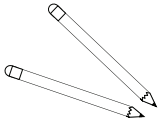
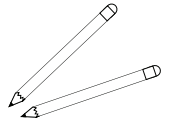


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Using Formatting to Pace Your Piece



What if writing had no built-in breaks for the reader? The writing would go on and on, sentence after sentence, with no paragraphs or chapters. Every page would be a "wall of text," page after page, until the end of the essay or book. Our eyes and brains would get tired!

Authors and publishers use three main formatting strategies to give our eyes and brains mini-breaks, and to help us understand how the information is organized. This helps us make sense of what we are reading.

There are three main formatting strategies, called "breaks," that are used to organize and pace narrative texts:

- Chapter Breaks
- Paragraph Breaks
- Text Breaks

Writers can learn how to write better stories by studying great writing. Select a novel to use for the following activity. Read about each kind of break, and then look through your novel to find two examples of each kind of break. Record the information in the table.

Chapter breaks are used when the author:

- Creates a change in time or place.
- Shifts the narrator to tell the story from a different character's point of view.
- Creates a cliffhanger by breaking the paragraph in the middle of the action.

Page	What do you think was the reason for this chapter break? Choose from one of the bullet points listed above.

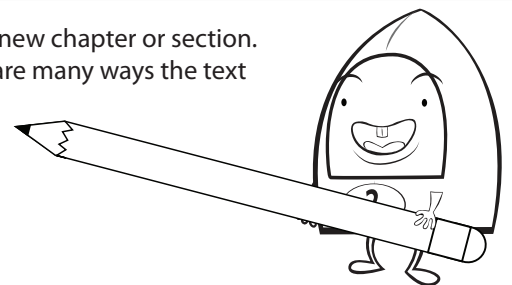
Paragraph breaks are used when:

- The story goes in a new direction.
- There's a scene change.
- A dialogue occurs back-and-forth between speakers, creating a new paragraph each time someone different speaks.

Page	What do you think was the reason for this paragraph break? Choose from one of the bullet points listed above.

Text breaks are those places where the author wants to insert a space, but not a new chapter or section. Lots of authors use them, and they often create problems for book layout. There are many ways the text break can be used to:

- Give the reader a rest.
- Change scene in the middle of a chapter.
- Insert a storyline outside the current narrative.
- Flash back to an earlier event.
- Supply explanation or backstory to the main action.



Page	What do you think was the reason for this text break? Choose from one of the bullet points listed above.