

# “Writing Lessons According To the 6 Traits of Writing” July 2007

## Lesson Template

**Lesson Title:** Expanding sentences with a Tiger

**Trait:** Primary focus: Sentence Fluency. Also builds: Word Choice

**Grade Level:** 2, 3

**Content Area:** Writing

**Program:** Based upon concepts presented in Project Read – Framing Your Thoughts, Concept II – Expanding the Predicate.

**MA Framework:** Composition

**Strand/Standard:** **Standard 21.2:** Revise writing to improve level of detail after determining what could be added or deleted.

**Standard 21.3:** Improve word choice by using dictionaries.

**Teacher:** Amy Barrett

**Instructional Content/Strategy/Strategies:** *Describe the content/strategy learned and used.*

Use of sentence expanders to create descriptive sentences to improve sentence fluency.

**Instructional Objectives:** *Include content, process or skills, goals . . .*

Students will rewrite a story, creating fluent sentences that provide the reader with details that enhance the story.

**Description:** *Include how you proceeded with the lesson. What did you do?*

Students read Tiger, Tiger, by Beverly Randell. Sentences in this story are short and “bare bones”, for example “Tiger is asleep” “Tiger is hungry”. Students are given a booklet featuring each of the pictures from the book, with the scaffolding to rewrite the story, using the appropriate action word they have chosen as well as predicate expanders. Students are not changing the plot or theme of the story, simply adding words to bring the sentences from simple (or “bare bones”) to a more interesting expanded sentence. To expand the predicate we ask where, how, when, or why.

For example, page one shows a tiger sleeping. Students will complete the following sentence, to provide more information about the action of the story, by considering the illustration and answering where, when, how, or why questions.

The tiger \_\_\_\_\_ in the \_\_\_\_\_ .  
Predicate (rests, or sleeps)                      how                      where

Each page of the story is re-written with this format.

**Resource Materials:** *Include book chapter pages, handouts, graphic organizers . . . .*

Tiger, Tiger, by Beverly Randell, a Rigby PM Reader.

Handout/graphic organizer to record responses, see attached.

**Assessment/Follow-up:** *List the method(s) you'll use to assess student learning.*

When books are complete, students read their newly revised story to the group. Follow up discussion will allow students to compare the bare bones structure of the original versus the newer sentences.

Students may also notice how different students interpreted text, or chose to focus upon different areas of detail, for example student could say “Tiger napped quietly in the sunshine”, or “Tiger snoozed comfortably on the grass”.

**Reflection:** *How was this content/strategy useful or successful? What changes would you make, if any?*

*Why did you select this content/strategy for this lesson? Was this an effective content/learning strategy?*

*How will this content/strategy lead to increased achievement in your classroom?*

This strategy is useful because students are provided with the story and the structure and can therefore concentrate on the predicate expanders. The previous lesson in this program focused on predicates, and depending upon previous success with action word choice lessons, students are reminded and encouraged to choose predicates more interesting than “slept”, or “ran”.

I chose the early reader because it provided bare bone sentences to narrate a story with great illustrations and a story that could easily provide more details. Because it is written at this level, this lesson can be completed with children reading at a first grade level, yet, the story is engaging enough that older children can enjoy rewriting the story with whatever level of writing skills they have reached. One change, or addition, that I would consider, is to include a story with more action scenes. Tiger, Tiger is well illustrated, and a favorite with some students, but because several animals are sleeping or waking up, the exciting expanders are not as appropriate as the when or where expanders. Practicing word choice activities for predicates is appropriate here, attempting to vary word choice for each page (sleep, nap, rest, etc).

A later lesson in this program is “Subject Describers”. I have presented a similar approach, asking students to add a subject describer (adjective), as well, i.e. “The enormous tiger sleeps under the tree”, or the “The orange and black tiger sleeps soundly on the ground under the tree”....

When I first tried this lesson, I was pleasantly surprised at how successfully students completed this lesson. They were satisfied to hear how well their sentences flowed, especially in contrast to the bare bones sentence provided.

