Author’s Craft: Word Choice (Overused Words)

Objectives

Concepts About Print
• Use appropriate uppercase letters and end punctuation.
• Put spaces between words.

Oral Language and Grammar
• Share a personal experience in a unique way.
• Use complete sentences.
• Use appropriate nouns, verbs, adjectives, and personal pronouns.
• Avoid overused words.

Purposeful Phonics Connections
• Apply phonics knowledge to encode unknown words.
• Write high-frequency words.

Reflecting Reading in Writing
• Ask questions.
• Share a beginning, a middle, and an end.
• Analyze characters, setting, problem, and resolution.
• Reread.

Writing
• Write a personal narrative.
• Revise for word choice.

Materials
• Modeling text prepared prior to lesson (see Focus)
• Editing Checklist (from Day 2)
• Chart paper and markers
• Interactive whiteboard resources

1. Focus (15 MINUTES)

Display the modeling text (without corrections) on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources, and read it aloud. Ask: What word does the writer of this text use too often? (Allow responses.) That’s right. This writer has overused the word great. Remember that when you overuse a word, readers stop paying attention to it. It loses its meaning. Let’s look at each example in this text and think about other words that would be more meaningful in each sentence.

When I was five, I had a great really fun birthday. My parents took me to a great new restaurant. We ate great delicious hamburgers and French fries. Then we had a cake. It was great tasty!

Modeling Text

Sentence 1. Ask: When the author writes “great birthday,” what does he or she mean? Allow responses. If necessary say: I think the author means that this birthday was really fun. Let’s write that.

Sentence 2. Say: Now the author writes that the restaurant was great. What do you think the author could mean? (Allow responses. Generate a list of other words the writer could have used, such as fancy, new, exciting, etc.) Let’s use one of these more interesting words in place of great.

Sentence 3. Ask: When someone says that the hamburgers and fries are great, what does that person mean? (Allow responses. Work with students to generate a list of adjectives that describe taste, such as delicious, yummy, etc.) Let’s cross out the word great and write a different adjective.

Sentences 4 and 5. Say: Close your eyes and think about all the birthday cakes you have ever eaten. What are some words that could describe them? (Allow responses. Work with students to generate a list of words that might describe a great cake, such as tasty, moist, melt-in-your-mouth, etc.) Let’s use one of these more interesting words in place of great.

Reread the revised version of the personal narrative together. Ask: Which version do you prefer to read? Tell me why. Allow responses.
2. **Rehearse** (5 MINUTES)

Invite each student to work with a partner. **Say:** Tell your partner about a word you sometimes overuse in your writing. Think of two or three other words you could use instead of that word. Remember to use the editing checklist to help you. Move among the pairs of students to monitor and support their efforts.

3. **Independent Writing and Conferring** (20 MINUTES)

Distribute students’ writing folders. **Say:** Continue working on your personal narratives. Look for words that you have overused, and think about how you could change those words so your writing is more descriptive. Support students as needed as they finish their narratives, underline the resolution in yellow, and edit with their partners. Remind them to use the Editing Checklist you have posted and to ask each other questions as they revise for describing words, writer’s voice, and overused words. Use the Sample Responsive Conferring Prompts to help you provide differentiated support to individual students based on your observations.

4. **Share** (5 MINUTES)

Invite two pairs to share their edited, revised drafts. Point out and celebrate places where students used a variety of interesting words in their writing.

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**Sample Responsive Conferring Prompts to Support and Scaffold Writers**

**Goal Oriented**
- I use words such as ______ to show how I feel.
- I might describe ______ with the word ______.
- I will make sure each sentence is a complete thought.

**Directive and Corrective Feedback**
- Read your sentences. What do you notice about the words you use?
- What word could you use in place of the word ______.

**Self-Monitoring and Reflection**
- Have you overused any words? How could you fix that?
- What is another word you could use to write this?
- What describing word could you add here?
- How does this part show your own special style of writing?

**Validating and Confirming**
- You told a problem and how you resolved it!
- You asked yourself questions about your sentences. Strong writers do that to help them write better sentences.
- You were careful not to overuse words!
- You used your writer’s voice!