

Diction

Consider:

Doc awakened very slowly and clumsily like a fat man getting out of a swimming pool. His mind **broke the surface** and fell back several times.

— John Steinbeck, *Cannery Row*

Discuss:

1. What is the subject of the verb *broke*? What does this tell you about Doc's ability to control his thinking at this point in the story?
2. To what does *surface* refer? Remember that good writers often strive for complexity rather than simplicity.

Apply:

List three active verbs that could be used to complete the sentence below. Act out one of these verbs for the class, demonstrating the verb's connotation.

He _____ into the crowded auditorium.