

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

**Lesson Title: Orange Sense**

**Trait: Word Choice**

**Grade Level: 3-6**

**Content Area: Writing**

**MA Framework: Composition**

**Strand/Standard: Revising 21.4**

**Teacher: J. Granado**

**Instructional Content/Strategy/Strategies:** *Describe the content/strategy learned and used.*  
The strategy is to get students to choose words that help the writer appeal to their audience’s five senses.

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

The objectives are to get students look at the ordinary with a more discerning eye, and to move beyond their basic word choice. Students learn that something they may “see” everyday has so much more to it that what they take in at first glance. When you really take the time to be in the moment, and examine something, a whole new world opens up for description.

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

-The day before the lesson have an orange on your desk. Let the students know that the orange is going to help them become better writers. They become curious about how it will be involved in their day.

-The next day, before beginning the lesson, have students wash their hands.

-At the start of the lesson hold the orange in your hand and ask, “How will this orange help you become a stronger writer? Do you think that vitamin C is that powerful?” Keep students in suspense for a moment, and make it seem intriguing. The more that they get into a creative mode of thinking, the easier it is for them to let go and really dissect the qualities of the orange.

-Have students arranged in groups of four.

-Hand out graphic organizer (back to front). (You can have one for each group and make copies later or have each child have their own.

-Hand out an orange to each group and tell them not to do anything to the orange.

-Explain to the students that this orange is just an ordinary orange. It’s not magical or special in anyway. It is they who hold the magic and power. Students are to look at the outside of the orange. At first you need to guide students to really look at the orange. You can have students use a magnifying glass at this point. Ask students, “When looking at the peel, what words come to mind to describe the divots? What does it remind you of?”

- Once you get students thinking beyond, “orange” and “bumpy,” you get them to move onto the other senses, and have the students work more independently. They can use a finger nail to get a piece of the peel to taste. At that point even more of the orange is exposed once the citrus oils ooze out.

-Walk around and monitor group progress. Step in and help facilitate stronger word choice. Once groups are done describing the unpeeled orange, have groups share some of the more powerful words/descriptions they came up with.

-Have students peel the orange, and repeat the process. This is when students get to taste the fruit of the orange. I had my class only take a small bite of the fruit, and finish eating the remainder of the orange once their group had completed their graphic organizer. Don't forget to have students look at the pith of the orange and examine its qualities as well.

- It is important that students hear the ideas that others came up with, so even after you close the lesson with a sharing time, the sharing is not completely over. When you return to writing the next day, have students pull out these pages and review what wonderful words they were able to conjure.

- It is also an option to create one large class graphic organizer, or even a list of some of the more impressive word choices.

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

- \* Graphic Organizer Unpeeled Orange
- \* Graphic Organizer Peeled Orange
- \* Orange (1 for each group of students)
- \* Napkins/wipes
- \* magnify glass for each pair of students

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

You can have students revise a current piece and remind them to use words that will make the reader use their senses. When you conference with students write your notes about where each child is in the development of this word choice strategy. You can also start a new piece with the students focusing on word choices that get readers to use their senses.

**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 was successful because my students were able to see all of the descriptors they were able to come up with for something as simple as an orange. When they really took the time to look at something, or think about something they could come up with several possibilities.

\* When I did this lesson I had each child write on their own graphic organizer. Next time, I will have one per group and then make copies of the finished product.

\* I wanted my students to see how each of them had the ability within themselves to expand their thinking and writing. This is a very concrete way to see immediate results.

\* Yes, it was an effective learning strategy. I was able to refer to the orange as a way to encourage student to look at other aspects of their writing, and expand it.