

Grades: **6th-12th**

*Adaptation: **3rd-5th**

How to Write a Killer Fight Scene

Common Core Standard(s): CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W3.B

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W3.C

Materials Needed: Blank paper and pencil or a writing device

Class Objective: I can write a fight sequence that remains realistic and well paced.

Lesson Plan

1. Watch **Jo Schaffer Layton's** class "**How to Write a Killer Fight Scene.**" While listening, have students take notes on all of the great information Jo shares about fight scenes.
2. Pause the video at minute 10:32 and have students actually try to write a short fight scene. You can either use the short gif she shows in her class or use this longer scene:  **FIGHT PRACTICE 20/01/31** (only choose one fight sequence from this video). Either way you do it, have them write this scene using some of the suggestions Jo gave during the first section of her class.
3. Pause the video again at minute 14:20 and have students try to act out the actions of one of the characters described in this fight sequence. Don't have them pretend to fight each other as this describes (this could be dangerous). Instead just act out one of the characters to see if they could do it. Remind them that a great way to tell if the fight they are describing is realistic, is to either act it out or picture it in their mind. Then continue watching the video.



4. Instead of pausing again when she says to pause, watch to the end of the class and have students go back into the earlier fight sequence they wrote and revise it using some of the information Jo Schaffer-Layton gave during the remainder of the class. Allow them to research if needed to make it more realistic.
5. After they've revised their fight sequence, have them go back into their own story where they have action or a fight happening and revise it for pacing and sentence length. Remember, when wanting to show fast action use fewer words and shorter sentences, and when wanting to take a breath or pause include a longer sentence. Revise it again.
6. Finally, have them trade with someone else and read the other person's fight sequence out loud. While they read it out loud, the other person is going to try to act out or do what was explained.

TO CHALLENGE: Challenge students to practice writing fight sequences by looking up action and fight scenes from movies on YouTube and trying to write them while also paying attention to sentence fluency and pacing.



TO SIMPLIFY:

***ALTERNATE ADAPTATION for younger audience:**

Tweens (ages 9-12): 3rd-5th

Common Core Standard(s): CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.B

Materials Needed: Depends on the classes you choose from the option below.

A Device to show videos.

Class Objective: I can write with sentence fluency and proper pacing.

ADAPTED LESSON PLAN

Day 1

1. Younger students may struggle with being able to shorten or lengthen sentences in order to show pacing differences between action and description. This class will focus on teaching them the basics of either splitting sentences, combining sentences, or varying the beginnings of sentences.
2. Have students get out a piece of writing they have completed. Give them a blank piece of paper as well. Have them go through their piece of writing and count how many words are in each sentence, the first word of the sentence, as well as what punctuation is used at the end of those sentences. Have them write the information down as they check. It should look something like this:

Sentence #--How many words were in the sentence. The first word. The punctuation mark.

#1- 5 words- The .

#2- 5 words-The .

#3- 7 words-And !

#4- 3 words-The !

Have students specifically look to see if their sentences are different lengths, have different words they begin with and whether they are



different types of sentences or not. This could help them realize they didn't use punctuation or they only have one long sentence or every sentence starts with 'And then'. These are realizations you want the students to make for themselves so that the later lessons help them fix a problem they already know they have.

3. Because fighting can be upsetting for younger students, use this quick 15 minute video about sentence fluency instead of the fighting video.

 [Writing - Trait of Sentence Fluency](#) (Pause it after minute 13)

4. Have them go back and look at their tracking sheet for whether their sentence lengths varied and whether they had different kinds of sentences. Have them write down 2-3 things they need to fix for sentence fluency. The rest of the week will be mini-lessons on fixing those things.

Day 2-6

5. Each day do a different lesson from this document: [Sentence Lessons](#)

Day 2- Sentence Anagrams

Day 3- Sentence Elaboration (Basic Elaboration)

Day 4-Sentence Elaboration (Advanced Elaboration)

Day 5 and 6- [Fixing Run On Sentences](#)

6. After you know students have some skills for working with sentences, then have them go back into the original story they counted words in and make sure their sentences are different lengths and different types.
7. Have them get with a partner and read their stories out loud now (or they can read their story to themselves out loud) and check for sentence fluency. Fix sentences again if it seems like it still feels awkward or hard to read.
8. Overall, remember that this is a process and will take lots and lots of practice and repetition to get good at it. But until they know how to work



with sentences, it will be hard to implement the ideas suggested in the Fight Scenes video.

***EXTRA PRACTICE all ages (optional)**

Editing Skills:

For extra practice to reinforce today's topic you may assign students to work, in class or at home, on a page/chapter of their novel or a short story applying the key techniques learned today.. The papers can be exchanged with other students for peer review with specific attention to just the topic of focus.

(Independent study students can form online or in person writing clubs for this type of activity or exchange with sibling/parent/teacher) This will enhance editing skills while simultaneously further ingraining the lesson at hand.

Revising Skills:

When the papers are returned, students have the opportunity of fine tuning the skill of taking feedback and applying it to revision and rewrite of their manuscript.

Group Discussion:

After rough draft and final draft are returned it may be helpful to share what was most helpful or difficult about the feedback and how it may have helped to improve their writing. (Independent study can do this via online/Zoom chat or live in a writing club setting)

Encourage students to continue working on writing started in class on weekends, holiday breaks and over the summer. After school clubs and extracurricular writing classes may be organized with students covered under the license or with those who own a personal subscription.

Extra Credit Opportunities:

Offer extra credit for those who attend live or online TABC & TwABC writing conferences or for submitting their writing to be published in the TEEN AUTHOR BOOT CAMP: POETRY, TEEN ANTHOLOGY & FIRST CHAPTER CONTESTS. For the younger aspiring writers there is the Tween First Paragraph Contest.

<https://www.teenauthorbootcamp.com/contests>



[Teen Author Boot Camp™](#) in March & [Tween Author Boot Camp™](#) in November are great writing conferences to attend in person or online to meet favorite authors and to be a part of a supportive writing community that will help students hone their writing skills, get published and boost their confidence.

