Revise Your Historical Fiction for Voice (Point of View)

1. Focus

Explain Revising for Voice (Point of View)

Say: Sometimes when we complete a draft of a story, we assume we’re done, but we’re not. We still have to revise our historical fiction to make sure it is all told in the same voice, or point of view. If the story is told by one of the characters, you have used a first person point of view, so your sentences make use of the pronouns I and we. If your story is told by a third person narrator, who is outside the story, then the narrator’s voice typically uses only he, she, and they to discuss the characters and their actions. You cannot write a story that has both first and third person narration at the same time. When you revise, it is important to make sure that the point of view of your narrative voice is consistent.

Model Revising for Consistent Voice

Display the modeling text (without revisions) on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources.

| 1. We He painstakingly copied the marks into the stone. |
| 2. Belshunu said, “My apprentice will make your votive.” |
| 3. I The Wife of Hudu-libbi looked over at the young man, then said, “I have heard that your apprentice is quite the craftsman . . . he’ll do.” |

Modeling Text

Say: These sentences are from the story “The Strong and the Weak: Hammurabi’s Code.” Let’s see what we need to do to make sure all of the sentences are in the third person.

Read sentence 1. Say: This sentence reads as if the narrator is participating in the story. You can tell by the word We. If we want to rewrite the sentence in the third person, we need to insert the name of a character or the pronoun he or she. I’ll cross out We and add He. Model making insertions and deletions.

Read sentence 2. Say: This sentence reads as if someone is observing Belshunu say something to another character. This sentence is already in the third person, so we can leave it as is.

Read sentence 3. Say: The narrator cannot be in the story and observing the story at the same time. So, let’s put a character in here. I’ll delete I and insert The Wife of Hudu-libbi. That will take the narrator out of the story again. Model making insertions and deletions.

Objectives

In this mini-lesson, students will:

- Learn to revise a historical fiction story to make consistent use of the third person voice.
- Revise a section of their own writing and share their revisions with the class.
- Discuss how they can apply this strategy to their own independent writing.

Preparation

Materials Needed

- Chart paper and markers
- Interactive whiteboard resources

Advanced Preparation

If you are not using interactive whiteboard resources, copy the modeling text (without revisions) and the practice text onto chart paper prior to the mini-lesson. Leave enough space between lines to allow you to insert new text.
2. Rehearse

Practice Revising to Establish a Voice with a Consistent Narrative Point of View

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

| I had made many votives and knew exactly what to do. |
| Ditanu was offended by her mistrust. |
| We set up the stones and went to work. |
| She watched so intently that her jewelry settled into silence. |

Practice Text

Invite students to work with partners to revise the sentences so that all of them are written in the third person. Each pair should write down their sentences and be prepared to read them to the class.

Share Practice Revisions

Bring students together and invite pairs to read aloud their revised sentences and explain how they revised each sentence to establish a consistent third person voice. Record sample student sentences and post these as models for students to use as they revise their own historical fiction stories.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: We just learned that, when a writer revises a story, it is important to review the narrative voice to make sure the story is told consistently in either the first person or the third person. As you revise your historical fiction, pay close attention to the point of view and make sure your entire piece is told from either the first or third person. If your writing switches points of view, revise it so that you have a consistent point of view.

Encourage students to focus on voice (point of view) as they revise their stories. During conferences, reinforce students’ use of this and other strategies using the prompts on your conferring flip chart.

4. Share

Bring students together. Invite students to read aloud a section of their historical fiction that they revised for voice (point of view).

Strategies to Support ELs

Beginning

Beginning and intermediate ELs are not ready to work on this writing process skill. While other students collaborate on the small-group activity or write independently, meet one on one with students to support developmentally appropriate writing skills based on their independent writing and language levels. Because this lesson focuses on point of view, you might want to work with students on pronouns.

Intermediate and Advanced

Pair ELs with more fluent English speakers during the partner activity. Support oral language by providing simple sentence frames such as:

A story is told in the first person when ______.
When I am observing the story, I am using ______.

All Levels

If you have students whose first language is Spanish, share these English/Spanish cognates to help them understand the lesson focus: consistent/constante; revise/revisar.