Revise for Word Choice

1. Focus (15 minutes)

Display page 10 of the mentor big book using the big book or interactive whiteboard resources. Discuss the photograph and read the journal entry together. Say: I like something Tom did on this journal page. He didn’t just write “Today was the first day of vacation!” Instead he wrote “Today was the first day of summer vacation!” He used the word summer to describe which vacation he was talking about. Strong writers work hard to use just the right describing words so readers can better visualize and understand a text. Now I will think of something to draw and write about in my journal. After I write, I will see if I can add just the right describing words to make my writing even better.

Model how to close your eyes and visualize an idea, using the think-aloud below as an example.

Say: One time I was driving in a new town. All of a sudden, the highway went into a tunnel. The tunnel was long and had only a few lights inside. Now I will choose which details to draw about my memory of the tunnel. I will draw the tunnel with a car going through it.

Model drawing the scene on chart paper. Then say: I will write “I drove through a tunnel. I was glad to get to the other side!” As you write, continue emphasizing and modeling the writing skills detailed in Weeks 1–5.

Ask students to reread the journal entry with you. Say: I wrote the most important details and used complete sentences. I used uppercase letters where I should have, and I put end punctuation on each sentence. I think my message could be better, though. I ask myself, “What was the tunnel like? What describing word could I add to tell my readers what it was like?” I could use the word dark or shadowy. But I think the word gloomy best describes the tunnel.

Demonstrate how to insert a caret before the word tunnel and add the word gloomy above the caret. Then ask students to read your new, improved sentence with you. Say: That’s better! Now my readers can visualize what the tunnel looked and felt like.

I drove through a gloomy tunnel. I was glad to get to the other side!

Modeling Text
2. Rehearse (5 MINUTES)

Invite students to close their eyes and visualize an experience to draw and write about in a journal. Say: Tell your partner about your idea. Tell what happens and how people feel. Tell “who” or what your sentence is about and act out the action to make sure you have a complete thought.

If your class includes English learners, you may wish to model using the following oral sentence frames to support their partner talk:

- One time I ______.
- I felt ______.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring (20 MINUTES)

Distribute students’ writing journals. Invite each student to draw a picture of what he or she described to a partner and to write as many sentences as possible. Continue to support students at whatever stage of writing development they are in. Help students circle any adjectives they include, or ask questions to determine if they could add an adjective to a sentence. Assist them by inserting a caret and the word in the proper spot. Alternatively allow students who would like to add an adjective to get ideas and support from other students.

Use the Sample Responsive Conferring Prompts to help you provide differentiated support to individual students based on your observations.

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 read aloud their journal entries. Ask other students to listen for describing words.
- Work with a small group of students who had difficulty adding describing words to their sentences. Ask one or more students to read aloud a sentence or copy example sentences on chart paper. As a group, brainstorm words that the writers could use to make the sentences more descriptive. Read aloud the sentences, substituting the adjectives.
- Invite volunteers to read aloud their drafts. Ask them to tell about any changes they made to their writing when they went back to reread it.

Sample Responsive Conferring Prompts to Support and Scaffold Writers

Goal Oriented

- I see ______ in my mind. I will think about words that show what I see.
- I will reread my writing and look for places where my message could be more descriptive.

Directive and Corrective Feedback

- In this sentence you tell me about ______, but I can’t picture it. What word could you add to help me?
- How could you describe ______? What other words could you use?
- Tell me some words that describe ______. Now add one of those words to your sentence.

Self-Monitoring and Reflection

- Show me where you used a describing word to help your reader understand what you are writing about.
- Tell me the strategies you used to come up with words to describe ______.

Validating and Confirming

- You wrote the word ______! I like the way you worked that out!
- You asked yourself questions about your sentence. That’s something strong writers do to help them write.
- You thought about several different words and chose ______. That will help your readers visualize your writing.
- You went back and fixed your writing. Strong writers do that!

Teacher Tip

Begin a class word bank of simple adjectives, such as long, red, shy, fast, late, and ripe. Add to the list as students discover new adjectives in their reading and writing, and encourage students to refer to the list as they revise their work.