**Word Choice Writing Strategy - January 2014**

**“Words Paint a Picture for the Reader”**

**Common Core Standards:**

***CCSS.ELA-Literacy W2:***

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

***CCSS.ELA-Literacy W9:***

Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

**Purpose:**

* To assist students in word choice to express ideas that make sense to not only the writer, but also the reader/audience
* To assist students to look critically at words that are powerful, energetic and active
* To empower students to work through the writing process, finding words that capture and convey meaning

**Word choice includes:**

* Applying strong verbs
* Selecting striking words and phrases
* Using specific and accurate words
* Choosing words that deepen meaning
* Words should be chosen to help the writing sound natural
* Words should paint memorable pictures for the audience

**Word Choice Activities:**

**READING – finding examples of words**

* Use samples of cartoons on overhead. Leave off the captions. Have students fill in the captions.
* After the first draft of a writing assignment is complete, ask students to find a partner to switch their paper with. The partner must circle five words that could be changed by using a thesaurus. Switch back papers and all students use the thesaurus to find replacement words.
* Give students a copy of nonfiction text. Use sticky notes and replace ten hard to understand words with easier words. Use dictionaries and a thesaurus to complete this activity.

**RESOURCE – using a thesaurus**

* Look up any word from the selection you are reading. Use the thesaurus to find five synonyms for the word. Choose two and write new sentences for them.
* Make a list of adjectives you found in the chapter or selection and then look them up in the thesaurus. Put one new word beside each.
* Make a list of verbs and follow the example above.

**Wall – Word Wall**

* Students make wall list of verbs, adjectives, and adverbs from their reading. They must use these in their writing activities.
* A similar list of descriptive phrases can be kept for the student use.
* Discuss how authors use these to “show” not “tell” the action in their stories.

**Game – Object Game**

* Students bring in objects from home. Choose an object and have the students use the word walls to describe the objects.
* Use large chart paper and ask for more qualifying words to narrow down the exact details of the object or qualifiers that describe the object better. Do this as a class.