



**WRITING
TOOLBOX**

SENTENCE OPENERS

ENRICHING YOUR WRITING

A successful writer or speaker feels that they are not using the language well unless they form some short sentences and some long ones. So they vary the length of their sentences in order to lend variety to their speech. They know that using uniform sentences indicates immaturity and leads to monotony of utterances. Effectiveness and colorful style are attained by using various sentence openers. The following list of seven common sentence openers will help you to improve your own writing.

1: SUBJECT

The **tortoise** felt confident and challenged the hare to a race.

One cloudy morning, a powerful **lion** was meandering through the woods.

He was a quaint little man with a queer green suit.

2: PREPOSITIONAL

In a flurry, the shocked hare dashed toward the finish line.

Up above the village, Peter sat and wondered how to relieve his boredom.

Since last year killer bees have been found as far north as Arizona.

3: “LY”

Calmly the triumphant tortoise placed his foot over the finish line.

4: “ING”

Shrieking with fear, Peter scrambled to evade the rabid wolf.

5: “ED”

Deceived by the cunning fox, the narcissistic crow began her song.

6: CLAUSAL,

Although she was hungry, vanity overcame her and she began to sing.

Since the tortoise knew the hare to be lazy, he boldly made a challenge.

Because killer bees are hard to contain, danger is rapidly increasing.

If you use a variety of sentence openers, your writing will improve.

7: VSS (VERY SHORT SENTENCE = 5 WORDS OR LESS)

“Thief!” he screeched.

Use punctuation.

The lion bellowed and thundered.



SMILEY FACE TRICKS

ENRICHING YOUR WRITING

M **AGIC 3**—THREE PARALLEL GROUPS OF WORDS, USUALLY SEPARATED BY COMMAS, THAT CREATE A POETIC RHYTHM OR ADD SUPPORT FOR A POINT, ESPECIALLY WHEN THE THREE WORD GROUPS HAVE THEIR OWN MODIFIERS.

- “In those woods, I would spend hours **listening** to the wind rustle the leaves, **climbing** the trees and spying on nesting birds, and **giving** the occasional wild growl to scare away any pink-flowered girls who might be riding their bikes too close to my secret entrance.” (Todd, college freshman)
- **If I had a sticker on my shirt that said “Loser” or if my hair looked like a zombie’s or if I had spinach stuck between my teeth,** she would tell me the truth no matter what.
- Sometimes I wonder why the geeks get picked on. It’s always, **“Hey, look, it’s nerd boy again, going to his daily session of chess club,” or “Where you think you’re going, smarty pants, I thought we had a deal—you carry my lunch tray, and I won’t give you a wedgie,” or “Brain on feet, do my homework for a while and I’ll try to get you a date with the girl who has glasses thicker than yours.”**



F **IGURATIVE LANGUAGE**—NON-LITERAL COMPARISONS— SUCH AS SIMILES, METAPHORS, AND PERSONIFICATION — ADD “SPICE” TO WRITING AND CAN HELP PAINT A MORE VIVID PICTURE FOR THE READER.



- It was a hot July morning, and the last few days of freedom before school were slipping by **faster than a greased ten-foot-long boa constrictor at the ice capades.** In other words, I only had a week and a half to **play my brains out,** both inside and outside, and a week and a half before the **evil schoolwork monsters** took over my time, a week and a half before **life as I had known it these past two months was over.**
- “When we first moved into the house on Orchid Street, I didn’t like it. My room was hot, cramped, and **stuffy as a train in the middle of the Sahara.** And the **looming skeleton-like gray and white frame** of the place scared me.” (Teri, grade 7)

S

SPECIFIC DETAIL FOR EFFECT—INSTEAD OF GENERAL, VAGUE DESCRIPTIONS, SPECIFIC SENSORY DETAILS HELP THE READER VISUALIZE THE PERSON, PLACE, THING, OR IDEA THAT YOU ARE DESCRIBING.

- It was the first day of school and I wasn't prepared for it. **I took a look at my watch, sat down on my bed, and started to crochet.** I was no good at it, but I had to learn. I looked at the crooked doily I had made and raveled the whole thing. "I will do this if it's the last thing I do before she...."
- Tears rolled down my face and I walked out of the house to catch the bus. I was hoping to find a new bus, but my wishes never came true because here came bus 33, **the bus with torn seats, a coughing, hacking engine, and holes so deep in the aisle we could see the road beneath us.**



- "It's one of those experiences where you want to **call a radio station** and tell your problems to **some guy who calls himself Dr. Myke**, but how isn't more of a doctor than your pet hamster is, one of those experiences where you want to **read a sappy Harlequin novel** and **listen to Barry Manilow** with a box of bonbons as your best friends, one of those experiences where you wouldn't be surprised if someone came up to you and asked **exactly what time yesterday you were born.** Yeah, one of those." (Ileana)

R

REPETITION FOR EFFECT—WRITERS OFTEN REPEAT SPECIALLY CHOSEN WORDS OR PHRASES TO MAKE A POINT, TO STRESS CERTAIN IDEAS FOR THE READER.



- She said it as though I had my own carriage I could ride on Thursdays or any day or at the snap of my fingers, like she does. **She knows** I'm only allowed a driver on Sundays. **She knows** the old woman lives three estates and one house down the way—the long, long way. **She knows** I have to walk the road and back, and **she knows** the maid was supposed to hem up that stupid petticoat – too long and all. The only reason I was asked to do such an outrageous favour for her was because everybody else on the estate was concentrating on her – **how lovely** her hair looked, **how lovely** her dress fit, and **how lovely** her gold brooch looked with the pearls she had to buy for herself.
- The veranda is your way only shelter **away from** the sister in bed asleep, **away from** the brother that plays in the tree house in the field, **away from** your chores that await you." (Leslie)

EXPANDED MOMENT—INSTEAD OF “SPEEDING” PAST A MOMENT, WRITERS OFTEN EMPHASIZE IT BY “EXPANDING” THE ACTIONS.

- “But no, I had to go to school. And as I said before, I had to listen to my math teacher preach about numbers and letters and figures...I was tired of hearing her annoying voice lecture about ‘ $a=b$ divided by x .’ I glared at the small black hands on the clock, silently threatening them to go faster. But they didn’t listen, I caught myself wishing I were on white sand and looking down at almost transparent pale-blue water with Josh at my side...I don’t belong in some dumb math class. I belong on the beach, where I can soak my feet in caressing water and let the wind wander its way through my chestnut-colored hair and sip Dr. Pepper all day long.” (Shelly)



- “I wonder where them dumb girls went?” one asked.

“They’re probably off painting their nails,” the other said.

A few more insults like that, and by then my friend and I had heard enough. I looked at Annie and noticed she had the same look on her face. Two windows stood before us so we walked to one quietly and looked at each other. She had that same expression on her face that she had before she rolled down “Dead Man’s Hill” in a barrel. I knew what she was thinking. She mouthed, “One, two, three...” Then we jumped from our fifteen-foot-high tree house and landed miraculously on our feet. We scared the living daylights out of those boys, and they took off running like two little sissy girls. Annie and I burst out laughing until our jaws hurt. We spent the rest of the day giggling and remembering.

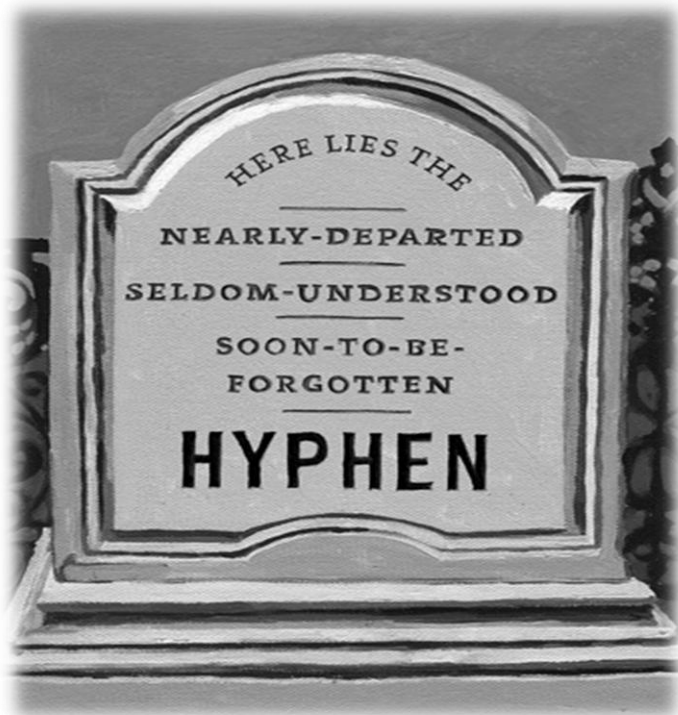
HUMOUR—PROFESSIONAL WRITERS KNOW THE VALUE OF LAUGHTER; EVEN SUBTLE HUMOUR CAN HELP TURN A “BORING” PAPER INTO ONE THAT CAN RAISE SOMEONE’S SPIRIT.



- **Why you lyin’, cheatin’. stinkin’, hairy, little double-crossin’, yellow-bellied sapsucker!** Me and Pa done looked all over fifteen dadgum counties for you, and yer just **roaming around out here in a bear suit laying monkey eggs or something all over creation.** You think gasoline comes cheap nowadays? That receipt had a three-digit figure on it! Pa’s gonna turn you over his knee and beat the livin’ daylights outta you! I’m tellin’ you, girl, **I’m a gonna slap you so hard your uncle’s gonna say “Ouch!”** Now take off that mask!”

HYPHENATED MODIFIERS—SOMETIMES A NEW WAY OF SAYING SOMETHING CAN MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE; HYPHENATED ADJECTIVES OFTEN CAUSE THE READER TO “SIT UP AND TAKE NOTICE.”

- Little did I know that when Mom asked if I liked the new neighborhood in town that that one innocent question would be the beginning of the destruction of my life. I was going to choose “yes” as my answer, but I had one of **those I-don’t-want-to-lose-my-friends** looks.
- She’s got this blonde hair, with dark highlights, parted in the middle, down past her shoulders, and straight as a preacher. She’s got big green eyes that all guys admire and all girls envy, and this **I’m-so-beautiful-and-I-know-it-body**, you know, like every other super model.
- The cell phone bell pierces the silence of the hallway and Sheila, the stern school nurse, rolls her eyes as I answer. She mutters in her **I’m-holier-than-thou-and-my-shoes-don’t-squeak** voice, “Oh, Jeez.”



FULL-CIRCLE ENDING—SOMETIMES STUDENTS NEED A SPECIAL ENDING, ONE THAT EFFECTIVELY “WRAPS UP” THE PIECE. ONE “TRICK” IS TO REPEAT A PHRASE FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE PIECE.

- **Beginning:**

“Hey, you, with the green and neon-orange striped shoelaces, you who always pulled on my old frazzled white ones in math. Hey, you, who always added your version of ‘art’ to my math problems for Mrs. Caton’s class so that $9 \times 7 = 64$ turned out to be train with puffs of smoke and two boxcars and made me get an 83 instead of a 93 since Mrs. C. doesn’t count locomotives as correct answers.

Ending:

“Now Justin still sits behind me in math with his neon-green and orange striped shoelaces and pulls on my old white frazzled ones. He still draws zombies on my homework, but he hasn’t dumped another pitcher of Kool-Aid on me – not yet at least. Oh, and by the way, in case you’re wondering, his first words when he opened his eyes were, “It was James Kenton who hid your clothes and made you walk around in a chicken suit...I’m not that mean.”

FULL-CIRCLE ENDING—CONTINUED....

Do I seem mad to you?

I'm not mad!

I'm furious!

Does my face seem as red as an apple?

It's not! My face is a fire!

The divorce was taking my heart and
Crushing it into oblivion.

My tears were a flowing stream

My brain an exploding bomb.

My dad had this

I-don't-care-about-my-family-I'm-gonna-get-wasted kind of look,

But do I seem mad?

He used to have my sister and me in his back pocket,

But now he has his new I-like-you-right-now-but-when-we-get-serious

I'll-stab-you-in-the-back "perfect" girlfriend there instead

But do I seem mad?

Dad just got married.

They had been dating for about an hour and he popped the question. But do I seem mad?

I just sit there with my fake smile

While she puts on the biggest show and says,

"Oh, I love your kids, they're so cute" and fake smiles back at me.

But do I seem mad?

My dad used to be my best friend and
protector of my childhood.

Now he is my enemy.

But do I seem mad?

His new wife has me in her death-grip,

Waiting for me to do something bad

She is a cobra waiting to strike.

But do I seem mad?

I'm not mad!

I'm furious!



GENERAL TOOLS

PREPOSITIONS

Words that introduce phrases which always contain either a noun or a pronoun.

About	Before	Except	On	Under
Above	Behind	For	Onto	Underneath
According to	Below	From	Opposite	Unlike
Across	Because of	In	Out	Until
After	Beneath	Inside	Outside	Up
Against	Beside	Instead	Over	Upon
Along	Between	Into	Past	With
Amid	Beyond	Like	Since	Within
Among	By	Minus	Through	Without
Around	Despite	Near	Throughout	
Aside from	Down	Of	To	
At	During	Off	Toward	

CLAUSAL STARTERS

When	Since
Where	Although
While	If
As	

SIMILE (AS/LIKE)

“Light as a feather.”
 “A road like brown ribbon.”
 “Happy as a lark.”

METAPHOR (CANNOT BE TRUE)

“A heart of stone.”
 “The metal sky.”
 “A flaming rose.”
 “Sand for hair.”
 “The glass ocean.”

THE BANNED LIST

SAID Exclaim Assert Cried out Screech Intone	LIKE Savor Crave Taste Luxuriate Relish Bask	GO Rush Journey Tour Trek Advance Depart Abscond	EAT Devour Ingest Consume Masticate Gnaw
GET Obtain Acquire Capture Solicit Seize	NICE Agreeable Decorous Refined Fitting Gentle Dainty	PRETTY Beautiful Magnificent Alluring Gorgeous Comely	
SEE Observe Perceive Distinguish Notice	BIG Capacious Immense Gargantuan Enormous	HAPPY Content Pleased Glad Joyful	

ADVERBS

Arrogantly	Essentially	Innocently	Predictably	Surely
Abnormally	Evenly	Intensely	Presumably	Surprisingly
Absentmindedly	Eventually	Interestingly	Primarily	Suspiciously
Absolutely	Evidently	Inwardly	Probably	Sympathetically
Anxiously	Exactly		Proudly	
Assuredly	Extremely	Keenly		Tearfully
		Kindheartedly	Quaintly	Teasingly
Badly	Fairly	Kindly	Quickly	Tenderly
Bashfully	Famously	Knowing	Quietly	Tentatively
Beautifully	Fervently		Quizzically	Thankfully
Bitterly	Finally	Lazily		Thoughtfully
Bravely	Flippantly	Lightheartedly	Rapidly	Tightly
Brilliantly	Foolishly	Lightly	Readily	Tragically
Briskly	Fortunately	Limp	Reassuringly	Tremendously
Broadly	Frankly	Longingly	Recklessly	Triumphantly
	Freely	Loudly	Regularly	
Calmly	Frequently	Luckily	Relatively	Undeniably
Carefully	Frightfully		Reluctantly	Uneasily
Certainly	Fundamentally	Madly	Repeatedly	Unusually
Charmingly	Furiously	Magically	Reproachfully	Unusually
Clearly		Meaningfully	Righteously	Utterly
Closely	Generally	Mechanically	Roughly	
Coaxingly	Generously	Miserably		Vastly
Commonly	Gently	Mockingly	Sadly	Violently
Completely	Gradually	Modestly	Searching	Virtually
Constantly	Grandly	Murderously	Sedately	Vividly
Continually	Gratefully	Musically	Seriously	
Continuously	Greatly		Sharply	Warmly
Coolly	Greedily	Naively	Sheepishly	Wholeheartedly
Correctly	Grimly	Naturally	Significantly	Wildly
Crossly	Guilty	Naughtily	Silently	Willfully
Curiously		Nearly	Slowly	Willingly
	Haphazardly	Neatly	Slyly	Wisely
Dearly	Happily	Noiselessly	Softly	Wishfully
Deceivably	Harshly		Solidly	Wistfully
Delightfully	Helpfully	Painfully	Sorrowfully	Woefully
Determinedly	Heroically	Patiently	Sourly	Wonderfully
Diligently	Hideously	Physically	Sternly	
Distinctly	Highly	Plainly	Strictly	Yearningly
Dreamily	Hopelessly	Playfully	Strongly	Youthfully
		Positively	Stupidly	
Enormously	Immediately	Possibly	Substantially	Zealously
Entirely	Immensely	Potentially	Successfully	Zigzaggingly
Especially	Increasingly	Powerfully	Suddenly	

“ING” WORDS

Acting	Gossiping	Maintaining	Scheming
Accepting	Groaning	Managing	Slowing
Arguing	Guaranteeing	Marching	Smiling
Asking		Marveling	Staggering
Assuming	Hanging		
	Helping	Noting	Thinking
Badgering	Hurting		Trying
Barging		Objecting	
Belittling	Ignoring	Offending	Urging
	Illuminating	Offering	
Calling	Implementing	Opening	Vanishing
Catching	Increasing	Operating	Vaulting
Clasping	Inquiring	Ordering	Visualizing
Clinging	Insuring	Outrunning	Vowing
Devastating	Jeopardizing	Panicking	Waiting
Discovering	Jinxing	Piling	Walking
Dodging	Judging	Planting	Wanting
Drilling	Jumping	Plotting	Washing
		Preparing	Wishing
Eliminating	Kayaking	Producing	
Ending	Keeping	Purchasing	Yawning
Enlarging	Knocking		Yelling
Exciting		Quarreling	
Extending		Quitting	
Eyeing			
	Lacking	Racing	
Falling	Landing	Reacting	
Flashing	Lasting	Realizing	
Flinging	Laughing	Recording	
Flocking	Leading	Reducing	
Folding	Lending	Roaming	
Frustrating	Lifting	Running	

“ED” WORDS

Abused	Feared	Mesmerized	Tainted
Accepted	Flooded	Mocked	Taunted
Accused	Followed		Terrorized
Angered	Fooled	Ordered	Touched
Assured	Fragmented		Trapped
Appreciated	Frightened	Perplexed	Traumatized
Authorized		Presumed	Trusted
	Galvanized	Produced	
Badgered	Gnarled	Protected	Unaffected
Banned	Goaded	Provoked	Unannounced
Berated	Governed	Punished	Urged
Buoyed	Guided		
Buffeted		Questioned	Validated
Bumped	Handled		Victimized
	Hardened	Reduced	Vindicated
Calmed	Harmed	Rejected	
Covered	Honored	Repelled	Warned
Coveted		Reproached	Warped
Created	Ignored	Resented	Watched
Credited	Infused	Rested	Wasted
Crowded	Injured		Winded
	Interested	Scared	Wounded
Denied	Intertwined	Shackled	Wrecked
Depressed	Inundated	Shattered	Wronged
Devastated		Shocked	
Disgusted	Jaded	Stalked	
Disheartened	Jeopardized	Startled	
Dissatisfied	Jinxed	Starved	
	Judged	Steadied	
Eliminated		Stumped	
Exasperated	Languished	Stunted	
Excited	Lifted	Stupefied	
Exhausted	Linked	Stymied	
Exhilarated	Locked	Supported	
Exonerated		Surprised	
Extended			

SAID IS DEAD!!!

Accused	Cautioned	Echoed	Indicated	Objected	Rehearsed
Acknowledged	Challenged	Emitted	Inferred	Observed	Reiterated
Added	Chanted	Emphasized	Informed	Ordered	Rejoiced
Addressed	Charged	Ended	Inquired	Outlined	Related
Advised	Chatted	Enunciated	Inserted		Remarked
Advocated	Chattered	Estimated	Insinuated	Panted	Remembered
Affirmed	Cheered	Exclaimed	Insisted	Paraphrased	Reminded
Agreed	Chided	Explained	Instructed	Persisted	Reminisced
Alleged	Chimed in	Exploded	Interjected	Persuaded	Renounced
Allowed	Chirped	Expounded	Interpreted	Petitioned	Repeated
Announced	Chocked	Expressed	Interrogated	Piped	Replied
Answering	Chuckled		Interrupted	Pleaded	Reported
Antagonized	Claimed	Fabricated	Intoned	Pointed out	Requested
Apologized	Clamored	Fibbed	Intonated	Pouted	Responded
Appealed	Clarified	Fitted in	Invited	Praised	Restated
Applauded	Coaxed	Finished	Iterated	Prayed	Resumed
Argued	Commanded	Fired		Preached	Retorted
Articulated	Complained	Flattered	Jeered	Presented	Retracted
Asserted	Compiled	Fretted	Jested	Presumed	Revealed
Assured	Complimented	Fumed	Joined in	Pretended	Reviewed
Avowed	Concluded	Fussed	Joked	Proclaimed	Ridiculed
	Clucked		Joshed	Prodded	Roared
Babbled	Consented	Gabbed		Promised	Rumored
Badgered	Continued	Gasped	Kidded	Prompted	
Bantered	Contributed	Gibed		Pronounced	Sang
Barked	Cooed	Giggled	Lamented	Proposed	Scoffed
Bawled	Corrected	Gloated	Lashed out	Propositioned	Scolded
Bayed	Cracked	Goaded	Laughed	Protested	Scorned
Beckoned	Cried out	Gossiped	Lied	Puffed	Screamed
Began	Criticized	Grieved	Lisped	Purred	Screached
Begged	Croaked	Groaned			Shouted
Bellowed	Crowed	Growled	Maintained	Quacked	Shrieked
Bemoaned		Grumbled	Mentioned	Quarreled	Shuddered
Beseeched	Decided	Grunted	Meowed	Queried	Sighed
Blubbered	Declared	Guessed	Mewed	Questioned	Smarted off
Bluffed	Defined	Gulped	Mimicked	Quibbled	Snapped
Blundered	Demanded	Gurgled	Mispronounced	Quipped	Snarled
Blurted out	Demonstrated		Misquoted	Quizzed	Sneered
Blustered	Denied	Hacked	Moaned	Quoted	Snipped
Boomed	Described	Hammered	Mocked		Snored
Bragged	Dictated	Harped on	Mourned	Raged	Snorted
Broadcasted	Directed	Hedged	Mumbled	Rasped	Spat
Brooded	Disagreed	Heralded	Mused	Reasoned	Specified
Bubbled	Discerned	Hinted	Muttered	Recalled	Speculated
Burped	Disclosed	Hissed		Recapitulated	Sputtered
Butt in	Disputed	Howled	Nagged	Recited	Squawked
Buzzed	Divulged	Hypothesized	Named	Recommended	Squeaked
	Drawled		Narrated	Recounted	Stammered
Cajoled	Droned	Implied	Nixed	Reflected	Stated
Called		Implored	Noted	Rehashed	Stressed

TRANSITIONS & LINKING WORDS

Words that can be used to ADD INFORMATION:

Again	For example	Equally important
Also	Furthermore	Finally
Another	For instance	As well
And	Moreover	Next
Additionally	Besides	Likewise
Along with	In addition	

Words that can be used to COMPARE THINGS (show similarities):

In the same way	Likewise	As
Similarly	Like	also

Words that can be used to CONTRAST THINGS (show differences):

And yet	Yet	On the contrary
Although	At the same time	After all
Contrast to this	However	Otherwise
But	Still	Nevertheless

Words that can be used to EMPHASIZE A POINT:

Again	For this reason	Truly
To repeat	To emphasize	In fact

Words that can be used to CONCLUDE or SUMMARIZE:

As a result	Finally	In conclusion
To sum up	Therefore	Last
In summary	Consequently	

Words that can be used to SHOW TIME:

About	After	Finally
Then	Next	Soon
Later	Meanwhile	Today
Tomorrow	Second	Third
Until	At	Before
First	Afterward	During

SENTENCE ENHANCERS

1. **Who/which (clause in the middle of a sentence)**—use “who” for people and pets; use “which” for everything else.

The yellow-bellied sapsucker which is native to Canada and the northern United States destroys young trees by sucking sap from the branches.

The lion who felt he would never be able to disentangle himself from the hunter’s net was most grateful for the appearance of the little mouse.

2. **“Ly” word (adverb, dual)**

The fox casually mentioned how pleased he would be to hear the crow sing.

The shepherd boy frantically and desperately screamed to the villagers below.

3. **Because...**—middle of sentence.

The hare was delighted because he knew it would be an easy race.

4. **Strong verb (dual)**—use thesaurus, banned word list, synonyms, etc.

All the animals taunted and teased the panic stricken hare.

5. **Quality adjective (dual)**—use thesaurus, banned word list, synonyms, etc.

“What magnificent feathers you have,” crooned the cunning and crafty fox.

6. **When, where, while, as, since, if, although...**—middle of sentence.

The hare dozed peacefully while the tortoise plodded persistently.

The cheese dropped to the ground when the crow began to sing.

The lion was humbled as he beheld his miniature rescuer at work.