Lesson Title: Choose Your Words Carefully: Using Word Choice

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Grade Level: 1st Grade

Subject Area: Writing

Time Allotted for the Lesson: Express in number of class meetings and/or number of hours.

3 Days, 90 minutes. Day 1: 30 minutes. Day 2: 30 minutes. Day 3: 30 minutes.

Short Description of Lesson: Write a brief, yet concise, description of what occurs in this lesson (50 words).

Students will listen to a tall tale and examine the way words stretch a story from reality. They will edit a short story and replace dull words with more exciting word choices to liven up their work and engage readers. To understand this concept words will be classified as “Rice Cake” or “Salsa” words. To complete this activity, students will utilize the Thesaurus tool in Microsoft Word to select more impressive words. By doing so, they will "stretch" the truth and exaggerate the story, making it more like a tall tale.

Classroom Layout and Grouping of Students: Where will learning take place? How will the room be organized? How will students be grouped? (whole group, individuals, pairs, small groups, etc).

Reading activity will take place on the carpet space as a whole group. A follow-up writing session will take place at student desks or room space for students to work independently. The remaining activities will take place in the computer media lab for whole group instruction using the projector screen while at other times students will work independently to type their work.

State Curriculum Standards met in this lesson: Go to the state curriculum standards at http://www.isbe.net/ils/Default.htm (use state standards where you are in preparation) and select the grade content/level appropriate standards that are being met in this lesson. Copy and paste below:

Writing 1.4.4.b - Acquire and use new vocabulary

Writing 1.4.5.a - Use descriptive words and other details to expand and improve student's own writing

National Education Technology Standards for Students (NETS•S) met in this lesson: Go to the http://cnets.iste.org/index.html and select NETS•S 2007 grade level profile (K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12) the appropriate indicator(s) and standard) that are being met in this lesson. Copy and paste below.

1.b - create original works as a means of personal or group expression.

Instructional Objective(s): Each instructional objective [learning outcome] for this lesson should identify the A, B, C and D – Audience, Behavior, Condition, and Degree. (Activities are NOT learning outcomes).

1. Students will write a tall tale by correctly identifying and changing at least four descriptive words in his/her story.
2. 
3. 
**Materials, Resources and Technology:**

*List all materials (textbook, other books, maps, crayons, research guides) technology resources (computers, printer, scanner, internet connection, cameras, etc) and web addresses that are needed for this lesson. If you are using copyrighted materials, you must include title, author, date, city and publisher.*

**Materials and resources needed for this lesson.**

1. Armadillo Tattletale by Helen Ketteman
2. Student Writing Portfolio
3. Writing Journal

**Technology resources needed for this lesson**

1. Computer Media Lab and projector screen
2. Microsoft Word
3. Word Choice practice document

**Web Addresses needed for this lesson:**

*Website name (e.g. Yahoo), followed by the site’s complete web address (e.g. http://www.yahoo.com)*

1. www.thesaurus.com
2. www.freethesaurus.net
3. www.visualthesaurus.com/index.jsp

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**Student’s Present level of Performance and Knowledge:** *Do the students have the adequate knowledge to complete the lesson successfully? What pre-requisite skills must the students have to complete the lesson content? Include technology skills.*

Students should be familiar with Microsoft Word functions like adjusting font size and color from previous lessons. Students will benefit from understanding what a noun and adjective are (material covered earlier in school year).

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**Instructional Procedures**

**Lesson Set:**
*How will you open the lesson to motivate the students? How will you relate this lesson to previous learning & to real life experiences, to explain the importance of the learning to the students? (requires student involvement)*

Students will listen to the story Armadillo Tattletale by Helen Ketteman, a story about an armadillo that stretches the truth and learns how quickly it can get you out of trouble. Armadillo’s word choices are extravagant and engage readers to create vivid imagery. During the story, the teacher can repeat a line using a dull word to illustrate how words affect how a sentence sounds.

**Techniques and Activities:**
*List the step-by-step activities in sequential order as they occur in the lesson. They clearly identify what is to take place in the lesson. Within the procedures a variety of classroom teaching strategies (methods) are identified. Student centered activities are included as well as guided practice of the learning is included.*

1. During day one, students will be given a writing prompt for their writing journals. Students should respond with at least 5 sentences that address the prompt “What I did last weekend....” Students should try to be as thorough and neat as possible, as they will need this writing again for later writing activities.

2. Students will be taught the difference between Rice Cake and Salsa words. This comparison is to show that rice cakes are dull, tasteless, and do not have a lot of flavor whereas salsa is lively, flavorful, and makes eating fun. The goal is to find words that mean the same thing, but are not used as frequently, and
place them into our writing. These words are called synonyms and can be found in a Thesaurus. Using the practice word document, students will look at the sentences and be taught the process of identifying a dull word and replacing it using Microsoft Word’s thesaurus tool. The visual procedure aid will assist learners during this process. Students will have several opportunities to walk through step-by-step to change a word in the sentence. The last few are for students to attempt independently with the teacher walking around as needed to assist.

3. Day 3: Students will have this opportunity to type up an “average” story about what they did over the weekend that was written in a prior lesson during “free writing” time. This story will be typed using Microsoft Word and students will again engage in using the thesaurus tool to edit their word choices and create more exciting, and possibly exaggerated, stories. Students will print out 2 copies of their finished work. One will go into their writing portfolio; the other will be stapled with the rough draft and submitted to the teacher for review.

Lesson Closure:
How will the lesson come to a close? The content should be summarized and related to future lessons, and actively involve the students.

Play a game to show the difference between “Rice Cake” and “Salsa” words. In writing journals, students will make a t-chart, labeling the top with **Rice Cake** and **Salsa**. The teacher will say words for students to classify as boring or exciting. Students can write these words into their writing journal and check answers together as a class.

Optional Closing Activity: Have a rice cake/salsa writing celebration where students can have an opportunity to taste these treats.

**Adaptations for Special Learners:** How will you adapt the learning/equipment for students with special needs?

Students who demonstrate difficulty learning the steps can be taught the shortcut (Shift + F7) to quickly bring up the thesaurus tool. If students are known to have difficulty typing material during the given time, the teacher can type up a partial or all of the students’ work so that they can focus on the word choice activity.

Students who would benefit from hearing the text, instead of reading it, can utilize Microsoft’s accessibility features that enable Text-to-Speech.

**Supplemental Activities - Extension and Remediation:** Extensions are additional activities to expand learning on the lesson content. Remediation activities include methods to re-teach the learning for students who need more instruction/practice.

Students who demonstrate ease with this activity can be given opportunities to look at thesaurus books and attempt to manually find synonyms for the dull words. Students who demonstrate difficulty may benefit from hearing different versions of a story that utilize dull words vs. exciting words.

**Assessment/Evaluation:** How will you measure the student’s success? Formally or informally? Formal evaluation of student work requires that a grade is taken while informal might be monitoring of work, or class discussion. This section should contain a description of the assessment process, the criteria for achievement, and performance levels. The criteria should directly align to objectives and instruction. Describe your plan for providing feedback to your students.
Students will submit a rough draft and typed final copy of their “tall tale” that was created using Word’s thesaurus. The teacher will evaluate students’ work to see if they adequately changed at least four words in their story from their rough draft.

**Student Products:** What artifact(s) or products will result from the lesson? (such as a report, newsletter, diagram, slideshow, drawing, etc.)

Students will have another document for their writing portfolio that will be placed in the Word Choice section.

Adapted from PDF: *Preparing to Use Technology: A Practical Guide to Curriculum Integration* (2007)