Revise: Vary Sentence Beginnings

Objectives

Concepts About Print
• Apply print concepts and conventions during writing.

Oral Language and Grammar
• Retell information orally.
• Use nouns, verbs, adjectives, and personal pronouns in complete sentences.

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

Reflecting Reading in Writing
• Ask questions.
• Identify main idea and details.
• Use texts as sentence models for writing.

Writing
• Revise an informational report for sentence beginnings.

Materials
• Modeling text prepared prior to lesson (see Focus)
• Informational Reports anchor chart (from Week 20)
• Students’ drafts of informational reports (from Weeks 20 and 21)
• Chart paper, markers, and highlighters
• Interactive whiteboard resources

1. Focus (15 MINUTES)

Display the modeling text without revisions on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources. Read the text aloud, asking students to follow along as you read.

Butterflies are insects. Butterflies These insects have three body parts. Butterflies They have antennae. Butterflies They have wings. Butterflies can fly.

Modeling Text

Say: I notice something about this report. Every sentence in the report begins with the same word—Butterflies. Let’s read it again, and I want you to listen for the repetition, too. Reread the sentences. Then invite a volunteer to highlight the word Butterflies at the beginning of each sentence.

Say: Today I will show you how I revise this text by using different words to begin the sentences. Think aloud and model how to revise the sentences.

Sentence 1. Say: I won’t change this sentence. This is my topic sentence, and I need to let my readers know that I’m writing about butterflies.

Sentence 2. Say: This sentence also begins with Butterflies. I want to change that. Butterflies are insects, so I’ll write “These insects have three body parts.”

Sentences 3 and 4. Say: I don’t need to start these sentences with Butterflies because my readers already know I’m talking about butterflies. What pronoun could I use instead? (Allow responses.) Yes. I can use the pronoun They in each sentence. Model making the revisions.

Sentence 5. Say: I don’t want another sentence that starts with They. I haven’t used the word Butterflies since the first sentence, so I will leave it here.

When you finish revising, ask students to read the revised modeling text with you. Say: That's better! Now the report sounds more interesting. We will talk more about sentence beginnings tomorrow. Today you will look at one of your reports to see if you need to change some of the sentence beginnings. First let's add this skill to our Informational Reports anchor chart.

Refer to the Informational Reports anchor chart displayed in your classroom and review it with students. Then add the last bullet about beginning sentences in different ways.
Writing My Informational Report

• I pick a topic.
• I read some books about my topic.
• I give my report a title.
• I write a topic sentence to tell the main idea.
• I write facts I learned about my topic.
• I draw pictures to support my facts.
• I cite my sources.
• I begin my sentences in different ways.

Informational Reports Anchor Chart

2. Rehearse (10 MINUTES)

Distribute students’ writing folders and give students highlighters. Ask each student to choose an informational report he or she wrote and would like to revise. Ask students to work in pairs. Say: Decide which report you will revise first. Read the report together and highlight the first word in each sentence. If you see the same word over and over, ask each other questions to help you think of other words you could use. When you are done, do the same thing with the other report. Move among the pairs of students to monitor and support their efforts.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring (15 MINUTES)

Say: Now make the changes you and your partner talked about. You don’t have to revise every sentence, but try to make your writing better by having some sentences start in different ways. If any students have difficulty figuring out what to revise, ask questions to guide them to notice places where they could make revisions. In addition use the Sample Responsive Conferring Prompts to help you provide differentiated support to individual students based on your observations. As students finish, say: Now reread your report to your partner to show how the new sentence beginnings you wrote make your report sound more interesting.

4. Share (5 MINUTES)

Invite two pairs to share their revised reports. Point out and celebrate examples of varied sentence beginnings. You may wish to provide additional modeling based on your observations during Independent Writing and Conferring.

Sample Responsive Conferring Prompts to Support and Scaffold Writers

Goal Oriented
• I will look for places where I can vary my sentence beginnings.
• I will ask myself questions to help me choose words to use.

Directive and Corrective Feedback
• What is another way to say ______?
• What pronoun could you use for ______?
• A ______ is a ______. Could you start with that word instead?

Self-Monitoring and Reflection
• What could you ask yourself here?
• How could you make that sentence even better?
• How could you vary the beginnings of these sentences?

Validating and Confirming
• You wrote the word ______! I like the way you worked that out.
• You asked yourself questions about your sentences. That’s something strong writers do.
• You thought about several different words and chose ______. That will make your report sound even more interesting.
• You went back and fixed your writing. Strong writers do that!

Teacher Tip
Keep the Informational Reports anchor chart on display in the classroom and encourage students to refer to it both as a writing tool and as a checklist for editing and revising their writing.