education has unsettled rather than enlightened him.
- 2.5.3. **IC+ Dependent phrase/IC:** The narrator underscores Ethan’s tenuous, uncertain understanding of his life: able to see only the “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things, Ethan, for his modest education, thus seems unsettled rather than enlightened him.
- 2.5.4. **IC+ IC/Dependent phrase:** The narrator underscores Ethan’s tenuous, uncertain understanding of his life: Ethan is in fact able to see only the “Cloudy meanings” “behind the face of things, his education having unsettled rather than enlightened him.

- 2.5.5. **IC+IC+IC:** The narrator underscores Ethan's tenuous, uncertain understanding of his life. This is particularly evident when he describes Ethan as able to see only the "Cloudy meanings" "behind the face of things." His confused musings thus suggest that his education has unsettled rather than enlightened him.

2.6. ETS

- 2.6.1. **Dependent Phrase/IC+IC:** Showing a tenuous, uncertain understanding of his life, Ethan seems essentially troubled by the meagre benefits of his education: this is underscored by the narrator's observation that Ethan's insights barely rise to the level of the "Cloudy meanings" "behind the face of things."
- 2.6.2. **IC/Dependent phrase+IC:** Ethan shows a tenuous, uncertain understanding of his life, essentially troubled by the meagre benefits of his education: this is underscored by the narrator's observation that Ethan's insights barely rise to the level of the "Cloudy meanings" "behind the face of things."
- 2.6.3. **IC+ Dependent phrase/IC:** Ethan shows a tenuous, uncertain understanding in his self-reflection: Indeed, regarding Ethan as troubled by the meagre benefits of his education, the narrator characterizes Ethan's insights as barely rising to the level of the "Cloudy meanings" "behind the face of things."
- 2.6.4. **IC+ IC/Dependent phrase:** Ethan shows a tenuous, uncertain understanding in his self-reflections: Indeed, the narrator seems to regard Ethan as troubled by the meagre benefits of his education, his reading underscored by Ethan's insights, which barely rise to the level of the "Cloudy meanings" "behind the face of things."
- 2.6.5. **IC+IC+IC:** Ethan shows a tenuous, uncertain understanding in his self-reflections: Indeed, the narrator seems to regard Ethan as troubled by the meagre benefits of his education; his reading is underscored by Ethan's reflections, which the narrator characterizes as barely rising to the level of the "Cloudy meanings" "behind the face of things."

Conclusion:

OK! So, any one-sentence meme can have 120 variations. Multi-sentence variations can come in 5 structures, still with 6 possible orders, still using up to 8 SCS for any given phrase or clause. That's a lot of variety—let's just say about 1000! As you look at the sweep of all that English makes possible, this might feel, well, a little discouraging—do we have to learn to write ideas 1000 ways?

Answer: of course not! **One good one is always enough. Still, let's see this as liberating, not intimidating: there is no reason you should every need to feel "written into a corner" or "stuck with an awkward sentence" ever again.**

The solution is not to learn 1000 variations dutifully; it's to learn the **6 structures of a meme and the 8 SCS**, then start absorbing the depth, richness, and beauty of English *every time we read!* As we enjoy watching others play with the order, or sentence structure, or choice of phrase types, or even the number of sentences each idea, we'll be inspired to play too. Whichever way we choose, there is always *some* reasonably-clear and even elegant way to express and connect ideas that your reader will find clear and compelling. Embrace the possibilities!