

SIX TRAIT WRITING WARM-UPS

TRAIT #4: WORD CHOICE

PREPARATION

FOLLOW-UP

EXERCISE

1.	Write "loud" words- i.e. KABOOM! CRASH! ROARING, THUNDERING, EARSPLITTING	Ask students for other "loud" words to add. Have students write down the five "quietest" or softest words they can think of. Have them share these words and list them on the board.	Talk about how words can convey the sound of things.
2.	Write descriptive words for how a pillow feels - i.e. fluffy, puffy, billowy, cushiony, etc.	Ask students for other words to add. Then have them write down 5 words that describe the feeling of mud. Have them share words and list on board.	Talk about how words can convey the feel of things.
3.	Write words that evoke smells-i.e. popcorn, brownies, roses	Have students list other words that describe pleasant smells. Then have them list words that describe unpleasant smells (sour milk, garbage, burned toast, etc.) See how many they can come up with.	Talk about how words can describe specific smells.
4.	Write words that describe tastes - i.e. chocolatey, salty, tangy	Have students add other words that describe pleasant tastes. Then have them list words that describe unpleasant tastes (sour, burnt, hot, etc.)	Talk about how words can describe specific tastes.
5.	Display pictures of two very different scenes - i.e. one city & one country, or one mountain & one seashore.	Have students list other objects they see in the first picture and words that describe them. Then have them list words that describe what's in the other scene. Compare similarities and differences.	Talk about how words can describe what you see.
6.	Write the word "walking"	Ask students to help you make a list of all the ways someone or something could be walking (marching, scuffling, stomping, dawdling, etc.) Now add adjectives (hurriedly, leisurely, angrily, etc.) Compare these verb/adverb combinations with the simple word "walking". Is there a difference in what you "see"?	Talk about how specific words can give you a clearer picture of what's happening.
7.	Display a few pictures with captions (from books or magazines) Display another picture without a caption.	Have students make up descriptive captions for the picture. Share captions. Discuss which make the picture seem more interesting and why.	Talk about how words can affect how you see things.
8.	Have several different kinds of catalogs. (i.e. - J.C. Penney, J. Peterman, L.L. Bean)	Read the descriptions of similar articles. Ask students which they would be more likely to buy.	Talk about the importance of word choice in advertising messages.
9.	Write on the board: "Tired Words"	List a few overused words that "need a rest" i.e. - nice, fun, big, really, etc. Have children suggest alternate words that could be used instead of these. List them next to the tired words.	Point out how much more expressive the new words can be.
10.	Write on the board: "My Favorite Words"	List some of your favorite (expressive) words. Have each student begin their own list. Share words.	Keep lists in writing folders to refer to and add to.