1. Focus

Explain Using Sensory Words

Say: When I write a procedural text, I choose words that clearly describe the steps in the process. Sometimes I use words that help the reader see, smell, or hear some part of the procedure. These kinds of “sensory words” are especially helpful when writing a procedure because it’s important to tell the reader what to expect. For example, if I’m writing about how to roast a marshmallow, I might say, “Hold the stick over the glowing coals and wait until you see wisps of smoke and smell the roasting sugar of the marshmallow.” The sensory phrases glowing coals, wisps of smoke, and roasting sugar of the marshmallow help readers imagine in sights and smells what they want to achieve. Today I’m going to show you how to use sensory words in your procedural texts to help readers see, smell, and hear parts of the procedure.

Model How Writers Use Sensory Words

Display the modeling text on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources. Ask students to listen for sensory words as you read the text aloud.

Modeling Text

Say: In the second sentence, I notice the word pops. This is a sound word and a visual word. When I read it, I think of the sound of the toaster popping up and I see the toast popping out of the toaster. In the next sentence, the phrase golden brown tells me what the toast should look like. I’ve seen good pieces of toast and these words remind me what to look for. At the very end, the writer uses the word ding, the sound the microwave makes when it’s finished cooking. It’s a nice sound word to use at the end because it tells us not only is our sandwich finished, but we’ve reached the end of the process, too. I’m going to underline these words and label them “sensory words.” Underline and label the identified words.
2. Rehearse

Practice Using Sensory Words

Write the practice text on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources.

Roll the cookie dough into balls. Put them into the oven to bake, about 10 minutes. Take them out to cool.

Practice Text

Ask students to work with a partner to revise and add to the steps for baking cookies using sensory words. Remind students that sensory words help readers see, smell, and hear your text. Each pair should write down their sentences and be prepared to read them to the class. They should be ready to explain the sensory words they chose to use.

Share Practice Sentences

Bring students together and invite partners to read aloud their sentences and explain their word choices. Record students’ sentences and post these as models for students to use as they draft or revise their procedural texts.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: We learned that we can use sensory words in our procedural texts to give readers a clearer picture of what we want them to do and what they should expect. Sensory words allow readers to imagine what they need to do visually and through other senses. Look for chances to try sensory words in your procedural texts.

Ask students to identify a section of their procedural texts where they could use more sensory words. During conferences, reinforce students’ use of this and other strategies using the prompts on your conferring flip chart.

4. Share

Bring the class together. Invite volunteers to read aloud a section of their procedural text in which they use sensory language. Ask them to explain their word choices.

Strategies to Support ELs

Beginning

While the rest of the class works on the partner practice activity, you may wish to support the oral language development of beginning ELs. You may like to introduce them to a number of sound words using animal sounds. Display pictures of animals and say the sounds they make. Say: The cow says, “moo.” Ask students to repeat after you. You may wish to have students tell the sounds animals make in their home language.

Intermediate and Advanced

Pair ELs with fluent English speakers during the partner activity. Supply the following sentence frames to help them complete the sentences:

The cookie dough will feel ______.
When the cookies are done, they will smell ______.
They will look ______.

All Levels

If you have ELs whose first language is Spanish, share these English/Spanish cognates: procedural text/el texto de procedimiento; sensory/sensorial.