

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.

Transition Words

Words that can be used to show **location**:

above	behind	by	near	throughout
				to the
across	below	down	off	right
against	beneath	in back of	onto	under
along	beside	in front of	on top of	
among	between	inside	outside	
around	beyond	into	over	

Words that can be used to show **time**:

while	first	meanwhile	soon	then
after	second	today	later	next
at	third	tomorrow	afterward	as soon as
before	now	next week	about	when suddenly
during	until	yesterday	finally	

Word that can be used to **compare** two things:

likewise	also	while	in the same way
like	as	similarly	

Words that can be used to **contrast** two things:

but	still	although	on the other hand
however	yet	otherwise	even though

Words that can be used to **emphasize a point**:

again	truly	especially	for this reason
		to	
to repeat	in fact	emphasize	

Words that can be used to **conclude or summarize**:

finally	as a result	to sum up	in conclusion
lastly	therefore	all in all	because

Words that can be used to **add information**:

again	another	for instance	for example
also	and	moreover	additionally
as well	besides	along with	other
next	finally	in addition	

Words that can be used to **clarify**:

that is	for instance	in other words
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