

Elegance

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Understand Elegance

- It's NOT mean SIMPLICITY ; otherwise , is To DISARMING simplicity (relentless simplicity can be dry , even arid)
- In addition to knowing the ways that shape our thoughts in elegant and clear , we still need to PRACTICE.

Balance VS Coordinate

Balance

- Parts of a sentence seem to be related in **length** or **meaning**.

➡ Buy a bucket of chicken and have a barrel of fun.

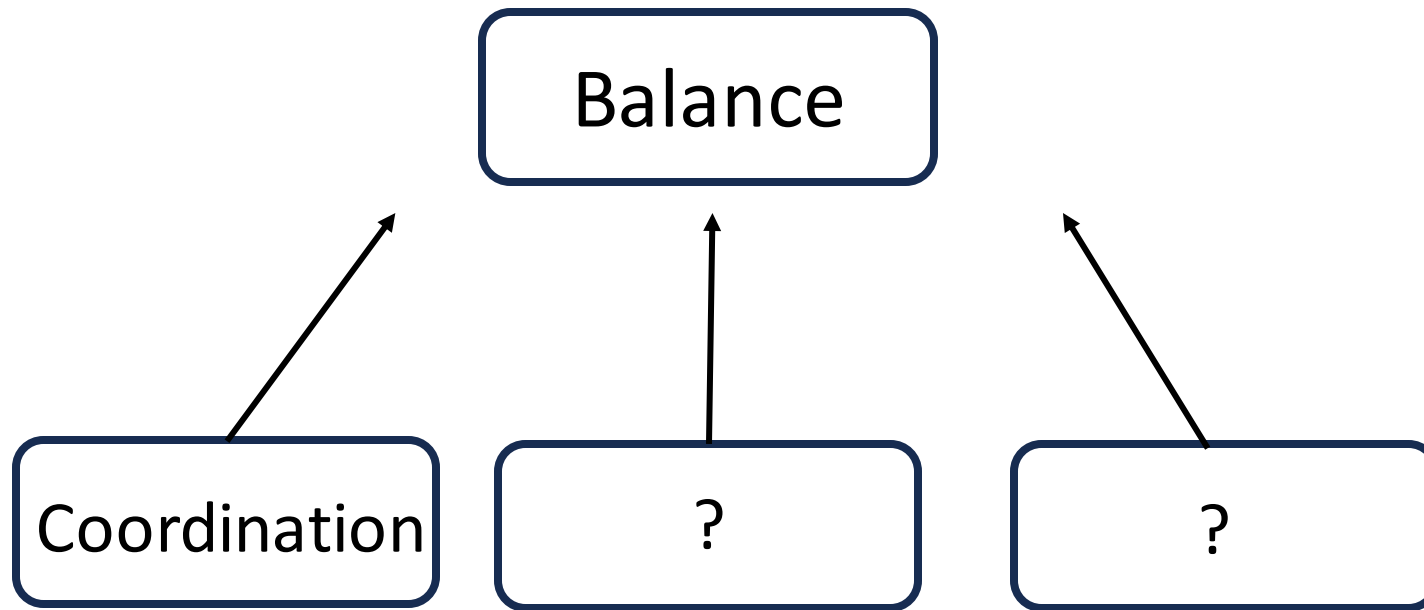
Coordinate

- A sentence with a **conjunction** joining each part.

➡ I have a pet dog **and** her name is Fluffy.

Balance VS Coordinate

The most common balance is **based on** coordination.



Balance And Symmetry

Parts of a sentence can echoing another in sound , rhythm , structure , and meaning.

The most common balance is based on coordination.

- Balance Coordination
- Uncoordinated Balance

Balanced Coordination

1a.

The national unity of a free people depends upon a sufficiently even balance of political power to make it impractical for the administration to be arbitrary and for the opposition to be revolutionary and irreconcilable. Where that balance no longer exists, democracy perishes. For unless all the citizens of a state are forced by circumstances to compromise, unless they feel that they can affect policy but that no one can wholly dominate it, unless by habit and necessity they have to give and take, freedom cannot be maintained.

--Walter Lippmann

Balanced Coordination

1b. (the version revised by autuor)

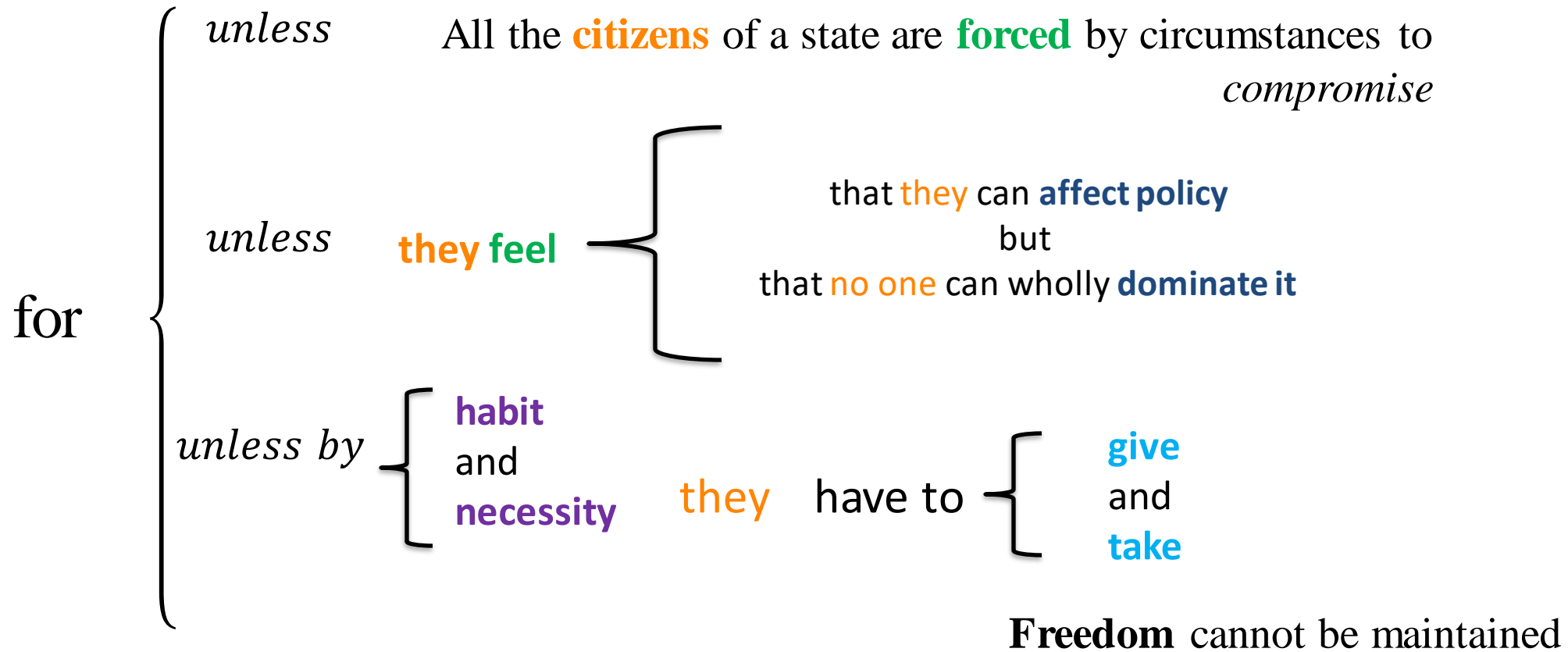
The national unity of a free people depends upon a sufficiently even balance of political power to make it impractical for the administration to be arbitrary against a revolutionary opposition that is irreconcilable opposed to it. Where that balance no longer exists, democracy perishes, because unless all the citizens of a state are habitually forced by necessary circumstances to compromise in a way that lets them affect policy with no one dominating it, freedom cannot be maintained.

Balanced Coordination

$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{for } \textit{the administration} \text{ to be arbitrary} \\ \text{and} \\ \text{for } \textit{the opposition} \text{ to be } \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \textit{revolutionary} \\ \textit{irreconcilable} \end{array} \right. \end{array} \right.$

1. Topic: **the administration** balances **the opposition**

2. Closes: balancing arbitrary, revolutionary and irreconcilable by
the stressed sounds and meanings



1. Repeat **citizens** as the topic of each clauses → all the
citizens, they, they

1. **Force** against **feel** → balance the sound and sense

2. **Affect policy** against **dominate it** → balance the meaning

3. **Habit** against **necessity** → balance the meaning

4. **Give** against **take** → balance the stressed

Uncoordinated Balance

1. Subject balances the object



Scientists whose research

*Create revolutionary views of
the universe*

Invariably confuse

Those of us who

*Construe reality from our
common-sense experience of it -*

2. Balance the predicate of the sentence

A
government



That is unwilling to *listen* to the
moderate hopes of its citizenry

Must eventually *answer* to the *harsh*
Justice of its revolutionaries

3. More complicated version.

Were I
trading

scholarly principles

for

financial security

I would not be writing

Short books ^{3a}

on

Minor subjects ^{3b}

for

Small audiences ^{3c}

1. A subordinate clause – **were I trading** Balances the main clause – **I would not be writing** → **clause v.s clause**

2. The object of the subordinated clause – **scholarly principles** balances the object in the prepositional phrase – **financial security** → **object v.s object**

3. The object in the main clause (3a) **short books**, balances objects in two prepositional phrases (3b), **minor subjects** (3c), and, **small audiences** (with the balanced **short, minor, and small**).

Here's the point

1. Create the most rhythmical balance → when **each succeeding balanced element is a bit longer than the previous one**
2. The **most striking feature** of elegant prose is **balanced sentence structure**
3. You can balance one part of a sentence against another by coordinating them with *and, or, nor, but* and *yet*

Climactic Emphasis

1. Weighty Words

a. At the end of a sentence, **prepositions feel light**, so we avoid leaving one there

b. nominalization > N > adj=adv > prep.

Climactic Emphasis

2. Of + Weighty words

Compare

The fairest part **of the earth** VS the earth's fairest

The most civilized portion **of mankind** VS most civilized part

By ancient renown and disciplined valour VS ancient renown and disciplined valour

The union **of the provinces** VS unified the provinces

enjoyed and abused the advantages **of wealth and luxury** VS enjoyed and abused
luxurious wealth.

The executive powers **of government** VS executive governmental powers

Climactic Emphasis

3. Echoing Salience

At the end of a sentence, reader hear special emphasis when a stressed word or phrase balances the sound or meaning of an earlier one.

e.g:

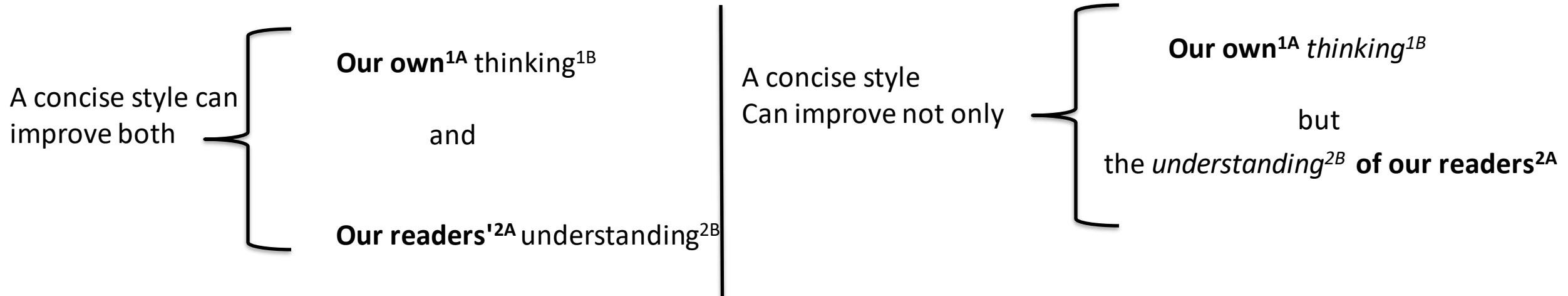
1. Apart from a few mechanical tricks of rhetoric, **manner** is indissolubly linked to the **matter**; **style** **shapes**, and in turn is **shaped by**, **substance**.
2. It seems frivolous almost inappropriate, to be stylish about style
→ Echoes both the sound and meaning of **manner** in **matter**, **style** in **substance**, **shapes** in **shaped by**, and **stylish** in **style**

Climactic Emphasis

4. Chiasmus

→ It balances elements in two parts of a sentence, **but the second part reverses the order of the elements in the first part.**

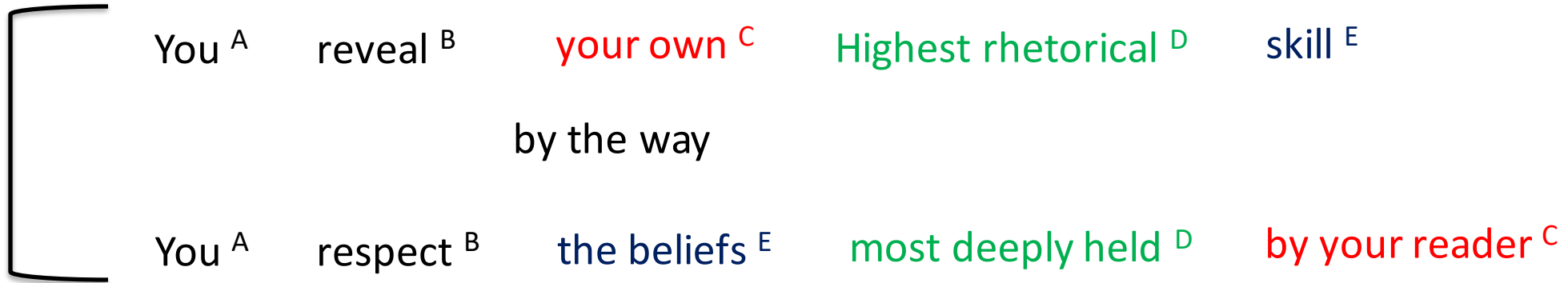
Example (end with chiasmus → the original pattern is 1A1B:2A2B, now is **1A1B:2B2A**)



Climactic Emphasis

4.Chiasmus

More complex example → The first elements are parallel, but the last three mirror one another → **AB CDE : AB EDC**



Climactic Emphasis

5.Suspension

Open a sentence with a series of parallel and coordinated phrases and clauses.



Delay and thereby **heighten** a sense of climax.

Climactic Emphasis

If [journalist] held themselves as responsible for the rise of public cynicism as they hold “venal” politicians and the “selfish” public; *If* they considered that the license they have to criticize and defame comes with an implied responsibility to serve the public—*if* they did all or any of those things, they would make journalism more useful, public life stronger, and themselves far more worthy of esteem.

Climactic Emphasis

The impact of a long suspension is inversely proportional to its frequency of use: **the less it's used, the bigger its bang.**

Here's the point

1. End with a **strong** word, or better, a pair of them.
2. End with a **prepositional** phrase introduced by *of*
3. End with an **echoing salience**
4. End with a **chiasmus**
5. **Build up** to the end

Extravagant Elegance

Combine all elements in a single sentence.



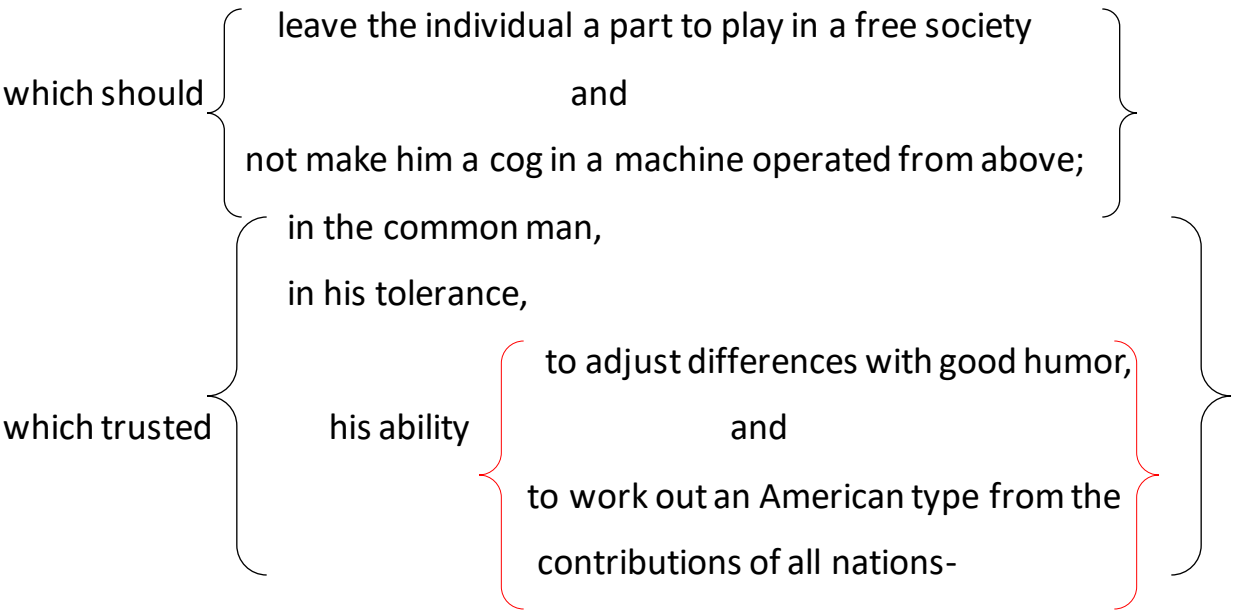
Aim at something **special**.

Extravagant Elegance

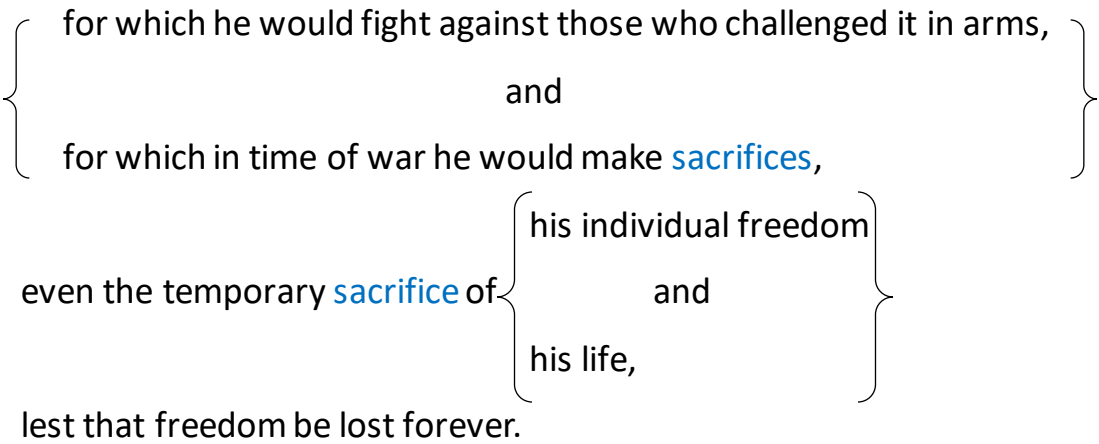
This then is the heritage of the pioneer experience—a passionate belief that a democracy was possible which should leave the individual a part to play in a free society and not make him a cog in a machine operated from above; which trusted in the common man, in his tolerance, his ability to adjust differences with good humor, and to work out an American type from the contributions of all nations—a type for which he would fight against those who challenged it in arms, and for which in time of war he would make sacrifices, even the temporary sacrifice of his individual freedom and his life, lest that freedom be lost forever.

This then is the heritage of the pioneer experience-

a passionate belief that a democracy was possible

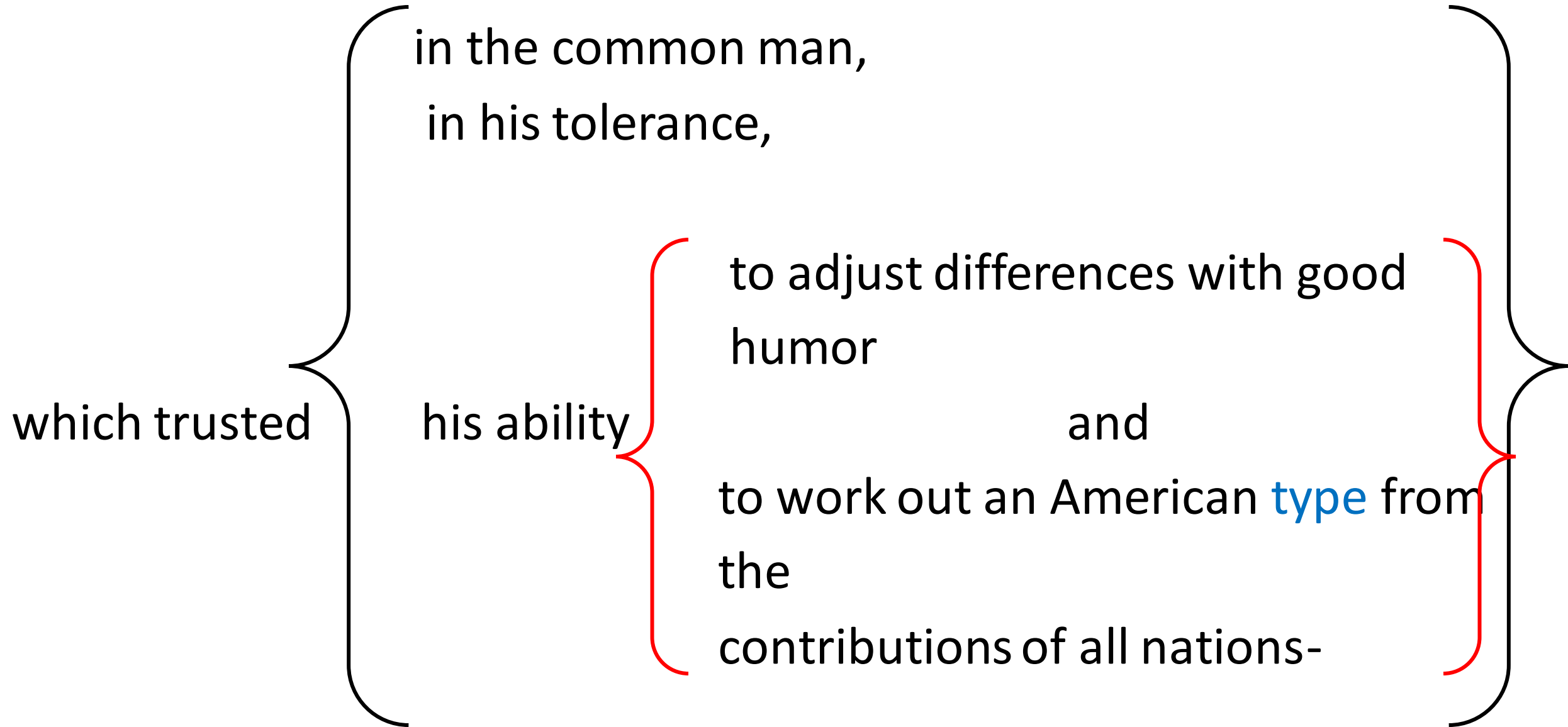


a type



This then is the heritage of the pioneer experience-
a passionate belief that a democracy was possible

which should { leave the individual a part to play in a free society
and
not make him a cog in a machine operated from above; }



Coordination inside coordination

a type

{ for which he would fight against those who challenged it in arms
and
for which in time of war he would make sacrifices, }

even the temporary sacrifice of { his individual freedom
and
his life, }

lest that freedom be lost forever.

● Resumptive modifier

the **temporary sacrifice** of his individual freedom and his **life**,

lest that freedom be **lost forever**.

- Balance **meaning**
- Echo
- Balance **sound**

Nuances Of Length And Rhythm

Use the **length** of a sentence for a purpose.

- Short ➡ Urgency
- Terse ➡ Certainty
- Directness
- Self-conscious ➡ Feeling

Nuances Of Length And Rhythm

- Short ➡ Urgency

Shots rang out on both sides. But the board fence stood in the way, dividing the soldiers from the revolution. The attackers decided to break down the fence. They broke down part of it and set fire to the rest.

Nuances Of Length And Rhythm

- Terse ➡ Certainty

The teacher or the lecturer is a danger. He very seldom recognizes his nature or his position. The lecturer is a man who must talk for an hour.

Nuances Of Length And Rhythm

- Directness

These chapters are for children, and I shall try to make the words large enough to command respect. In the hope that you are listening, and that you have confidence in me, I will proceed. Date are difficult things to acquire; and after they are acquired it is difficult to keep them in the head. But they are very valuable. They are like the cattle-pens of a ranch- they shut in the several brands of historical cattle, each within its own fence, and keep them from getting mixed together.

● Grammatical sentence

● Long punctuated sentence

Nuances Of Length And Rhythm

- Self-conscious ➡ Feeling

In any event, up at the front of this March, in the first line, back of that hollow square of monitors, Mailer and Lowell walked in this barrage of cameras, helicopters, TV cars, monitors, loudspeakers, and wavering buckling twisting line of notables, arms linked speeding up a few steps, slowing down while a great happiness came back into the day as if finally one stood under some mythical arch in the great vault of history, helicopters buzzing about, chop-chop, and the sense of American divided on this day now liberated some undiscovered patriotism in Mailer so that he felt a sharp searing love for his country in this moment and on this day, crossing some divide in his own mind wider than the Potomac, a love so lacerated he felt as if a marriage were being torn and children lost-never does one love so much as then, obviously, then-and an odor of wood smoke, from where you knew not, was also in the air, a smoke of dignity and some calm heroism, not unlike the sense of freedom which also comes when a marriage is burst –Mailer knew for the first time why men in the front line of battle are almost always ready to die; there is a promise of some swift transit.

Here's the point:

>30 or <15

Think about the **length** of sentences if they are longer than 30 or shorter than 15.

Summing Up

- Qualities of elegance are **varied** and **subtle**.
- Three characteristics are **compatible**
 - ➡ The **simplicity** of characters as subjects and **actions** as verbs.
 - ➡ The **complexity** of balanced syntax, meaning, sound, and rhythm.
 - ➡ The **emphasis** of artfully stressed endings.
- **Less is more**

Thank you for your attention 😊