Objectives

In this mini-lesson, students will:

- Learn to revise a persuasive letter for sentence fluency by varying sentence length and starting sentences with different words.
- Revise a section of their own writing and 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 (without revisions) and the practice text onto chart paper prior to the mini-lesson. Leave enough space between lines to allow you to insert new text.

1. Focus

Explain Revising for Sentence Fluency

Say: After we finish a draft of a persuasive letter, it’s time to revise. When we revise, we read over our writing and make changes to improve it. We want to make sure that we have presented a strong argument, explained it clearly, and provided examples to support our thinking. We might add information or take some out, and we might change sentences. Today we’re going to focus on revising sentences to add variety. We are going to vary the way we start our sentences and change the length of our sentences. Both of these strategies will help you become a better writer and will help keep readers interested in what you have to say.

Model Revising for Sentence Fluency

Display the modeling text (without revisions) on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources. Ask students to listen as you read the following sentences:

1. We want My class wants to hold a bake sale next week.
2. We want to raise money to buy recycling bins.
3. We want need small recycling bins in the library.

Modeling Text

Say: All of the sentences start with the same word. And they sound about the same—short and choppy. I can revise these sentences to make them flow better.

Sentence 1. Say: I can start the first sentence by telling who we is—my class. This makes my first sentence begin in a different way than the other sentences. Model making the change to the first sentence.

Sentence 2. Say: I can keep the words we want at the beginning of this sentence, but I want to vary the length so that these sentences are not all the same length. I can add a phrase that explains why the class wants to raise money. This not only gives the reader more information but it makes the sentence sound better and adds variety. Model making the change.

Sentence 3. Say: Can I think of another way to start this next sentence without using we want? I could write we need. Then I could add details to tell more about the recycling bins and where we need them. This makes the sentence more interesting and adds length. Model making the changes.

Reread the sentences after they have been revised.
2. Rehearse

Practice Revising for Sentence Fluency

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

1. The zoo is fun to visit.
2. The zoo opens at nine o’clock.
3. The zoo is open every day.

Practice Text

Ask students to work with a partner to revise the sentences for sentence fluency. Each team should write down their sentences and be prepared to read them to the class and explain how they changed the beginnings of their sentences and varied their length. Say: When we change the way our sentences begin and vary their lengths, we make them more interesting and add more information.

Share Practice Revisions

Bring students together and invite partners to read aloud their revised sentences and explain how they varied sentence length and used different words to start sentences.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: We just learned that we can revise our sentences to make them more interesting and informative. We can look for ways to vary our sentence lengths and beginnings. We can add details to make them sound better. Remember to think about sentence fluency when you revise your persuasive letter.

Encourage students to focus on sentence structure when they revise their own persuasive letters 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 students to read aloud a section of their persuasive letters that they revised for sentence fluency.

Strategies to Support ELs

Beginning
While the rest of the class works on the partner practice activity, work one on one with beginning ELs to practice writing interesting sentences. Begin with a basic sentence and help students add words to make it more detailed and interesting; for example: Mia is a girl. Mia is a girl who likes ice cream.

Intermediate and Advanced
Pair ELs with fluent English speakers during the partner activity.

All Levels
If you have ELs whose first language is Spanish, share these English/ Spanish cognates: persuasive/persuasivo(a); variety/la variedad.