

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

Lesson Template

Lesson Title: Sensory Sentence Starters

Trait: Word Choice

Grade Level: 3/4

Content Area: Language Arts

MA Framework: English Language Arts

Strand/Standard: General Strand 21 : Revising

Teacher: Linda Roy

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

Students will learn to revise their writing in such a way that their writing will be enhanced in order to draw the reader in and remain engaged.

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

Students will learn to use vivid vocabulary to create descriptions that show, not tell a story.

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

First, have students identify the five senses. Present examples of words/phrases that relate to each sense. Next, model taking a dull sentence and revising it to be more descriptive. (Students may want to close their eyes and visualize the statement under discussion and talk about how the picture in their mind changed as a result of the wording change.)

Then, as a group, generate a list of words that may be used to replace ‘tired’ words such as saw, said, like, happy, was etc... Display this vocabulary as a reference. Students will complete Sensory Starter – 1 (pg 34) with adult support and reference to group generated vocabulary as needed. When students have completed this task, they should share the revisions they have made as a group. Discuss how the vivid vocabulary has improved the original paragraph. Additional time may be allowed for students to make further revisions if desired.

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

Super Story-Writing Strategies & Activities by Barbara Mariconda and Dea Paoletta Auray. Scholastic Professional Books. Pages 33-35

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

After students complete Sensory Starter – 1 (pg 34) with adult support and reference to group generated vocabulary as needed, Sensory Starter -2 (pg 35) can be used as a tool to assess students' independent ability to demonstrate a grasp of the concept. (Leave reference materials in view) This activity should be followed up by the student examining a piece of their own writing (with or without teacher support and feedback, depending on the skill of the writer) to identify words/phases that may be improved and completing the revisions.

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 lesson has been used successfully with small groups of students within a Learning Center setting. It is effective because it breaks down the revision process to a manageable level for students who are struggling writers. Using the five senses as a hook, makes the process familiar and personal so that the students have an easier time transferring their visions into a written format. Struggling writers often demonstrate repetitive phrasing and passive descriptions. By showing them explicitly how to go about revising their work using sensory phrasing, it is hoped that with practice this skill will generalize to their daily writing. One change that might be made is to brainstorm replacements for overused words in a separate mini-lesson prior to completing this lesson. This change would save time and can be used as an easier pre-cursor to more abstract revision concepts.