

4W3d: Use concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events precisely.

I can make my final revisions to my chaining memory booklet by "cracking open" empty words and phrases.



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THIS IS THE PART OF THE NARRATIVE CHECKLIST WE ARE USING

TODAY:

	Grade 4	NOT YET	STARTING TO	YES!
	Development			
Elaboration	I added more to the heart of my story, including not only actions and dialogue but also thought and feelings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Craft	I showed <i>why</i> characters did what they did by including their thinking.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	I made some parts of the story go quickly, some slowly.			
	I included precise and sometimes sensory details and used figurative language (simile, metaphor, personification) to bring my story to life.			
	I used a storytelling voice and conveyed the emotion or tone of my story through description, phrases, dialogue, and thoughts.			

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When we revise we do not so much revise the page as revise our thinking, our feeling, our memory, ourselves—who we are.

—Donald Murray, *The Craft of Revision*, 3rd Edition, p. 1



Turn and talk to your partner.
What do you think this quote means
and what do you think we will be
learning today?

Connection: Author, *Georgia Heard* talks about the concept of cracking open words, phrases, and sentences to get to the real meaning . . . the picture, the heart, the real message, our thinking, our feelings, our memories, our ourselves. Think about cracking open an egg . . . or cracking open a mysterious door.



In each case, cracking open the known reveals the unknown. And, in most cases, it leads to something better, more exciting, more useful, more colorful, more surprising. Often in our early drafts—we may have non-descriptive words, phrases, and sentences that need to be cracked open and elaborated to really get to the good part. Today, we are going to work on this important strategy. Like the Beatles said, today we will "Take a sad song and make it better!"



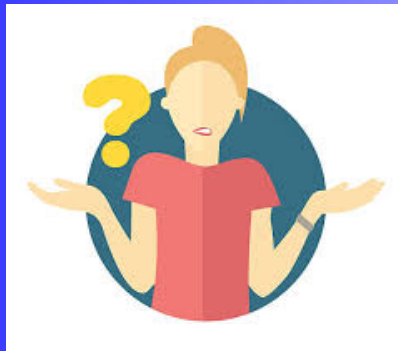
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Teach: Consider these rather boring sentences:

- It was a pretty morning.
- He was a good boy.
- The food was good.
- It was a surprise.



These are all telling sentences and we know that good writing shows and does not tell. And even though they tell, they sure don't tell much. The reader is left with questions and uncertainty because of a lack of details.



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Teach:

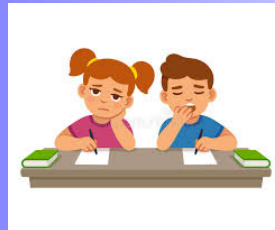
When we crack open words and phrases we're trying to get to the show of the sentence. The process is easy. When you find a word, phrase, or sentence that tells, stop; envision the person, place, or thing; and give words to what you see in your mind. Then use the words that describe what you envision as you rewrite. Let me show you some examples and let you practice a couple of examples, too



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Teach: Boring words or phrases:

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These are all telling sentences and we know that good writing shows and does not tell. And even though they tell, they sure don't tell much. The reader is left with questions and uncertainty because of a lack of details. When we crack open words and phrases we're trying to get to the show of the sentence. The process is easy. When you find a word, phrase, or sentence that tells, stop; envision the person, place, or thing; and give words to what you see in your mind. Then use the words that describe what you envision as you rewrite. Let me show you some examples and let you practice a couple of examples, too.

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Word/Phrase/Sentence	What I Envision	Cracked Open Rewrite
It was a pretty morning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sun/clouds • Palms/sway 	The palms swayed as the sun rose in the cloudy sky.
He was a good boy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trevor • A boy scout • Trustworthy 	Trevor was as good as a boy scout (and just as trustworthy).

Instead of Fun (adjective). Try: Amusing, merry, enjoyable, lively, pleasant, diverting, festive, delightful

Instead of Fun (noun). Try: Ball, blast, enjoyment, escapade, frolic, high jinks, merriment, recreation, romp, treat, merrymaking, horseplay, game, festivity, delight, entertainment

Instead of Thing: Try: object, material, item, tool, utensil

Instead of Smile: Try: beam, grin, laugh, smirk, glow

Instead of Walk: Try: hike, stroll, step, stride, plod, stomp, glide, gallop, trudge, trample

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We do:

Word/Phrase/Sentence	What You Envision	Cracked Open Rewrite
The food was good.		
It was a surprise.		

Remember: The two best keys for cracking open words, phrases, and sentences are specific word choices and sensory details. We have the responsibility to show and not tell. We also have the responsibility to fill our stories with the best words that can weave our writing into memorable finished pieces.

Don't feel that you have to use a form or format (like the one above) when cracking open words, phrases, and sentences. Once you're conscious of cracking open your writing, you'll find the approach that works for you.



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Active engagement: Turn and talk to your partner about something you want to revisit in your chaining booklet and make it better.

Independent:

- Read through the draft of your chaining booklet. Underline each word, phrase, or sentence that tells or that lacks description. Choose one or two of these words, phrases, or sentences to crack open and see what the results are. Continue cracking open your writing until it shows instead of tells.
- Crack open at least one sentence. Use a post it to create interesting one.
- Begin your own personal thesaurus (word treasury) by finding at least two tired over used phrases/words and begin listing alternative words/phrases. (You may use a thesaurus).
- Begin collecting your own word treasury and keeping in your notebooks:
 1. Words you love the sound of
 2. Don't know the meaning of but would like to find out
 3. Words you have seen in books that look interesting
 4. Words that give a strong image
 5. Words that evoke a memory
 6. Words you love to say out loud
 7. Words that have special meaning
 8. Try using them in your own writing (see if they make sense).



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Mid-workshop interruption:

Let's review what we are doing

today and why it is important. Let's

look at _____'s piece and see how he-she revised by

cracking open a word or phrase.



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Share: What did you do as a writer today? How did cracking open words or phrases help you? Why is it an important strategy to include in our revision?



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TEACHER PAGE: Circulate and make sure kids including John, Travis and Sheng have thesaurus. Help them find words and see if they can "fix."