Revise for Word Choice

1. Focus (15 minutes)

Display page 14 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 used adjectives to make his writing more exact and interesting. What was the water like? How do you know? (Allow responses.) We know that the water was very, very cold because Tom used the word freezing to describe it. What was the diving board like? How do you know? (Allow responses.) The diving board was really high. Tom describes it as the highest diving board. The words freezing and highest help me visualize what Tom’s experience was like. Strong writers work hard to use just the right describing words for their readers. Let’s review what else writers do in their journals.

Refer to the posted Journals anchor chart and read it aloud with students. Then tell students that you are ready to draw and write in your journal. Say: After I write, I will see if I can add just the right describing word 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: When I was little, I went to a play. The actors’ costumes were bright colors and had lots of beads that sparkled in the light. After the play, we got to shake hands with the actors. I touched one of the capes, and it felt like the edge of my old baby blanket. Now I will choose which details to draw. I will draw one of the actors in a costume. I will be watching her with an amazed expression on my face!

Model drawing the scene on chart paper. Then say: I will write “I went to a play. The play was great. The costumes were even better!” As you write, continue emphasizing and modeling the writing skills detailed in Weeks 1–5.

Ask students to reread the journal entry with you. Ask: What could I do to make my message better? (Allow responses.) Yes! I could add some describing words. I’ll ask myself, “What were the costumes like?” They looked colorful and shiny. They felt soft and smooth. I think the words fancy and silky best describe the costumes, though.

Demonstrate how to insert a caret before the word costumes and add the words fancy, silly (including the comma) 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 costumes looked and felt like.
I went to a play. The play was great. The fancy, silky costumes were even better!

**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 ______.
- I remember ______.

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)*

Invite two or three students to share their drawings and written messages. Point out and celebrate examples of specific adjectives students used in or added to their writing. You may also 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 visualize my idea in my mind. Then I will write what I see.
- I will use describing words to help my readers visualize my writing.

**Directive and Corrective Feedback**

- Reread your sentence about a past event. Now close your eyes and imagine yourself at that moment. Tell me what you see. What describing words could you add to your sentence to help your readers see what’s happening?
- In this sentence you tell me about ______, but I can’t picture it. What word could you add to help me?

**Self-Monitoring and Reflection**

- What are some ways you can improve your word choice when you go back and revise your message?
- Show me a place in your writing where you think you used strong words. Show me a place where you think you could improve your writing.

**Validating and Confirming**

- I liked the way you reread your sentence to check it. That’s what strong writers do.
- You thought about several different words and chose ______. That will help your readers visualize ______.
- You went back and fixed your writing. Strong writers do that!

**Teacher Tip**

Continue to ask students to say words slowly and write what they hear. In addition encourage students to keep a list of high-frequency words they learn to write. Celebrate each gain in sound/symbol relationships and known words.