Draw It to Write It: Drawing Before Drafting

1. Focus

Explain Drawing Before Drafting

Say: When I draft a personal narrative, I want to describe what happened so the reader can almost see it happening. Sometimes before starting to write, I draw pictures of the big things that happen in my narrative. Then I write words on my drawings that I can use to describe my scene. I try to include words that describe as many senses as I can. Today I’m going to show you how I draw before I draft. When I draw to write, I don’t worry about whether my drawings are “good.” I’m not trying to be an artist. I’m just sketching to help me visualize the scenes and get my ideas flowing.

Model Drawing Before Drafting

Display the modeling text on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources and read it aloud.

Say: I’m going to imagine that I am the author of this text. I will model what this author did before she wrote this text. I will show you how she used a drawing to help her get ideas for writing a description of the event in her personal narrative.

Modeling Text

Say: I remember when I got to the doctor’s office and how scared I was. I’m going to draw a picture of that event. (As you model, draw the scene on chart paper or use the interactive whiteboard resources.) I can almost see myself lying down in the doctor’s office. I’m gripping the sides of the chair with both hands. I must have looked terrified. And that big hole in my chin must have looked terrifying to my mom. I can remember the doctor coming toward me with a big needle in his hand.

After drawing, model how you jot down descriptive words that you can use in your writing.

Objectives

In this mini-lesson, students will:
• Learn how to use drawings as an aid to drafting a personal narrative.
• Practice using drawings to draft a personal narrative.
• Discuss how to apply this strategy to their independent writing.

Preparation

Materials Needed
• Chart paper and markers
• Interactive whiteboard resources

Advanced Preparation
If you will not be using the interactive whiteboard resources, copy the modeling text onto chart paper.
**Strategies to Support ELs**

**Beginning**
Work one on one with beginning ELs. Invite them to draw a picture of one scene from their personal narratives. Encourage them to talk about their drawings, using as many descriptive words as they can. Jot down examples of descriptive words on self-stick notes and place them on the students’ drawings.

**Intermediate and Advanced**
Pair ELs with fluent English speakers during the practice activity.

**All Levels**
If you have ELs whose first language is Spanish, share these English/Spanish cognates: describe/escibir; description/la descripción; scene/la escena.

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**Say:** Now that I have my drawing, it brings back the memory of how I felt then. I can think of good descriptive words that I can use in my draft. I’ll jot these words down under my picture to help me remember when I write my draft. Model writing descriptive words under your drawing, for example, *terrified*, *anxious*, *worried*, *in pain*, *gigantic needle*, etc.

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**2. Rehearse**

**Practice Drawing Before Drafting**

Invite students to draw a picture of one of the scenes in their personal narratives. Then ask students to tell a partner about the scene. Encourage partners to help each other write descriptive words under their pictures.

**Share and Discuss Drawing Before Drafting**

Bring the class together and invite students to show their drawings and read aloud the words they wrote underneath. Use the examples to remind students that there are many possible words to choose for each scene you describe. Discuss whether this process makes it easier to write a draft of the narrative.

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**3. Independent Writing and Conferring**

**Say:** We just learned how to draw scenes from our personal narratives before writing about them. Pictures can help us “see” the scenes we’re going to describe and think of good words to use to describe what’s happening. As you get ready to draft your narrative, try drawing your scenes first.

During independent writing time, encourage students to describe in writing the scene from their narratives that they drew. During student conferences, reinforce students’ use of this and other strategies using the prompts on your conferring flip chart.

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**4. Share**

Bring students together. Invite volunteers to share one of the scenes they drew from their narrative and then ask them to describe it.