Participial Phrases:
one way to increase sentence fluency while combining sentences
an overhead resource from WritingFix

If you ever have two action-packed sentences that share the same subject, like:

The child skipped all the way home.
He smiled as he remembered his wonderful day.

You can combine these two sentences by turning one of the sentences into a participial phrase. Here are three different ways you could do this with the above two sentences. Be sure you notice the commas!

• Skipping all the way home, the child smiled as he remembered his wonderful day.
• The child, smiling as he remembered his wonderful day, skipped all the way home.
• The child skipped all the way home, smiling and remembering his wonderful day.

Work with a partner, and find several ways to combine the following sets of sentences by using participial phrases. Write your favorite one down and put the comma(s) in the right places.

The tiny little dog yipped at the package delivery man.
The dog scratched at the gravel that lined the fence.

Saint Nick sat in his upholstered chair at the mall.
He waved and smiled at the children who walked by.

The student waved his hand wildly in the air at the assembly.
The student tried to get the guest speaker’s attention.