

Kelly Haramoto

writing focus

4th grade

Writing

Time needed:

60 minutes

Content objectives: Students will:

1. Experiment with and use more descriptive words in their writing.
2. Add detail, strengthen word choice to writing
3. Evaluate between vague and detailed word choice by watching a demonstration and listening to other students writing.

Language objectives: Students will:

- Watch and listen to a demonstration designed to exploit the difference between vague and detailed word choice.
- In small groups discuss the words that were used in the demonstration and brainstorm some words that might have been more effective.
- Individually write instructions to complete a task. It may be anything including what was demonstrated.
- In pairs or groups of three read and share their instructions with each other. Giving each other constructive feedback on how they might improve their instructions.

Materials needed:

1. One box of unopened crackers and a can of easy cheese.
2. Writer's workshop notebooks or paper for students to write on.
3. Large sheet of butcher paper to post descriptive words on. Word wall.

Anticipatory set:

- Ask the students for a volunteer to help give a class demonstration.

Procedures:

- Set up demonstration by placing one desk in front of class so everyone can see it. Put the unopened box of crackers and cheese on the desk. Place the volunteer student on one side of the desk facing away from the desk. Instruct the class and volunteer student that he/she is going to try to give the teacher directions on how to get some cheese on a cracker so that it can be eaten without looking behind him/her to see what is happening.
- Because this activity can get a little bit loud, remind the students that they shouldn't say anything because it might give the volunteer student an idea of what is going on.
- Now ask the volunteer to begin giving the instructions.

- As the volunteer student gives directions try to purposely take advantage of any open ended or vague directions. (Ex. If the student says, “open the box of crackers” don’t open it the right way. Be creative, smash a hole in the box with your fist or bite and tear it open.)
- Continue with the demonstration until you get to put some amount of cheese on a cracker, or for about 7-10 minutes.
(This should take about 15 minutes)
- Now that the demonstration is over have the volunteer student turn around and look at what he/she has instructed the teacher to do.
- Explain to the students the importance of using appropriate detail and strong descriptive word choice when writing. Model this by pointing out one or two areas from the demonstration where the instruction was good but could have used some more specific word choice or more detail.
- Have the students get into small pre-selected groups of four and get out there writer’s workshop notebooks or paper to write on.
- Inform the students that you have a large piece of butcher paper hung up in the front of the class. It is for them to come up and write any of their descriptive words on. They may come up anytime during the lesson to add more words, but there may only be one or two students writing on the paper at one time.
- In their groups have them discuss what went wrong and when. Then tell them to brainstorm ideas or come up with more descriptive words to try and give better instructions for the demonstrated task. Tell them to write down their detailed ideas and descriptive words in their notebooks so that they can use them later.
(This should take about 5-10 minutes)
- Now have the students return to their seats and individually write instructions to perform a specific task keeping in mind the importance of using detail and choosing descriptive words to try and paint a picture in their readers’ minds. (the task may be anything including what was demonstrated)
(This should take about 15-20 minutes)
- Regroup the students in pre-selected pairs or groups of three to read and share their instructions with each other. Explain to them that they do not have to be finished with their instructions in order to read what they have to the others in their group. Tell the students to take turns listening to each other and try to give the reader constructive feedback on how they could make their writing paint a more descriptive picture.
(This should take about 7-10 minutes)

Closing:

- Ask the students if the lesson today was effective in showing them the importance of using detail and choosing descriptive words.
- Close by asking if anyone would like to share what they have so far with the entire class as an example of what they have learned today.

Adaptations for ELL's

Stage 1 and 2 Pre-Production Early Production	-Give clarification of what the lesson is about and what is happening in L1. -Provide some descriptive words in English and L1. -Group appropriately according to activity. -Assess according to level of ability. -Modify information to be comprehensible.
Stage 3 Speech Emergent	-Provide clarification if necessary in L1. -Group appropriately according to activity. -Modify information to be comprehensible. -Assess according to level of ability -Explicitly point out the difference between vague and detailed word choice.
Stage 4 and 5 Intermediate/Fluent	-Provide higher level challenges in language and writing rubrics. -Group appropriately according to activity. -Assess according to level of ability. -Challenge students to evaluate their word choices and determine if they are the most effective.

Grouping: **Heterogeneous** grouping is used when placing students in groups of four. This will help the students acquire more diverse words and ideas than smaller or individual brainstorming. It will also help the LEP student's access and practice using new vocabulary.

Homogeneous grouping is used in the pairs or small groups of three. This will allow students with similar language ability to help one another achieve a higher level without feeling behind or bored.

Individual grouping is used to let the student experiment and practice with new and diverse vocabulary acquired from larger groups. This will give students the opportunity to use new vocabulary in their own writings.

Assessment: Formative

- Walk around the class and listen to the groups' words and ideas while they are brainstorming.

- While students are reading their writing to their partners listen and check for understanding. Encourage them to give each other constructive feedback.
- Watch and give appropriate praise/feedback to the students for their words they add on the butcher paper or word wall.

Summative

- Examine finished butcher paper or word wall and check for expanded use of common vocabulary.
- Collect writing samples and assess according to ability.
- Keep a running record of students understanding and use of learned skills.

Strategies:

Metacognitive: By having the students think about what was ineffective with the word choice or detail in the demonstration, and brainstorming new more productive example, helps them to think critically about experimenting and choosing words that appropriately paint a picture in their readers' minds.

Cognitive: By writing and listing new words in their groups and trying to use them in new ideas, helps the students to gain a strategy for expanding their own vocabulary. Adding words to the word wall also helps them to remember what the words were and gives them the opportunity to practice using them.

Social/Affective: In their larger groups the students are able to share new vocabulary and ideas with one another. This helps to build and access a larger amount of useful vocabulary words. Reading and sharing in the pairs and smaller groups helps to relieve stress from large group performance. It also helps to give LEP students more time to be exposed to and practice using English.

Herrell and Jordan: By using a demonstration of a real life situation, with real objects, this gives the students a better example of what the lesson is about. **(Realia) (Visual aids)** By placing the students in groups to collectively build new ideas and vocabulary, helps to build classroom community. **(Cooperative groups)**