

URSULA'S WRITING IDEAS

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When you go for a bush walk, depending on the track and on how energetic you are feeling, sometimes you take small steps and other times you take long strides, really stretching your legs out.

Writing can be like that. Sometimes your sentences can be very short.

Like steps.

Sometimes they can be long, like when you write a sentence with so many words and so many ideas in it that it takes up several lines of the book you're writing in and perhaps you even have to turn the page to keep the sentence going or maybe sometimes you even run out of room altogether and have to find a totally new book or piece of paper so you can get to the end of your sentence before your pen totally runs out of ink too??????????????

Phew! That was definitely a stride of a sentence!



It can be a good thing to mix up strides and steps in your own stories. For one thing, if all the sentences are very short steps, or if they are all very long strides, it means your story can be hard to read. But also, short and long sentences make you feel different things when you read them. A short sentence can make something feel very sudden or surprising. A longer sentence can build up tension or excitement. There's lots of different ways you can use long and short sentences, but I always think the best way to find out what writing does is to experiment for yourself.

Here is a VERY long stride of a sentence. See if you can split it up into shorter sentences. You can use full stops, exclamation marks, commas – even question marks if you like. You might need to add a couple of words or take a few away. Once you've done it once, you could try it again, with different strides and paces – you're the chief experimenter!

I looked out the window and saw two green elephants in the wet playground hand in hand greedily eating ice cream, while on the roof a zebra was playing an electric guitar and I wondered what had happened to the teacher because she said she was going to the dentist but she would be back before lunchtime but now it was nearly time for the end of school and she still hadn't returned and those two elephants had finished their ice creams and now they dancing around in circles and singing the school song and one of them was trying to balance on top of a basketball but squashed it flat with a big bang! and the zebra fell off the roof into the trampoline and then the bell rang.

Stride on!

