

TITANIC

19

12

Learning Objective:

To write a recount using features of writing to build suspense and action.

NEXT

19

12

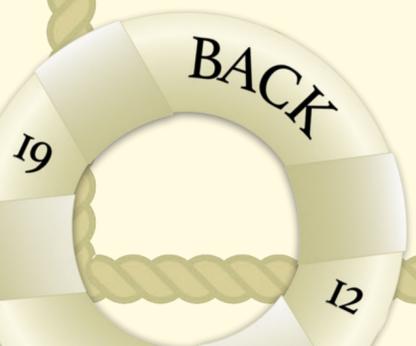


Tell your partner
about your character
from your recount.



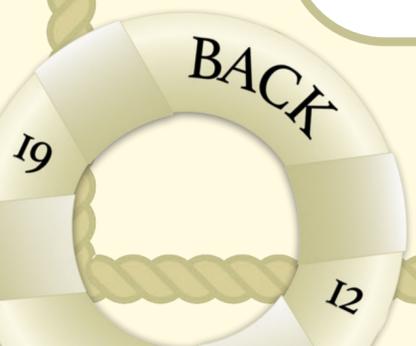
Today we will be writing the next chapter of our recounts. In this chapter, the ship will hit the iceberg and begin to sink.

What kind of overall mood are you going to need to create in this chapter?
How will you do this?



As you build up to the disaster, you will need to build tension, which results in action.

How will you do this?
What structural and language choices could you use to create tension, suspense and make your reader desperate to read on?



Ways to build tension in writing



I was woken by the loud clanging of a bell; a steward was calling for us to don our lifebelts. My heart pounding, I scrambled to fasten the lifebelts on myself and my sister. Grabbing her hand, we both raced along the tilting corridor. Other people around us were doing the same. I knew something bad must have happened. I knew we had to escape... but how?



How has this author built tension and suspense in this extract? How have they achieved a sense of action for the reader?



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Did you notice the transition from longer to shorter sentences? This transition into shorter sentences increases the pace of the writing. An increased pace creates an effect of rushing and action. Shorter sentences won't include much description, conveying their effect through the choice of verbs and nouns.



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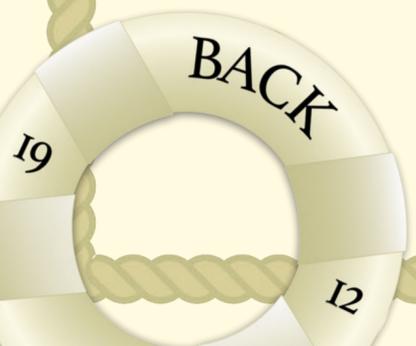
The author has made careful choices of intense verbs to create a tense and rushed effect for the reader. This matches the increased pace when using shorter sentences.



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The repetition used here emphasises the intensity of the situation.



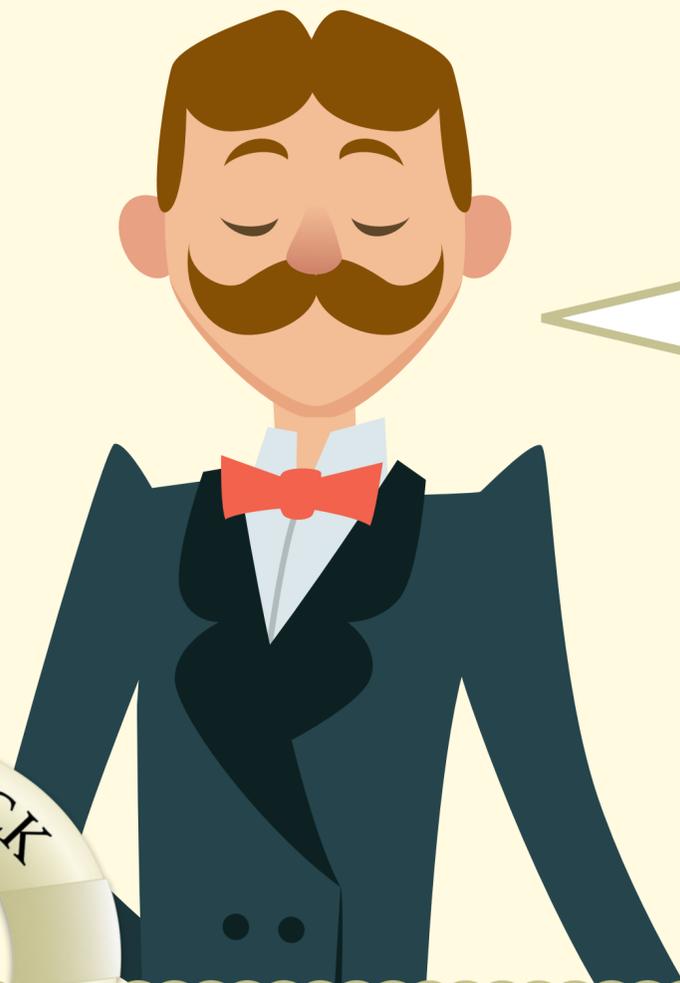
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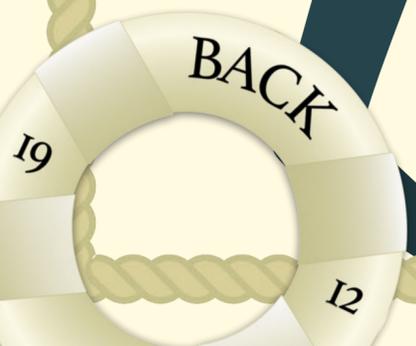
The author has used an onomatopoeic word to describe a sound. This literary device is excellent for drawing your reader in and placing them in the situation. The more involved the reader feels, the more powerful the overall effect will be.



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The author has used modal verbs to convey to the reader the definite feeling that something bad has happened. The use of 'must' rather than 'might' or 'could' creates a feeling of impending danger for the characters. Try switching to these alternate modal verbs to see how the effect changes.



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An ellipsis creates a ‘what happens next?’ feeling for the reader. Along with the rhetorical question that the author has used, it makes the reader desperate to read on to find out what happens. This suspense is very effective just before the climax or the solution of a story.



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Did you find any more features which built the tension and suspense for the reader?



Devices for building suspense, tension and action in writing:

- Shorter sentences
- Intense verbs
- Rhetorical questions
- Modal verbs
- Repetition
- Ellipsis
- Onomatopoeia

BACK

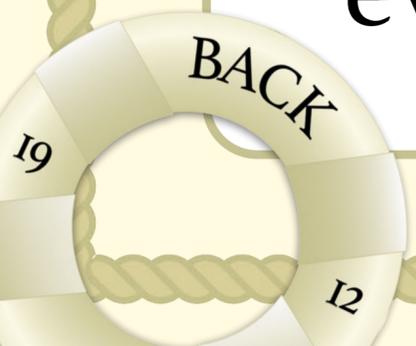
NEXT

Tension, suspense and action need to be built up to.

As a writer, having your characters complete a few normal tasks such as eating a meal or a leisure activity, could lead the reader to believe that everything is fine.



The reader can then be shocked by a sudden surprise of action and dilemma.



Another key device authors use to build up to the action of a story is to use **foreshadowing**. This is the act of letting your reader know little hints or clues about significant events happening later in the story. This can be subtle, or an obvious statement.



This creates an interesting effect as the reader will now know that something might happen, they just don't know what or when!

Little did I know, that it was the last meal I'd ever have aboard the Titanic.

As I lay in bed, I couldn't help but feel strangely uneasy about that night.

If only I had listened to his advice not to travel on the Titanic.

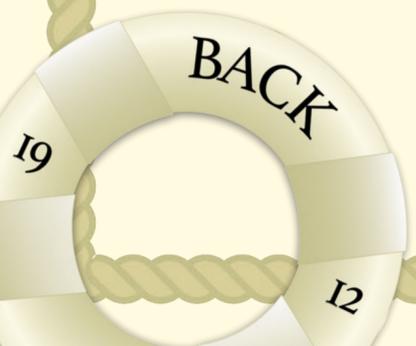
I had no idea that that would be the last time I'd ever see her.

Which writing devices will you use in your next chapter?



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- Rhetorical questions
- Modal verbs
- Repetition
- Ellipsis
- Onomatopoeia
- Build up to the action
- Surprise your reader
- Foreshadowing



Plenary

Did you use any of these devices? Share your examples.



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