

The Five Way Sentence

- An effective way to get stories started. A hook to draw in readers.
- Can be one or two sentences, but should not be three or more. Information needs to stay concentrated, intense.
- Creates a situation where the reader feels the story has started without them - *in medias res* - the reader has to catch up.
- Provides a lot of answers, that actually raise more questions.

The Five Way Sentence

- **Who**
- **“What like”** (describing word or phrase)
- Suggestion of **when** (not necessarily specific time)
- Suggestion of **where** (not necessarily specific place).
- **What they are doing** - start in the middle of the story

“The Purple Children” by Edith Pargeter

- **(1)**“The outrage took place at eleven o’clock on a moonless night before the stars began to silver the white walls of the church. **(2)** It was the sentry at the rear gate of the Town Hall, an eighteen-year-old new to the town , who was singled out as the weakest spot in the defenses.”

- First two sentences of the story.
- Things are already happening *-in medias res.*

Can you identify the five ways?

Write down as many of each category as you can find.

- **(1)**“The outrage took place at eleven o’clock on a moonless night before the stars began to silver the white walls of the church. **(2)** It was the sentry at the rear gate of the Town Hall, an eighteen-year-old new to the town , who was singled out as the weakest spot in the defenses.”
- (1) Who, (2) “what like” (3)when, (4)where, (5) what’s happening.

Identify the features of the opening:

WHO

- “The outrage took place at eleven o’clock on a moonless night before the stars began to silver the white walls of the church. It was the **sentry** at the rear gate of the Town Hall, an eighteen-year-old new to the town , who was singled out as the weakest spot in the defenses.”

WHO?

- Sentry.

What Like?

- “The **outrage** took place at eleven o’clock on a **moonless** night before the stars began to silver the **white walls** of the church. It was the sentry at the rear gate of the Town Hall, **an eighteen-year-old new to the town** , who was **singled out** as the **weakest** spot in the defenses.”

What Like? (Descriptions)

- outrage,
- moonless,
- white walls,
- eighteen-year-old,
- new to the town,
- singled out,
- weakest.

Suggestion of **when**.

- “The outrage took place at **eleven o’clock** on a **moonless night** before the stars began to silver the white walls of the church. It was the sentry at the rear gate of the Town Hall, an eighteen-year-old new to the town , who was singled out as the weakest spot in the defenses.”

Suggestion of **when?**

- Direct – 11 o’clock
- Indirect - Moonless night.

Suggestion of **where**.

- “The outrage took place at eleven o’clock on a moonless night before the stars began to silver the white walls of the church. It was the sentry at the **rear gate** of the **Town Hall**, an eighteen-year-old new to the **town** , who was singled out as the weakest spot in the defenses.”

Suggestion of **where**?

- Town Hall,
- Town
- Rear gate
- (you might want to also add the church)

What are they doing?

- “The **outrage** took place at eleven o’clock on a moonless night before the stars began to silver the white walls of the church. It was the sentry at the rear gate of the Town Hall, an eighteen-year-old new to the town , who was **singled out** as the weakest spot in the **defenses**.”

What are they doing?

- Something outrageous,
- Singling out a guard.
- “defending” (the guard)

So many questions...

- “The outrage took place at eleven o’clock on a moonless night before the stars began to silver the white walls of the church. It was the sentry at the rear gate of the Town Hall, an eighteen-year-old new to the town , who was singled out as the weakest spot in the defenses.”

Creates a situation where the reader feels the story has started without them - the reader has to catch up.

Lots of answers, but even more questions –

- Where, exactly, are we?
- What sort of outrage?
- Why have they singled out a guard?
- Why is town Hall guarded?
- Who is planning something?
- What are they planning?

AND MANY MORE!

With your own sheet of story openings...

- Work your way through each example.
- Find as many examples of the five “ways” as possible.

- With the stories we’ve studied, find as many examples of the five “ways” as possible.