

Lesson Skill: Adding specific vocabulary

Strand Writing

SOL 6.7, 6.8

7.7, 7.8

8.7, 8.8

Materials

- Copies of the attached Arithmetic Revision: Adding Specific Vocabulary handout

Lesson

1. Put the following paragraph onto the board:

We went on a vacation sometime this last summer. We went to a big beach. We swam a lot. I got a sunburn. We ate in restaurants. The food was delicious. It was great fun!

2. Ask students to make up some questions they might ask the writer of this paragraph to elicit more information. As students respond, put the questions on the board. The answers to these questions will make the writing more specific. For example, in response to the question, "Where was the beach?," the writer might specify the Outer Banks of North Carolina.
3. Discuss with students the changes they could make. Have students offer suggestions and watch you as you make the changes on the board.
4. Distribute copies of the attached Arithmetic Revision: Adding Specific Vocabulary handout, and review it with the students. Ask students to select a previously written paragraph or paragraphs from their writing portfolios that they think could use some improvement in the vocabulary used. Have students follow the concepts on the handout to make changes to the writing. Have them highlight and number the changes in the writing in order to facilitate discussion.
5. Have students describe some of the revisions they made. Summarize with a class discussion.

Strategies for differentiation

- The teacher should approve the student's choice of paragraph.
- Modify the Arithmetic Revision handout as a checklist for students to use as they revise their previously written paragraphs.

Arithmetic Revision: Adding Specific Vocabulary

Select a paragraph or paragraphs from your writing portfolio, and add specific vocabulary to give your writing more variety.

Add a metaphor or simile (e.g., “The violin sounded like a rusty gate swinging on its hinges.”).

Add proper nouns (e.g., *CVS Pharmacy* instead of *store*).

Subtract three non-specific words, such as *stuff*, *things*, *nice*, *pretty*, and *good*, and replace them with specific words.

Subtract any clichés, such as “dead as a doornail,” “right on target,” and “on the same page,” and replace them with something unique.

Subtract all unnecessary words and repetitious ideas.

Multiply the number of vibrant verbs, such as *screamed*, *ripped*, and *scoffed*.

Divide the writing into paragraphs.