

**PATTERN 5:** A SERIES OF BALANCED PAIRS  
(note the rhythm)

A and B , C and D , E and F .  
(may be in any slot in the sentence)

### Explanation

This pattern has a series of pairs—two or three or four, with a conjunction between the items in each pair. This construction creates a balanced rhythm, but how can you tell if this rhythm is right for your sentence? Read the sentence aloud; listen to the *rhythm*, which is the important feature. As you read, ask yourself: Does your sentence have an orderly progression? Are the items balanced against each other? Do you like the way the paired words sound together?

NOTE: You can use other coordinating conjunctions besides *and* and *or*. See the fourth example below.

### Examples

The textbook clearly showed the distinctions between prose and poetry, denotation and connotation, deduction and induction.

Great artists often seem to occur in pairs: Michelangelo and da Vinci, Gauguin and van Gogh, Monet and Cézanne.

Antony and Cleopatra, Romeo and Juliet, Tristan and Isolde, Lancelot and Guinevere were all famous lovers in literature.

Eager yet fearful, confident yet somewhat suspicious, Jason eyed the barber who would give him his first haircut.

(This is a variation of the pattern.)

### Professional examples

“A new book and PBS television series traces the numerous traditions—folk and gospel, blues and zydeco—that shaped American music.”—*Smithsonian*, November 2001

“Smuin’s recovery had much after a lifetime of meat and pizza at rehearsals—and his *SF Chronicle Magazine*, Dec 28, 2001  
“Tension is everywhere—kids and themselves; confusion principles, vitriol and virtue

“We will fashion ‘crazy w sources, both ancient and modern cultures showing it to be the an essential part of the human Wisdom

“No man is really happy precious little difference with beetles, or butterflies; roses, or antiques—anything will ride it hard.”—Sir William

NOTE: This sentence is a variation of the items of the series

### Exercises

Complete each of the following of balanced pairs.

1. Tea or coffee, \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
or \_\_\_\_\_
2. Some foods just seem to go \_\_\_\_\_  
and \_\_\_\_\_
3. Each computer has special \_\_\_\_\_  
and \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## ICED PAIRS

and D , E and F .  
 in the sentence)

three or four, with a conjunction creates a balanced sentence. Is this right for your sentence? *ythm*, which is the important part of your sentence have an orderly list each other? Do you like the

conjunctions besides *and* and *or*.

distinctions between prose and fiction and induction.

as: Michelangelo and da Vinci, Anne.

at, Tristan and Isolde, Lancelot in literature.

that suspicious, Jason eyed the suspect.

series traces the numerous styles of art deco—that shaped American

“Smuin’s recovery had much to do with changing his eating habits—after a lifetime of meat and potatoes and boxes of donuts and cold pizza at rehearsals—and his attitude toward life.”—Cynthia Robins, *SF Chronicle Magazine*, December 10, 2001

“Tension is everywhere—kids at odds with parents, teachers, other kids and themselves; confused about life and love, popularity and principles, vitriol and virtue.”—Susan Faust, *SF Chronicle*, October 28, 2001

“We will fashion ‘crazy wisdom’ from both secular and spiritual sources, both ancient and modern, and from both Eastern and Western cultures showing it to be the gritty core of many esoteric teachings and an essential part of the human story.”—Wes “Scook” Nisker, *Crazy Wisdom*

“No man is really happy or safe without a hobby, and it makes precious little difference what the outside interest may be—botany, beetles, or butterflies; roses, tulips, or irises; fishing, mountaineering, or antiques—anything will do so long as he straddles a hobby and rides it hard.”—Sir William Osler

NOTE: This sentence is a variation on a balanced series. Semicolons join the items of the series, which have internal punctuation.

**Exercises**

Complete each of the following sentences. Fill in the blanks with a series of balanced pairs.

- Tea or coffee, \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_—these are popular drinks.
- Some foods just seem to go together, like: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
- Each computer has special features: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.