

Sentence Splits for Easy Reading

An activity extension of "Balloons are not just for fun"

A well-written essay has a mix of short and longer sentences. Even then, the longer sentences should not be so long that readers get confused or find it hard to keep focused. How long is too long? The answer depends on which century you are in.

Take, for instance, the extract presented in the sidebar "**In fiction**" on page 15 of *What's Up* March 2023. The extract is from *A Voyage in a Balloon*, a novel first published in 1852. In those days, it was common to find very long sentences in print. That might make reading this story a challenge for some children.

You can make such texts easier to read by splitting each compound sentence into simpler ones. Try doing this with the following two paragraphs.

1. Without changing the meaning of any sentence, split the sentences in this extract into shorter sentences. You may change the punctuation (e.g. replace a comma with a full stop). You may also delete joining words or replace them. As far as possible, keep noun phrases intact.
 - a) Work directly on the box with handwritten edits e.g. scratch out words, insert full stops, replace joining words, and so on.
 - b) Rewrite your edited passage on the other side of this worksheet. Read it out aloud to yourself. Edit further until you are satisfied that it is very easy to understand.

We were to ascend at noon. It was truly a magnificent spectacle, that of the impatient crowd who thronged around the reserved enclosure, inundated the entire square and adjoining streets, and covered the neighbouring houses from the basements to the slated roofs. The high winds of past days had lulled, and an overpowering heat was radiating from an unclouded sky; not a breath animated the atmosphere. In such weather, one might descend in the very spot he had left.

I carried three hundred pounds of ballast, in bags; the car, perfectly round, four feet in diameter, and three feet in height, was conveniently attached; the cord which sustained it was symmetrically extended from the upper hemisphere of the aerostat; the compass was in its place, the barometer suspended to the iron hoop which surrounded the supporting cord, at a distance of eight feet above the car; the anchor carefully prepared; — all was in readiness for our departure.

An extract from *A Voyage in a Balloon* by Jules Verne