

# Lesson Skill: Word choice and sentence variety

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**Strand** Writing

**SOL** 4.7

5.7

## Materials

- Vivid images
- Available technology
- Thesaurus
- Poster of transition words and phrases
- A recent piece of student writing

## 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. 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.
2. Display a second image, and have students write for five minutes. Return to the writing example, and model revising it for specific word choice. Underline adjectives, draw a square around nouns, and circle verbs. Use think-aloud strategies to show the process of revising for interesting adjectives, more specific nouns, and stronger action verbs. Some revisions will come from thinking, others from a thesaurus. Model this process. After revising for word choice, show students how to connect one idea to the next by using transition words. Display the transition poster for student use.
3. Have students underline the adjectives, draw squares around the nouns, and circle the verbs in their own writing and revise their piece by thinking of stronger words, using the thesaurus, if necessary. They should use transition words to connect their ideas and create a flow of content.
4. Have students share their revisions, give and receive feedback to one another, then revise their own piece of writing for word choice and sentence flow. Hold writing conferences with individual students while others write.
5. As a conclusion to the lesson, have students share their revisions.

## Strategies for Differentiation

- Preteach the lesson by reading a literature selection, and use think-aloud strategies to model the use of word choice that enhances the meaning of the story.
- Provide visuals in the classroom of “dull vs. vivid” words for students to use.
- Provide interactive posters for students to add vivid words as alternatives to the pre-labeled dull word on each poster. For example, “good” will be on one poster and students will write words such as “delicious” as an alternative.

- Within students' writings, highlight the dull word, and have students substitute with a vivid word.
- Use electronic thesaurus as an alternative.