

Unit of Study:
Word Choice/Sentence
Fluency/Voice/Persuasive
Writing
Feb 28 April
28

Enduring Understandings: Focus

Week 1: Word Choice as Muscle; Students will understand that words can carry a lot of weight: they have substance, meaning, impact.

Week 2: Word Choice as The Target: precision is an important component of word choice. It hits the “bulls eye” What do you picture when you hear the word.

Week 3: Writers are Choosy about their words

Week 4: Sentence Fluency as personal imagery

Week 5: Sentence Fluency as “come Alive” poetry you can perform

Week 6: Voice is the essence of writing/the reason for the writing, reason for the reading; Voice as metaphor; individuality, mood.

Week 7: Persuasive writing is one of the most powerful types of writing that writers engage in

Week 8: Persuasive Writing

Anchor Mini Lessons:

Week 1/ Feb. 28- March 4 Word Choice as Muscle:

Monday: Some words have muscle; they carry a lot of weight. This is another way of saying that they have substance, meaning, impact. Vague words: nice, big, happy sad, great, fun are pebbles. They do not tip the scale because they do not tell us anything.

Illustrate with a scale, rocks and pebbles: using words like big, sad, very, enormous, jubilant, extremely. Have kids decide if they are pebbles or rocks. Words are written on cards and rock/pebble taped to the card. Then place the cards with the rocks on the scale.

Tuesday: Read Verdi by Jannell Cannon; Talk about the language in the book. As an example: she writes about a young python being sent into the jungle to grow up big and green as all pythons must. She could have written Verdi was a nice python. He wasn't too big. He was slow. He was happy. He had neat strips going down his back. Instead, she used heavy language: Verdi dawdled. He was proudly eyeing his bright yellow skin. He especially liked the bold stripes that zigzagged down his back.

Wednesday: Read I am the Ocean

“Today you might decide to try what Suzanna Marshak does in this book. You might pretend you're the wind, or the snow. Or the ice. A 1st grade writer wanted to describe what it would be like to be the grass: I am the grass. The kids always STOMP on me. I hate that! Think of trying this in your writing. Maybe you'll pretend you're the moon. What would it feel like to be the moon? What would you say? How could you describe it?”

Thursday: Read description of the main character: Popcorn from the book Ghost Eye Tell students to close their eyes while reading the description. “You may notice that the writer is describing what she sees when she looks at Popcorn. What are some of the descriptions she writes that help you picture popcorn. As students point out specific phrases, highlight or circle

them on the chart. Many of you have stories with one or more characters in them. Do you have a character you could describe so we could really picture him or her? Share: students talk aloud about what they see. Record some of their language on a post-it and give it to them to have when they return to their drafts.

Friday: Read Shades of Black: A Celebration of Our Children Leaves are green, the sky is blue, but what shade of green what shade of blue? Explore shades of meaning by explaining ideas about and definitions of color

Week 2/ March 7-13

Monday: Read *Smoky Night* by Eve Bunting; Following the turmoil, a street sign “lies crumpled in the gutter.” Not bent, not broken, *crumpled*. Does that word hit the bull’s eye. Ask students: What do you picture when you hear it? Does crumpled tell you more than bent?

Tuesday: Read *The Toy Brother*. Talk about the target words: Pain in the pants. Fathom, palsy-walsy, thrashing, minuscule: right on target words. Contrast with this version: Yorick wasn’t much fun. He wasn’t nice. Charles did not get why. You can get the basic meaning across with vague words like nice. Take extra care to aim for the center: bull’s eye words wake readers up.

Wednesday: Read *A Story for Bear*; talk about the language of the book. Are they pebble or rock words. Did they hit the target?

Thursday: Show students the cover of the book: Under the Quilt at night. Bring up in discussion background information about the underground railroad as students probably do not have any at this age.

Walk students through the book, showing them each chapter and its title. Ask them to consider what each title means. Point out that each title is an ing verb: running, waiting, watching, hiding, traveling, and singing. Ask if using a verb in a title is effective. What is the author trying to convey to the reader by using these verbs for titles?

Read *Under the Quilt of Night*.

Break the class into groups: assign each group a chapter from the book. Have each group Reread the chapter aloud; pick out strong, energetic verbs and list them on a piece of paper. Example pounding, hoeing, mending, fence, and crouch. Share lists with class. (Note: be sure each group as high level reader)

Friday; Review lists. Choose 12 verbs that are the most strong and energetic from the group lists. Be sure to discuss with students why they are selecting certain words over others. List these words on the individual square of the butcher paper to make a word quilt. Ask students to write book reviews that explain how *Under the Quilt of Night* got its title, including as many verbs from the word quilt as possible. Encourage students to use other interesting words as well.

Week 3/ March 14-18

Monday: Read the book, *Baloney*, aloud to students in a lively fashion. Don’t read the last 2 pages, which contain the decoder page. Let the students think the words are silly and make up.

Ask students to make a list of words they don’t recognize, such as Cumulus, fracas, aamu, and sighing flosser, and record them on the overhead.

Tuesday: Read the book again, this time, ask students to raise their hands when they hear an unfamiliar word and consider what it could mean from its context. Write a definition next of the word on the overhead.

Show students the decoder page at the end of the text. Share the list of words from this page, their definitions and the places in the text where they appear. Compare Scieszka and Smith’s definitions to the ones students made up.

Wednesday: Read Armadillo Tattletale. This is a Tall tale, talk about the words and the picture that they make in your mind. Make a list of the juicy words

Thursday: Read The Night I Followed the Dog; make a list of the active verbs and the specific nouns used throughout the text. Talk about how these words convey the message the author is trying to get across.

Friday: Read Mama Will be Home Soon; This book is an example of beautiful, everyday language used very, very well. Chart out the words, talk about how explicit they are.

Week 4/March 21-24

Monday: Brainstorm: what in the whole wide world around you, moves with rhythm? As they speak, write what they say on an overhead transparency, creating a poem of possibles.

Example: Geese in a giant V; Wild horses running; whales sounding, bats darting after insects, water flowing down a mountain waves pounding on the shore; clouds shifting, meandering; a rodeo clown; people walking down the street; My mothers hands; see page 91
Creating young writers;

This is Fluency: If it flows, if it moves with rhythm, if it moves with a beat, its fluent.

Tuesday: Read Little Fern's First Winter. Focus on the gentle rhythms of the language and the excellent dialogue; Notice how the print changes to match Ferns voice when she has lost her friend.

Wednesday: Read Night of the Gargoyles; Focus on the temp and quick pulse;

Thursday: Read Goal and Hoops; Compare and contrast the fluency techniques the author uses to make each book so extraordinary. Model for students how they might try a one or two word sentence or a longer, flowing sentence.

Week 5/ April 4-8

Monday: Introduce poetry that students can act out: Insectlopedia, Mamalabilia, Best Feast
See page 91: Creating young writers; Students can perform poems in small groups or whole class. Reinforces idea of fluency;

Tuesday: repeat Monday

Wednesday: Model write a story with the beginning of the sentences starting the same way; (p. 122) Ask students what they notice about the sentence. If they do not pick up on the repetition right away, read it once more, asking students to listen to the beginnings; Let them know I'm not happy with every sentence beginning being the same. Invite them to help think of different ways to begin each sentence. Let them do as much as you can before jumping in with the solution. End by reading the two stories side by side; "Which one sounds better?:"

Thursday: Read One Tiny Turtle: Model how this is a way to write about science with energy, beauty and voice.

Friday: Read Why Butterflies Go By on Silent Wings; Folk tale; Discuss the poetic melody and reverence for the natural world.

Week 6/ April 11-15

Monday: Read I Love You the Purplest. Compare and contrast different colors. Which have voice...which don't

Tuesday: Read How are you Peeling? Foods with Moods. Each pair of fruit/veg poses a new combination of voices, moods, feelings, and emotions. Teach so that kids understand how voice takes us past stale words and brings freshness and originality to their own writing.

Wednesday: Ask students: when you talk to a friend on the phone, how long does it take you to recognize that person? Not long. Why? Because every voice is different.(p. 86)Show pictures of striking art such as from: Smokey Night; Twilight comes Twice; Old Black Fly; Verdi; Tar Beach; No, David!; Pictures have mood and tone. Talk about with students;Talk about the differences in the pictures

Thursday: Read Just The Two of Us; Read; pointing out the deep commitment; passion and love of this father to his son.; model write a story using voice

Friday: My Big Dog; point of view;

Week 7 April 18-22

Monday: Read What's that Noise? Brainstorm some scary sounds you might hear at night that turn out to be something else. What could a scratching sound be; Model write a story

Tuesday: Sally Goes to the Mountains; Ask students to imagine themselves in the role of a pet or any animal having a similar adventure: to the mountains, beach, forest, river, lake or even a local store. Model write a story from animals point of view;

Wednesday: Read My Rotten Redheaded Older Brother; Use the book to illustrate striking true to life voice but also to show that when we have bad feelings, such as anger or jealousy, one good thing to do with them is to write them out.; Ask students have they ever had feelings like Treasha's. Explain that this association is called identifying (T-S) with the characters.

Thursday: Pre-assess to see what children understand about persuasive writing; Ask children to tell me what their favorite animal is, but they have to tell me why and try and get me to change my mind to agree with them.

Friday: Model writing about my favorite animal/cat. Hold picture of cat in front of me; Say: "I need to have a picture of a cat in front of me because that might give me some ideas. I'm going to start my writing by saying, "I think the cat is the best animal for three reasons. Mmmm, let me think. OH, I know, the cat is the best because you can play with it. I'm going to write that down. That's a good reason or argument. Now let me think. Yes, I know. The cat is a friendly animal. It makes a good pet. That's another good argument or reason. And my third reason is that the cat is easy to take care of and I like animals that are easy to take care of. I really admire them. I think I'll write that down, too." Discussion with class. Students revise writings from day before.

Week 8: April 25-28

Monday: Review persuasive. Talk about argument/reason; Create web with animals in middle, then on webs, their favorite animal and reasons; Revise their pieces.

Tuesday: Continue with lesson from Monday.

Wednesday: Create anchor chart: what makes a good argument.

Thursday: Explore other persuasive topics. Create chart

Skim/Scan book: Should There be Zoos/Tony Stead

Friday: Children choose topic from list; post asst.

Enduring Questions

Voice is individuality, personality, mood, expression, and connection to an audience: the right tone of voice for the message and the moment.

Word choice is about precision, hitting the target, relying on verbs instead of modifiers, and using words that paint pictures in a reader's mind.

Fluency is rhythm, grace, flow, music to the ears, going for the sound and not just the literal meaning.

What makes a good argument?

Mentor Text Needed

Verdi by Jannell Cannon
I am the Ocean by Suzanna Marshak
Ghost Eye by Marion Dane Bauer
Shades of Black: A Celebration of Our Children by Sandra Pinkney
Smoky Night by Eve Bunting
The Toy Brother by Wm. Steig
A Story for Bear by Dennis Haseley
Under the Quilt at Night by Deborah Hopkinson
Baloney (Henry P.) by Jon Scieszka
Armadillo Tattletale by Helen Ketteman
The Night I Followed the Dog by Nina Laden
Mama Will Be Home Soon by Nancy Minchella
Little Fern's First Winter by Jane Simmons
Night of the Gargoyles by Eve Bunting
Goal by Robert Burleigh
Hoops by Robert Burleigh
Insectlopedia; Mammalabilia; Best Feast; by Douglas Florian
One Tiny Turtle by Nicola Davies
Why Butterflies Go By on Silent Wings by Marguerite W. Davol
I Love You the Purplest
How Are you Peeling? Foods with Moods.
Twilight Comes Twice by Ralph Fletcher
Old Black Fly by Jim Aylesworth
Tar Beach by Faith Ringgold
No, David! By David Shannon
Just the Two of Us by Will Smith
My Big Dog by Janet Stevens
What's That Noise by William Carman
Sally Goes to the Mountains by Stephen Huneck
Should There be Zoos by Tony Stead

Materials Needed:

Chart paper
Butcher paper divided into 12 squares, 6x6, 3 squares across, 4 down to make word quilt

Anchor Charts:

Chart with printed description of Popcorn from Ghost Eye
Word Choice Target; see page 90 Creating Young Writers
Juicy Words
“If it flows, if it moves with rhythm, if it moves with a beat, it’s fluent.”

Anchor charts for word choice, sentence fluency and voice.

Anchor chart: What makes a good argument

1. First you have to pick a side.
2. Say why you think something.
3. Include facts if you can.
4. Ask other people or look at books and pictures to help you with your facts.

Assessment: Evidence of Student Understanding

Writing samples/6 trait assessment rubrics
DWA
Pre/Post Asst.

Student Self Assessment

6 trait rubric/writing samples

Skills Reinforcement: Ties to other areas of curriculum

Reading: Books on tape
Word Choice: visualizing
Sentence Fluency: inferring
Voice: visualizing; inferring

Math: creating story problems: word choice/visualizing

Word Work: Vocabulary

Act out words: p. 115
Make posters p. 115
Toss the Ball p. 115
Do a sentence as a play: p. 116
Create ad: p. 116
Greeting cards, bumper stickers tee short: p. 117
Personal dictionaries:p. 118
Collect favorites
Create alphabet books
Guess what it means
Show how Punctuation Divides Sentences p. 120
Create Rhyme Mobiles p. 121
Tier 2 Words from Robust Vocabulary
Juicy Words Chart
Persuasive Words Chart

Sources:

Craft Lessons by Ralph Fletcher
Using Picture Books to teach the 6traits: by Ruth Culham
Creating Young Writers by Vicki Spandel
Is That a Fact by Tony Stead
Robust Vocabulary: Bringing Words to Life: Isabel Beck

Standards Addressed:

Goal 3/Standard A: use correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization and structure
Students will be able to write to communicate for a variety of purposes and audiences.
Goal 3/Standard B: Compose well-organized and coherent writing for specific purposes and audiences
Students will be able to write to communicate for a variety of purposes and audiences.
Goal 3/Standard C: Students will be able to use basic components of the writing process;
retell a focused story; create a basic publication using available resources and experiment
with different forms of creative writing.

