Author’s Craft: Word Choice (Adjectives)

1. Focus (15 minutes)

Say: Today I’m going to look at one more personal narrative that I wrote and revise it by adding describing words. Remember that we add describing words to make our writing more interesting and to help our readers visualize what we are writing about.

Display your draft (without describing words) from Week 12, Day 5 and ask students to reread it with you. Say: I ask myself questions to help me think of places where I can add describing words. What did the ten-dollar bill look like? It was new and crisp, just lying there waiting for us to find. Why did Lori need the money? It was her lunch money, which explains why she was so happy to get it back. Now she could have lunch!

Demonstrate how to insert a caret and add an adjective above it in one or two sentences to make them more specific.

Asa and I walked to school. We saw a crisp ten-dollar bill! Who did the money belong to?

We took the money to the principal. She said Lori had lost her lunch money. Lori was so happy to get her money back!

Sample Personal Narratives Draft

Ask students to read your revised personal narrative with you. Ask: How do my revisions help make my writing better? (Allow responses.) Good! Now my readers can better understand what the ten-dollar bill looked like and why Lori needed it for school.

Put your personal narrative aside. Say: Today you will reread a personal narrative you wrote earlier and add one or two adjectives. Your partner will help you, and so will I!

NOTE: Choose four of the personal narratives you revised in this week’s lessons to use for next week’s lessons on writer’s voice.
2. Rehearse (5 minutes)

Distribute students’ writing folders. Make sure each student has a draft to work with. Say: Choose which draft you would like to revise. Then along with your partner, decide whose draft you will revise first. Read the draft together and ask each other questions about it. Use the answers to the questions to help you think of describing words to use. When you are done, do the same thing with the other draft. Move among the pairs of students to monitor and support their efforts.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring (20 minutes)

Say: Now add the describing words you thought of to your draft. Use a caret to put each word in the right place. Remember that you don’t need to add a describing word to every sentence. Adding one or two new words is fine. If any students have difficulty coming up with adjectives to add, ask questions to guide them and then assist them in inserting carets and words in the proper spots. You can also use the Sample Responsive Conferring Prompts to help you provide differentiated support to individual students based on your observations.

When students finish, say: Now reread your personal narrative to your partner and explain how the describing words you added make it better.

4. Share (5 minutes)

Invite two pairs to share their revised drafts. Point out and celebrate examples of specific adjectives students used in their drafts or added to their writing later. You may wish to provide additional modeling based on your observations during Independent Writing and Conferring.

Sample Responsive Conferring Prompts to Support and Scaffold Writers

Goal Oriented
• I will reread my writing to look for places where I could be more descriptive.
• I could describe ______ with the word ______.

Directive and Corrective Feedback
• What is the ______ like? Use one of the describing words in your sentence.
• Listen carefully to the sounds in the word ______. What letter stands for that sound?
• Try ______. Would that work?

Self-Monitoring and Reflection
• What did you ask yourself here (pointing)?
• What word did you use to describe ______?
• How could you make that sentence even better?

Validating and Confirming
• I like the way you used describing words. This helps me visualize as I read your message.
• What questions did you ask as you wrote your message? Strong writers ask themselves questions to help them decide how to make their writing better.
• You thought about several different words and chose ______. That will help your readers understand ______ better.
• You went back and fixed your writing. Strong writers do that!

Teacher Tip
Continue to ask students to say words slowly and write what they hear. Encourage them to keep a list of high-frequency words they learn to write. Celebrate each gain in sound/symbol relationships and known words.