

## 7. TITLE:

# Verb, person

## SENTENCES

### Examples:

- a. Flying, John had always been terrified of it.
- b. Walking, he seemed to have been walking for ever.

### EXPLANATION:

The traditional subject-verb combination is the basis of many sentences. It is possible, however, to invert the typical subject-verb structure and **open** a sentence with a verb in order to give greater importance/weight to that verb. The chosen verb should always be followed with a comma and then the chosen name of a person (or a personal pronoun—he, she, they, it) followed by the remainder of the sentence.

### TEACHING TIPS:

This sentence form is particularly powerful when used as a story opening and I have often taught it in this context. If this approach is taken then pupils should be taught that the first verb becomes the main subject of the story. If we take example a. above:

Flying, John had always been terrified of it.

Flying is the opening/operative verb. This would form a perfect opening for a story about a plane crash.

If the teacher wants to develop this, then pupils may be given themes such as:

- (i) An earthquake
- (ii) An evil ghost

Pupils are then asked to produce *verb, person* sentence story openings for these themes

e.g

(i) Trembling, he had never felt the earth beneath him trembling before ...  
but this was only the start of it!

(ii) Creeping, John Andrews knew there was something creeping behind  
him and when he turned and could see nothing, he still knew it was there!