

Scavenger Hunt

Onomatopoeia

Task

Go on a noisy word hunt for onomatopoeic words. Use the ABC chart to record your responses. See how many different words you can find.

Transfer to Writing

Have students choose one place in their writing that could use some sound. Highlight that sentence. Brainstorm a list of words that could be used there. Actually make (or try to make) the sound that the object/person would make. Insert it in. Read it aloud to see if it would work.

Vivid Verbs

Task

Find vivid verbs in the books you have and write them down. Draw a picture of what that might look like on a sticky note.

Transfer to Writing

Brainstorm a list of verbs that you could associate with a particular task. For example: swimming. The verbs we use for swimming would be very different from the verbs we use for rock climbing.

Once you've brainstormed all of the verbs for that task, write a story about a character who is passionate about that thing (ex. Swimming). Be sure to use those vivid verbs.

OR

Take a piece of writing you've already done. Circle verbs that aren't really all that exciting. Replace them with more vivid verbs. Use the Vivid Verbs Revision sheet.

Sensory Words

Task

Read through some of the mentor texts. Find words or phrases that have sensory language in them. Write them on your paper along with what sense.

Transfer to Writing

Use a highlighter to highlight the senses used in your rough draft. Even better, use a different color for every sense. Are you using one sense heavily but forgetting another? Try to use at least two senses in each scene.

Book List for Onomatopoeia:

CHICKEN CHASING QUEEN OF LAMAR COUNTY by Janice N. Harrington
CREEPY CARROTS by Aaron Reynolds
THE GREAT FUZZ FRENZY by Janet Stevens and Susan Stevens Crummel
MR. DUCK MEANS BUSINESS by Tammi Sauer
PRINCESS IN TRAINING by Tammi Sauer
RATTLETRAP CAR by Phyllis Root
SNOW SOUNDS by David A. Johnson
TRUCKS: WHIZZ! ZOOM! RUMBLE! by Patricia Hubbell
WATER HOLE WAITING by Jane & Christopher Kurtz

Book List for Vivid Verbs:

BUTTERNUT HOLLOW POND by Brian J. Heinz
COME ON, RAIN! by Karen Hesse
GIANT DANCE PARTY by Betsy Bird
IN THE SMALL, SMALL POND by Denise Fleming
LITTLE YELLOW LEAF by Carin Berger
MERMAID QUEEN by Shana Corey
MOSTLY MONSTERLY by Tammi Sauer
MR. DUCK MEANS BUSINESS by Tammi Sauer
MUD by Mary Lyn Ray
PRINCESS HYACINTH: THE SURPRISING TALE OF A GIRL WHO FLOATED by Florence Parry Heide
RECESS QUEEN by Alexis O'Neill

Book List for Sensory Words:

BUFFALO MUSIC by Tracey Fern
COME ON, RAIN! by Karen Hesse
CROW CALL by Lois Lowry
HEAT WAVE by Eileen Spinelli
NIGHTSONG by Ari Berk
OWL MOON by Jane Yolen
TWILIGHT COMES TWICE by Ralph Fletcher

Wordless Picture Books as Mentor Texts for Structure

Task

“Read” through a wordless or nearly wordless picture book. Read the pictures and note what’s happening in each.

Transfer to Writing

Use the pictures as a guide. Write your own story to go with the pictures. You can do the whole book or use one picture and go into great detail.

Note: Pictures or wordless picture books are good for supporting writers who have no idea what to write.

Wordless or Nearly Wordless Book List:

ART & MAX by David Wiesner
THE BOYS by Jeff Newman
CHALK by Bill Thomson
CHICKEN THIEF by Beatrice Rodriguez
FLORA AND THE FLAMINGO by Molly Idle
FLOTSAM by David Wiesner
FREE FALL by David Wiesner
GOOD NEWS, BAD NEWS by Jeff Mack
THE GREY LADY AND THE STRAWBERRY SNATCHER by Molly Bang
HOME by Jeannie Baker
INSIDE OUTSIDE by Lizi Boyd
JOURNEY by Aaron Becker
THE LION AND THE MOUSE by Jerry Pinkney
LOOKING DOWN by Steve Jenkins
MIRROR by Jeannie Baker
MR. WUFFLES by David Wiesner
MUSEUM TRIP by Barbara Lehman
MYSTERIES OF HARRIS BURDICK by Chris Van Allsburg
ONCE UPON A BANANA by Jennifer Armstrong
THE OTHER BONE by Ed Young
RAINSTORM by Barbara Lehman
THE RED BOOK by Barbara Lehman
SECTOR 7 by David Wiesner
SHADOW by Suzy Lee
SIDEWALK CIRCUS by Paul Fleischman
TUESDAY by David Wiesner
TIME FLIES by Eric Rohmann
UMBRELLA by Ingrid & Dieter Schubert
UN-BRELLA by Scott Franson
UP A TREE by Ed Young
WAVE by Suzy Lee
WHERE'S WALRUS by Stephen Savage
WONDER BEAR by Tao Nyeu

Genre Study: Personal Narratives

Task

Read some of the personal narrative pictures books. Use the checklist to identify what characteristics of a personal narrative it has (it may not have all of them).

If you are doing this in class, I would pick one book to do together, then older students can read more on their own and do the same thing.

Transfer to Writing

Have students write a story from their own lives. Then use the personal narrative revision checklist to see what characteristics they incorporated in their own writing.

Book List for Personal Narratives:

FREEDOM SUMMER by Deborah Wiles
GOIN' SOMEPLACE SPECIAL by Patricia McKissack
MY GREAT AUNT ARIZONA by Gloria Houston
MAMA'S SARIS by Pooja Makhijani
OUR TREE NAMED STEVE by Alan Zweibel
THE RELATIVES CAME by Cynthia Rylant
TED by Tony DiTerlizzi

Newspapers as Mentor Texts

Task #1

Look at the sports section and highlight all of the vivid verbs. Sports writers tend to be very creative with their verbs or their specific word choice. Each sport has it's own language. Students can even make a word list by sport.

Transfer to Writing

Borrow some of these specific words for your own writing. Students can also use this to help them with the vivid verb tasks in the vivid verb lesson.

Task #2

Take a look at headlines. Newspaper headlines can be good examples of word play.

Transfer to Writing

Brainstorm a list of possible titles for your story that use word play. Students can even work on this in teams and riff off of each other.

Task #3

Read the letters to the editor. Analyze for what persuasive writing techniques they used (see the DOE persuasive writing lesson with supplements).

Transfer to Writing

Write their own letters to the editor about a local issue. Utilize persuasive writing techniques.

Task #4

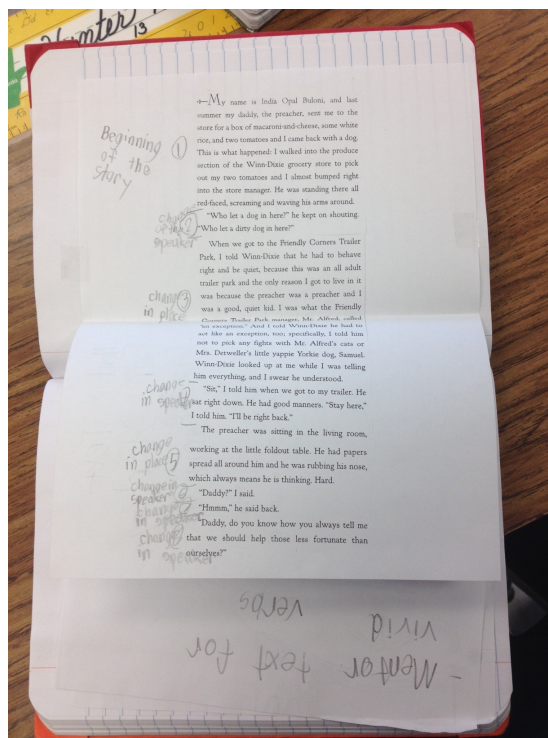
White out some of the speech bubbles on the comics and write their own dialogue.

Transfer to Writing

Write a story using that dialogue. Add in correct punctuation marks, dialogue tags, and even narration with details using the comic strip as a starting point.

Paragraphing

This is a sample from a Writer's Notebook using BECAUSE OF WINN-DIXIE to indicate why each new paragraph was started.



Reread a draft. Mark the places where new paragraphs should be. Have a buddy read through it and see if you missed anything based on the paragraphing checklist.

Imagery

Task

Find a favorite novel. Turn to a page where you can really picture the scene in your mind. Draw the picture you see in your mind. Take a look at the language that the author used to help you see that. How did the author paint pictures using her words? Photocopy the page or type it up yourself and write on it. Make notes to yourself.

Transfer to Writing

Try to write a few paragraphs that your reader will really see. Read your paragraphs out loud to a friend. Have her draw what she sees in her mind as you read your writing. Are there things she had difficulty imagining? Does her picture match the picture you have in your head (or is at least close)? The questions your friend still has may help you add a few details.

Figurative Language

Task

There are lots of types of figurative language, but pay attention particularly to similes. They help the reader picture things in a unique way, often by comparing two things, one of which the reader can relate to.

Find some similes in a novel (I recommend SAVVY and SECRET IN THE TOWER for some good figurative language). What makes them unique? Notice that they probably aren't similes that we've heard over and over again, like "fast as a cheetah."

Transfer to Writing

Take a look at a draft you are currently working on. Find a place where you could add in a simile to compare two things to make the writing more vivid for the reader. Insert a ^ and write the simile into your story.

Novel Suggestions

** Note: Any novel you are currently studying will probably work perfectly, but here are a few that I refer to over and over again.

BECAUSE OF WINN-DIXIE by Kate DiCamillo

BECOMING NAOMI LEON by Pam Munoz Ryan

DEAD END IN NORVELT by Jack Gantos

HORTON HALFPOTT by Tom Angleberger

LIZZIE BRIGHT AND THE BUCKMINSTER BOY by Gary Schmidt

THE NIGHT FAIRY by Laura Amy Schlitz

THE ONE AND ONLY IVAN by Katherine Applegate

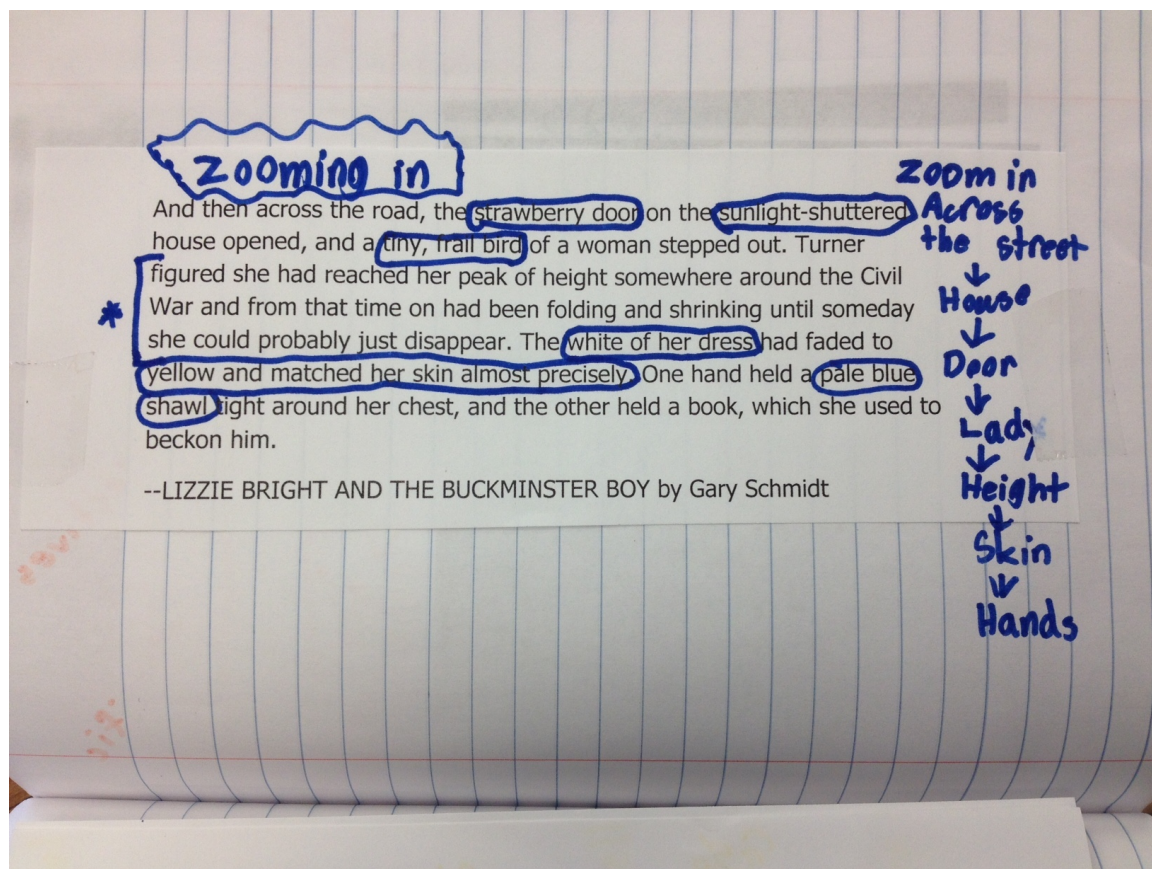
SAVVY by Ingrid Law

THE TIME SPIES series by Candice Ransom (#1 is called SECRET IN THE TOWER)

Example from a Writer's Notebook

Lizzie Bright and the Buckminster Boy by Gary Schmidt

We studied his technique of zooming in, and then we tried it out in our own writing.



Word Choice and Being Specific

Task

Read through some of the mentor texts. Notice the specific language being used. It's not just quiet in THE QUIET BOOK, it's "lollipop quiet."

The racecar in HOT ROD HAMSTER doesn't just have flames, it has "short flames, wide flames, sizzle down the side flames."

Also take a look at some of the specific language used in books like THREE NINJA PIGS and A TROOP IS A GROUP OF MONKEYS. Generic language is not used. It's very, very specific.

Very specific writing makes the writing really memorable.

Transfer to Writing

Take a boring sentence like this:

We rode to Walmart on our bikes.

Make it more specific like this:

We rode to Walmart on our mud-crusting mountain bikes.

Find a place in your own writing where there is a sentence that could use a little more specificity. You can change a whole sentence by just changing one or two words.

Book List

BEETLE BOP by Denise Fleming

CREAKY, OLD HOUSE by Linda Ashman

DAVE THE POTTER: ARTIST, POET, SLAVE by Laban Carrick Hill

HELLO, HARVEST MOON by Ralph Fletcher

HOT ROD HAMSTER by Cynthia Lord

A LEAF CAN BE... by Laura Purdie Salas

THE LOUD BOOK by Deborah Underwood

NIGHT OF THE GARGOYLES by Eve Bunting

THE QUIET BOOK by Deborah Underwood

THREE NINJA PIGS by Corey Rosen Schwartz

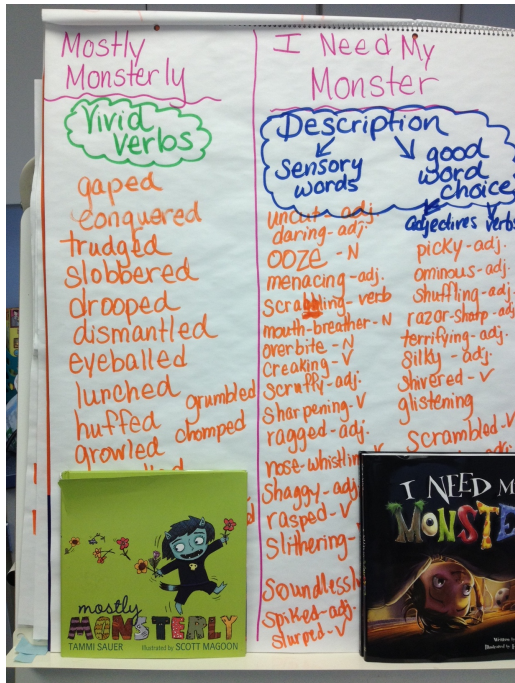
A TROOP IS A GROUP OF MONKEYS by Julie Hedlund

WATER CAN BE... by Laura Purdie Salas (forthcoming in April 2014)

Using Mentor Texts as Story Starters or Prompts

Tasks

Read a book, like **MOSTLY MONSTERLY** and/or **I NEED MY MONSTER**. Together talk about the vivid verbs and adjectives that are used to bring the monsters to life.



Transfer to Writing

Use a guided approach for brainstorming using these books to help create background for students' own monster stories.

Other Book Suggestions:

JEREMY DRAWS A MONSTER by Peter McCarty

THE MONSTER WHO LOST HIS MEAN by Tiffany Strelitz

MONSTORE by Tara Lazar

Using Nonfiction Picture Books to “Double Dip” Content and Teaching Writing Skills

Task

Choose a book that you are already reading in Social Studies or Science. Read it to help with content. Then go back and look at it as a writing text.

Students can look at:

- Organization of the text
- Use of vivid verbs, figurative language, and specificity in nonfiction
- Study a particular nonfiction subgenre
- Focus of the text

Transfer to Writing

When writing nonfiction, incorporate the use of good craft techniques (like the ones mentioned above) to make nonfiction writing interesting to read.

Book List:

ABE'S HONEST WORDS by Doreen Rappaport
AMELIA AND ELEANOR GO FOR A RIDE by Pam Munoz Ryan
ATLANTIC by G. Brian Karas
ELLINGTON WAS NOT A STREET by Ntozake Shange
FREEDOM ON THE MENU by Carole Boston Weatherford
FROG SONG by Brenda Z. Guidberson
GEORGE WASHINGTON'S TEETH by Deborah Chandra & Madeleine Comora
HENRY'S FREEDOM BOX by Ellen Levine
HOW BEN FRANKLIN STOLE THE LIGHTNING by Rosalyn Schanzer
LOOKING AT LINCOLN by Maira Kalman
LOVE TO LANGSTON by Tony Medina
MARTIN'S BIG WORDS by Doreen Rappaport
MARTIN & MAHALIA: HIS WORDS, HER SONG by Andrea Davis Pinkney and Brian Pinkney
MOONSHOT: THE FLIGHT OF APOLLO 11 by Brian Floca
NOAH WEBSTER AND HIS WORDS by Jeri Chase Ferris
NOW AND BEN: THE MODERN INVENTIONS OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN by Gene Barretta
PONY ISLAND by Candice Ransom
SIT IN: HOW FOUR FRIENDS STOOD UP BY SITTING DOWN by Andrea Davis Pinkney & Brian Pinkney
SKIT-SKAT RAGGEDY CAT: ELLA FITZGERALD by Roxanne Orgill
THOMAS JEFFERSON BUILDS A LIBRARY by Barba Rosenstock
THOMAS JEFFERSON: LIFE, LIBERTY AND THE PURSUIT OF EVERYTHING by Maira Kalman
VISITING LANGSTON by Willie Perdomo
WHEN MARIAN SANG by Pam Munoz Ryan