Revise for Flow of Ideas

Objective

In this mini-lesson, students will:
• Learn to revise for the flow of ideas.
• Practice revising for flow of ideas.
• Share their revisions with the class.
• Discuss how they can apply this skill to their own 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 prior to the mini-lesson.

1. Focus

Explain Revising for Flow of Ideas

Say: After writing the draft of our persuasive essays, we need to go back and reread our writing to check for flow of ideas. Sometimes when we draft, we get off track, maybe because we stop writing and come back to it later or maybe because we forget to follow our organizational planning chart. Whatever the reason, we might find when we reread our drafts that our writing doesn’t flow from stating an argument to supporting it with strong evidence. We need to rewrite to make our persuasive essay stronger. We can go back and look at our organizational planning chart and even check our research note-taking chart to see if we can write a better argument. Today I’m going to show you how to revise your persuasive essay for a better flow of ideas.

Model Revising for Flow of Ideas

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

1. In today’s busy world, many families find that on some days they need to rely on fast food so that they can squeeze in everything on their busy schedules. Although they must rely on fast food, they can still eat healthy if they make the right choices from the fast food menu. Of course, some families have found clever ways to make fast meals at home.

2. It is true that fast food menus contain many items with high fat, sugar, and salt. But today every fast food restaurant offers their customers alternatives. They include items that are healthy. Customers can read the nutritional information and make the right choices. Then they will be able to eat a healthy meal.

Modeling Text

Read example 1. Say: What was I thinking here by including this last sentence? I included a statement that argues against my argument that sometimes busy families have no choice but to go to a fast food restaurant. I had this information on my note-taking chart after talking to families, and I must have just included it in my essay without thinking. It’s good I reread my essay so that I can delete this statement and make my argument stronger.

Read example 2. Say: Where’s my evidence to support my statement that fast food restaurants offer their customers healthy alternatives? From my research, I found lots of examples of items that are healthy. I should have included that information here. Right now my essay is very weak, so I need to go back to my research notes and find examples of healthy alternatives that I can include here to prove my point.
2. Rehearse

Practice Revising for Flow of Ideas

Invite students to reread their drafts to look for places where their ideas don’t flow or where their argument is weak because they haven’t included the right evidence to support it. Students will not have time to work through their whole drafts during practice time, but they can continue to reread for flow during independent writing time.

If your class includes English learners or other students who need support, use “Strategies to Support ELs.”

Share Practice Revisions

Bring students together and invite volunteers to share places where they found that the ideas in their drafts didn’t flow or their arguments weren’t clearly supported.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: We learned that it’s important to reread our drafts to look at the flow of our ideas and check that our arguments are supported by evidence. When we find problems, we can go back to our persuasive essay planning chart to check for flow of ideas. We can also go back to our note-taking chart to find research we forgot to include.

Encourage students to concentrate on their flow of ideas as they revise during independent writing time. During conferences, reinforce students’ use of this and other strategies using the prompts on your conferring flip chart.

4. Share

Bring students together. Invite volunteers to read aloud a section of their drafts before and after they revised to show how they improved their flow of ideas.

Strategies to Support ELs

Beginning

This skill is advanced for beginning ELs. You will want to work with them individually to reinforce concepts while other students write independently. Help them take a simple piece of writing they have written and work on the flow of ideas with them.

Intermediate and Advanced

Pair ELs with fluent English speakers during partner practice.