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)
• 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 it aloud, asking students to follow along as you read.

Many trees change color in the fall. These trees shed their leaves. Trees grow their leaves back in the spring. Most trees give us shade.

Modeling Text

Say: We have learned that strong writers pay attention to how their sentences begin. They work hard to find interesting ways to begin sentences so that they don’t all sound alike. Tell me what you thought of this report. What did you notice about it? (Allow responses.) Let’s work together to make this a stronger report by varying the sentence beginnings.

Sentence 1. Say: If we leave this sentence as it is, it really isn’t true. Not all trees change color in the fall. I think we need to change this sentence. What could we change? Allow responses. Agree on a change and model making the revision, for example, “Many trees.”

Sentence 2. Say: We have the same problem in this sentence. How could we revise it so that readers know we are only talking about certain trees? Discuss how to change the sentence and model making the revision, for example, “These trees.”

Sentences 3 and 4. Repeat the guided practice process with these sentences, asking students to think aloud about how they would revise the sentences. You may wish to invite a volunteer to make the revisions on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources.
2. Rehearse (10 MINUTES)

Distribute highlighters and students’ writing folders. 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 at the beginnings of the sentences. Think about pronouns you could use. Think about describing words you could add. 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)

Ask students to make the changes they talked about. If any students have difficulty figuring out what to revise, ask questions to guide them in the right direction. 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)

Use the Share time in one of the following ways depending on your observations of students during Independent Writing and Conferring:

- Invite volunteers to tell how they revised their sentence beginnings. Ask other students to share their ideas about the revisions.
- If you feel students need more support in revising sentence beginnings, prepare another modeling text with sentences that start with the same words and ask students to help you revise it.
- Ask volunteers to read aloud their reports. Ask other students to pay attention to how the sentences begin.

Sample Responsive Conferring Prompts to Support and Scaffold Writers

**Goal Oriented**
- I could use the word _____ in place of _____.
- I ask myself, “_____?”

**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?
- Try ______. Would that work?

**Self-Monitoring and Reflection**
- What could you ask yourself here to help you?
- How could you make that sentence even better?
- What word could you use in place of the word _____?

**Validating and Confirming**
- I liked the way you asked yourself questions to find different ways to start your sentences.
- I like the way you varied the beginnings of your sentences. You used pronouns well!
- You went back and fixed your writing. Strong writers do that to make their writing the best it can be!

**Teacher Tip**
Continue to model good examples of nonfiction text by reading aloud nonfiction big books and trade books.