Objectives

In this mini-lesson, students will:

• Learn to revise science fiction by strengthening word choices.
• Revise a section of their own writing and share their revisions with the class.
• Discuss how they can apply these strategies 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 practice text onto chart paper prior to the mini-lesson. Leave enough space between lines to allow you to insert new text.

Model the Writing Process

Revise Your Science Fiction Story for Word Choice

1. Focus

Explain Revising for Word Choice

Say: Once we finish a draft of a science fiction story, it’s time to go back and revise. When we revise a draft, we read it carefully and then make changes and corrections to improve it. Revising is one of the most important steps in the writing process. In a science fiction story, I want to focus on my word choices. I want to make sure that I use striking words that show the reader, rather than tell the reader, what’s going on. I want to use words to let the reader know what my characters are like and what they’re feeling. I want to make sure I include words specific to my science fiction topic. Today I’m going to show you how to revise a science fiction story by choosing strong, interesting words.

Model Revising for Word Choice

Display the modeling text (without revisions) on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources. Read each sentence and model how you revise for word choice.

Modeling Text

Read sentence 1. Say: The word stuff isn’t very interesting. This is a science fiction story, so Jim should be leaving something behind that sounds like it could be in a science fiction story. I think if I take out stuff and insert the genre-specific word telepad, I can give the story more of a science fiction feel and make it more interesting. I’ll go ahead and do that. Model making the revisions.

Read sentence 2. Say: The word here certainly isn’t specific. It could be anywhere. I need to help my readers visualize where Jim is. I should add a word that sounds technical and fits the theme of science fiction. I’ll say that Jim is waiting in the Insta-Port. It’s a made-up word, but it gives the reader an idea of the setting—more than the word here. Model making the revisions.

Read sentence 3. Say: I think that I can make this sentence tell more about Jim’s sister’s feelings, simply by changing a few words. She’s very sad about
leaving her home, and the word **morose** is a good word to describe how she feels. **Morose** means “gloomy” and “sad.” Model making the revisions.

Read sentence 4. **Say:** Mom is just nodding, so the reader doesn’t really know what her feelings are. I can insert the word **sympathetically**, which shows that she has her own fears about going to a new world. This is much more interesting than just having her nod. Model making the revisions.

### 2. Rehearse

#### Practice Revising for Word Choice

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

1. “We don’t want the people in our new home to think we’re strange.”
2. Suddenly, I see our ride off in the distance.
3. I am happy and scared to go at the same time.

**Practice Text**

Ask students to work with a partner to revise the sentences by adding interesting words that fit the theme of science fiction. Partners should write down their sentences and be prepared to read them to the class and explain how their changes improved each sentence.

#### Share Practice Revisions

Bring students together and invite partners to read aloud their revised sentences and explain how they changed the text to improve the word choice for a science fiction text. Record students’ sentences and post these as models for students to use as they revise their own science fiction stories.

### 3. Independent Writing and Conferring

**Say:** We learned how to revise our science fiction stories to include striking words and genre-specific words. These revisions strengthen our stories by showing our readers more about how our characters think and feel and making the worlds we create in our science fiction stories come alive.

Encourage students to focus on word choice when they revise science fiction stories 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 science fiction stories that they revised for word choice.

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### Strategies to Support ELs

#### Beginning

Beginning ELs are not ready to work on this writing process skill. While other students collaborate on the small-group activity or write independently, meet one on one with students to support developmentally appropriate writing skills based on their independent writing and language levels. Since this lesson focuses on word choice, you might consider presenting students with a familiar object and having them list all the words they can about that object.

#### Intermediate and Advanced

Pair ELs with fluent English speakers during the partner practice.

#### All Levels

If you have ELs whose first language is Spanish, share this English/Spanish cognate: **descriptive/descriptivo(a)**.