

Activity 4: "The Slow-Motion Showdown"

Focus: Pacing and Sentence Variation during the Climax. **Duration:** 40 Minutes.

The Mission

Students will write the highest-stakes moment of a story. The goal is to use **short, punchy sentences** to create tension and **long, flowing sentences** to describe magic or movement.

Part 1: The "Heartbeat" Rule (5 Mins)

Explain the "Heartbeat" of a story:

- **High Tension (Action) = Short Sentences.** (e.g., *The floor cracked. I jumped. Silence.*)
- **Deep Magic/Description = Long Sentences.** (e.g., *The purple smoke swirled around the room, smelling of old paper and lightning, before settling into the shape of a wolf.*)

Part 2: The "Climax Prompt" (5 Mins)

Give them a high-stakes Quote Prompt:

"The shadow was inches away now, and the only thing between me and the darkness was the glowing stone in my hand."

Part 3: The Slow-Mo Sprint (25 Mins)

Students write the climax. They must follow these "Sentence Constraints":

1. **Start with 3 short sentences** (no more than 5 words each).
2. **Write 1 "Mega-Sentence"** using at least two commas to describe the magic/action.
3. **The "Slow-Mo" Moment:** Describe one tiny detail in the middle of the chaos (e.g., a bead of sweat, a flickering candle, the sound of a heartbeat).

Part 4: The Sound Check (5 Mins)

Students read their climax out loud to themselves. If they run out of breath during a sentence, it's too long! They must add a full stop.

Why this helps for the assessment:

- It prevents "Run-on Sentences" (the #1 mistake in Year 7).
- It teaches them how to **control the reader's heart rate**.
- It ensures the "Climax" feels different from the rest of the story.