Sentence Shape

Purpose: Upon completion of this activity, students will be able to diagnose and revise sprawling and shapeless sentences and understand the rules for beginning sentences.

Go to the WRC reception desk and ask to check out Joseph M. Williams' *Style: Lessons in Clarity and Grace*. You will need a driver’s license or other photo identification to check this book out for use in the WRC.

1. Read the first part of Lesson 8. If you need help understanding the concepts of characters/subjects and action/verbs discussed in the reading, please see Lessons 3 and 4 in the same book.

2. On a separate sheet of paper, answer the following questions about the reading:
   a. Since it is often difficult to see sprawl in your own writing, what does the book recommend you do to check for sentence sprawl?
   b. What are the four things that give readers a sense of shapeless sentence length?
   c. What are the two rules the book presents for beginning a sentence?
   d. Why should you avoid interrupting the subject-verb connection?

3. Continue reading the remainder of Lesson 8. Then, complete exercise 8.1 and 8.2. In exercise 8.2, you need not create resumptive, summative, and free modifiers; simply revise the sentences.

4. Before reviewing your answers with an instructor or tutor, use the space below to write any questions you still have:

   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________

5. Bring the book and your completed exercises to an instructor or tutor to review. Have that person sign and date this sheet.

   Instructor/Tutor signature ____________________________  Date ____________________________