

Grade 3 | Unit 2 | Module 3

Persuasive Essay



Lesson 3: Revise: Word Choice

Michigan Standards Alignment

[L.2.5.b](#), [L.3.3.A](#), [W.3.5](#)

Teacher Objectives

Students will be able to...

- identify the more precise or vivid word in a pair
- use a checklist to evaluate writing
- revise a draft by identifying vague words or phrases and replacing them with words or phrases that are precise or vivid
- determine whether sentences revised for word choice still make sense in context
- add vivid and precise descriptive words based on the effect they have on the draft's meaning

Student Objectives

I can...

- use a checklist to revise my writing
- recognize and revise words and phrases to be precise and vivid

Materials & Preparation

- [Module cheat sheet](#)

Items used in this lesson

- Graphic Organizer: [Opinion Essay Graphic Organizer](#)
- Reference Texts: [eSports: The Future of Sports?](#)
- Checklist: [Revising Checklist](#)

1. **Talk** with students about how words can make their writing exciting and detailed. Remind students that vague words and phrases don't have strong enough meanings. Vague words can be replaced with words that are more precise or vivid. Precise words are words with exact meanings. Vivid words have strong meanings and create strong feelings in readers.
2. **Write** the following word pairs: *cry/sniffle*; *giggle/laugh*; *young/little*; *mansion/house*.
3. **Ask** students to discuss the difference between each word pair. Is one word more vivid than the other? Remind students that vivid words paint a clearer picture for readers.

 **ELL Tip**

Review synonyms and antonyms with students. Provide visual images of words whenever possible. Encourage students to keep a running record of more precise synonyms in their writer's notebooks for common words, such as *say*, *walk*, *stuff*, *nice*.

I DO: TEACH

10 mins

The Teach section can be delivered by the teacher or through the video below. Additionally, the video and game can be assigned to students.

VIDEO

1. **Explain** that revising is the stage in the writing process where writers reread their drafts and make changes to strengthen their writing. Writers can use a checklist to ensure that an essay has all the necessary parts before they set about making the writing more precise.
2. **Show** students the [Revising Checklist](#) and your draft from the previous lesson. Remind students that each item can be rated as thumbs up--yes it is here and it is strong; thumb to the side--it is present but could be stronger; or thumbs down--not present.
3. **Read** the Beginning checklist items: *I introduced my topic. I stated my opinion*. Model reading your beginning paragraph. Explain that even though the sentences are complete and the opinion is stated, the beginning isn't strong so it should be rated as a thumb to the side.

 **Sample Dialogue**

Think aloud: The checklist says that I should have a clear topic in the beginning. When I look back at my essay, it says that when bikes and cars share the road, it can be dangerous. That is my topic. The next sentence gives my opinion: *Cities should create bike lanes*. Both are clear, but not very interesting. This beginning doesn't hook my reader so I will give them a side thumb.

4. **Read** the Middle checklist items referring to reasons, details, and linking words. Remind students that this assignment asked for at least two reasons. Look in your piece and locate the first reason and its details. Bring attention to the linking words. Rate them on the checklist. Repeat with the second reason.

5. **Read** the last checklist item *I used strong, precise words*. Reread your piece again, this time concentrating on nouns or noun phrases and verbs that can be substituted with more specific or descriptive choices.

■ Sample Dialogue

Think aloud: When we use a checklist, it helps us make sure that our essay has everything. It looks like we included all the elements in our essay, but we need to revise some of our nouns and verbs to make them stronger. Word choice is important, as it helps communicate our point.

6. **Reread** the second paragraph of your essay with students.

7. **Point** out that nouns or noun phrases and verbs can often be substituted with more specific or descriptive choices.

■ Sample Dialogue

Think aloud: Now that I am happy that my essay has two strong reasons and that both are supported with details, I need to evaluate my word choice. I am looking at the word *bike rider*. I notice that I use it three times in this paragraph. Is there a synonym I can use for variety so I don't use the same word over and over? How about *cyclist*? First, bike lanes make bicycling safer for cyclists. That sounds stronger. I'll use it again in the last sentence!

In the next sentence, the words *running into each other* could be stronger. We know that there are words that mean the same thing as *running into* but are more vivid. I would use the word *smashing*, but that almost sounds like the cars and bikes were running into each other on purpose. How about the word *collide*? *Collide* also means that they run into each other. When bicycles and cars have separate lanes, there is a smaller chance of them colliding. The word *colliding* makes sense here, and it is definitely stronger than *running into*.

8. **Identify** nouns or noun phrases in your writing that need more description. Model and think aloud about adding specific nouns and verbs, or vivid words such as adjectives and other modifiers helps make the sentence more precise.

■ Sample Dialogue

Think aloud: When I read the sentence *I have seen a bike riders fall into a hole!*, I know that *hole* is a noun. I can make the sentence, and my writing, more descriptive and precise. Is there a stronger, more precise word for *hole*? How about *ditch*? Also, when the bicyclist fell in, it was muddy. I am going to add that adjective, too. So, my new sentence reads: *I have seen a bicyclist fall into a muddy ditch!* While I am revising, I want to add a sentence that brings my readers back to my opinion. I am going to add *That was a dangerous situation that could be avoided if we had lanes just for bike riders*.

Check for Understanding

Check your students' understanding by using the game below.

GAME



Teacher Tip

Try synonyms that do not make contextual sense. Model determining if the sentence still makes sense with replacement words.



Teacher Tip

Add the following sentence to a class anchor chart for revising: *Use specific nouns and vivid verbs to make writing more precise.*

WE DO: GUIDED PRACTICE

15 mins

Extend learning by applying the content of the mini-lesson to a teacher or student sample. As students watch, listen, and help you write, think aloud so they benefit from your thought process. Guided practice can be delivered to the whole class or to a small group, or modified for additional support or differentiated instruction. Use the teacher text provided, or substitute with your own writing.

1. **Remind** students that effective writers use a checklist to help them revise their drafts. They revise their drafts by rereading what they wrote and asking themselves questions like the following:
 - Are the nouns precise and well described?
 - Are the verbs vivid?
2. **Group** students. Display the third paragraph of your essay. Guide student groups to identify weak nouns or verbs that can be changed to precise words. Have groups discuss and generate stronger synonyms. Have students check that the stronger words still support the sentence's overall meaning.

■ Sample Dialogue

Think aloud: In the sentence *This makes them hold up traffic*, the verb *makes* is weak. I looked it up in a thesaurus and found that *form*, *cause*, and *produce* are synonyms for *make*. Just because I found these words in a thesaurus doesn't mean they will make sense in the sentence. Work with your partner to decide which synonym replaces *makes* and makes sense in the sentence.

Let's try *form*: *This forms them to hold up traffic*. Does that sound right? Let's try *causes*. The revised sentence would be: *This causes them to hold up traffic*. I can shorten the sentence to *This causes traffic*. What do you think? This sentence still makes sense with this verb, and it is stronger.

3. **Direct** students to work with a partner and use the [Revising Checklist](#) to evaluate their drafts, including the Beginning, Middle, and End sections. Remind students that collaborating with peers helps writers evaluate their writing and set goals for revisions.



Teacher Tip

Invite students to consult a digital or print dictionary and thesaurus to determine or clarify the precise meaning of words.



ELL Tip

When students are replacing verbs, have them act out possible verbs in the sentence.



Teacher Tip

Students find it difficult to identify weak words in their own writing. Providing time to collaborate not only benefits student writing but also creates opportunities for peer feedback and helps build a strong writing community.

YOU DO: INDEPENDENT PRACTICE & TEACHER CONFERENCING

25 mins

Student Writing Practice

25 mins

Encourage students to use all of the revision strategies they've learned as they revise their writing. Allow more than one day for revisions. Not all targets need to be met in one independent writing session.

1. **Use** the Revising Checklist to continue to revise for the following:
 - add details that provide support for each reason
 - include linking words
 - word choice
2. **Reread** their draft from the previous lesson
3. **Identify** at least two nouns that lack precision and replace them with specific nouns, or weak verbs and replace them with verbs that are more vivid

Teacher Conferencing

Use independent writing time to confer with students, make informal observations, keep anecdotal records on students' progress, differentiate instruction, pull students for small group instruction, or conduct formative assessments.

1. **"Look Fors"** in this lesson. Are students doing the following:

- using the revising checklist to identify and revise for organization
- rereading their draft and identifying weak words
- substituting weak nouns and verbs with more precise and vivid words
- adding details to their draft

2. **"Look Fors"** from previous lessons. Are students doing the following:

- adding reasons and examples that support their opinion
- including a topic sentence for each paragraph
- including a closing paragraph
- using linking words to connect opinion and reasons



Conferencing Tip

Pay close attention to how students are using the strategy from the lesson. Assist students in revising for word choice by choosing more precise, vivid words to replace weak words. Help students rehearse the new words in the context of the sentence.



ELL Tip

Develop word consciousness by helping students notice the difference between written and spoken Standard English. Help generate synonyms and antonyms for adjectives and verbs that students use in their writing and have them record the words in their writer's notebook.

How will students see this assignment?

Writing Main Quest

Unit = **World 2**

Module = **Mission 3**

Lesson = **Level 3**



Use this time to conduct an informal assessment, have students reflect on their learning, or as an opportunity to celebrate their success.

1. **Partner Share:** Have students find a partner. Decide who is Partner A and Partner B. Have partners share the place in their draft where they revised by substituting a word. Have partners read the sentence before and the

ENRICH & RETEACH

Lesson plans can be adjusted to support students who are struggling and can be enhanced for students who are proficient.

1. **Reteach:** To provide extra support, slow the lesson down, devote more time or multiple days to instructing on each component, or provide extra examples or practice with the new learning.
2. **Enrich:** To provide enrichment, challenge students to address their audience by elaborating on their writing by adding details and examples, or descriptive words and phrases.