

Grades 3-5 Word Choice and Sentence Variety

Strand: Writing

SOL 4.7h, i, j
5.7g, h, i

Materials

- Vivid images from the Internet or other source
- Available technology
- Thesaurus
- Poster of transition words and phrases
- A recent piece of writing by the students that is ready to be revised (applying this lesson to their own writing adds authenticity)

Lesson

1. Conduct an Internet search or use other resources for vivid images (specific animal, scene, person, etc.). The images may be based on the genre of writing students are currently studying.
2. Display one image using available technology. Model writing a descriptive paragraph, using think aloud strategies. At this time, word choice and vocabulary are not important. Create either an informative or narrative piece based on the image chosen. This activity should last no longer than five minutes.
3. Display a second image and have the students write for five minutes.
4. Return to your writing example and model revising it for specific word choice. Underline adjectives and circle verbs. Use think aloud strategies to show the process of revising for more specific adjectives and verbs. Some revisions will come from thinking, others from a thesaurus. Model this process.
5. After revising for word choice, model sentence variety. The use of transition words (for example, meanwhile, in fact, etc.) will be used to write a variety of sentences. Use the transition poster to show students where they can find examples.
6. Students will now underline the adjectives and circle verbs in their own writing. They will then revise their piece by thinking of descriptive words, using the thesaurus, if necessary. Students will also work on sentence variety by using transition words.
7. Students share their revisions.
8. Students will revise their own piece of writing for word choice and sentence variety.
9. Hold writing conferences with individual students while others write.
10. Students share their revisions.