

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

Lesson Template

Lesson Title: Connecting “Wordly Wise” to 6 Traits Writing: 3 Mini-lessons

Trait: Word Choice

Grade Level: 5

Content Area: English Language Arts

MA Framework: English Language Arts: Composition

Strand/Standard: Revising: Standards 21.4 and 21.5

Teacher: Rose Begin

Instructional Content/Strategy/Strategies: Developing and enhancing word choice in student writing using words from “Wordly Wise.”

Instructional Objectives: 1) Students will write derivatives of words and discuss how the affixes change the meaning.

2) Students will choose a word from a “Wordly Wise” lesson, and demonstrate their knowledge of that word by writing a paragraph that conveys the meaning.

3) Students will revise existing or past pieces of writing using words from “Wordly Wise” where appropriate.

Description: This lesson is comprised of 3 mini-lessons that can be used weekly in conjunction with “Wordly Wise.” These lessons help students tie the vocabulary taught in “Wordly Wise” to their existing writing by enhancing their word choices.

*Mini-lesson #1

1) The teacher chooses one word from the “Wordly Wise” list and writes it on the board. Invite students to suggest prefixes and/or suffixes that can be added to the existing word, or changed if the word already contains a prefix or suffix. Write these words on the board. Some examples for the word *courage* are listed below.

encourage
discourage
courageous

courageously
encouragement
discouragement

2) Discuss how the meaning of each word changes. Students may write these words in their vocabulary journals or personal dictionaries.

3) Students work in groups or centers to perform this same activity with other words from their “Wordly Wise” list. The amount of words to be analyzed can be determined by the teacher. The students write down the words chosen from “Wordly Wise”, and the derivations made to that word, and discuss how each word is changed when a prefix and/or suffix is added. They may also draw pictures or write sentences to show the change in meaning for each word.

***Mini-lesson #2**

1) Direct students to look through their list of words, and highlight or write down words that “tickle their fancy” in any way. They may be words they have never heard before, spark an idea or thought, or just sound funny.

2) The students pick one of these words, and write a short paragraph, story, or poem around this word. The definition of the word they chose should be demonstrated within their writing. The teacher should model this activity, and/or complete this as a whole-class activity, at first. Dictionaries and thesauruses can be provided. Invite students to be creative in their writing. For example, if your class is studying poetry, they can choose to write an acrostic poem for the word they chose.

***Mini-lesson #3**

1) Students look through existing or past writing, and are challenged to substitute weaker words in their writing with words from their “Wordly Wise” list. At first, the teacher should guide students to highlight weaker words in their writing. The teacher can then show students how to use their “Wordly Wise” lists, as well as other resources (personal dictionaries, thesauruses) to enhance word choice in their classroom writing.

Resource Materials: “Wordly Wise” workbooks, *Improving Reading: Strategies and Resources* by Jerry L. Johns and Susan Davis Lenski, pgs. 244-245

Assessment/Follow-up:

Mini-lesson #1-The teacher will check the students’ vocabulary journals or personal dictionaries to assess their knowledge of words containing a common root, with different prefixes and suffixes.

Mini-lesson #2-The teacher can listen to the student read their piece aloud to the class, or the teacher may read the piece to him/herself to determine if the student has conveyed the correct definition of the word through writing.

Mini-lesson #3-The teacher and student should have a writing conference to discuss if and how words from their “Wordly Wise” list are effectively used in their classroom writing.

Reflection: Within the learning center setting, I do not personally work with “Wordly Wise” on a weekly basis. However, I know that teachers can have difficulty weaving this program within their English Language Arts curriculums. I thought it could be helpful to think of activities that allow teachers to use this program to enhance the writing their students already do. I have done Mini-lesson #1 with students in the learning center setting, and it has worked well within the small group setting. I do believe that it is very

important to use “Wordly Wise” as just one resource to enhance the word choice trait. I have found that personal dictionaries, thesauruses, and dictionaries of overused words are other great resources for students.