

LESSON 19: REVISION. I CAN REVISE MY WRITING BY FINDING A METAPHOR TO HELP SYMBOLIZE MY MESSAGE

## Common Core Standards for Memoir Writing Unit

CCSS.ELA LITERACY.W.5.3

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

CCSS.ELA LITERACY.W.5.3.A

Orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.

CCSS.ELA LITERACY.W.5.3.B

Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, description, and pacing, to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations.

CCSS.ELA LITERACY.W.5.3.C

Use a variety of transitional words, phrases, and clauses to manage the sequence of events.

CCSS.ELA LITERACY.W.5.3.D

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

CCSS.ELA LITERACY.W.5.3.E

Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.

CCSS.ELA LITERACY.W.5.4

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA LITERACY.W.5.5

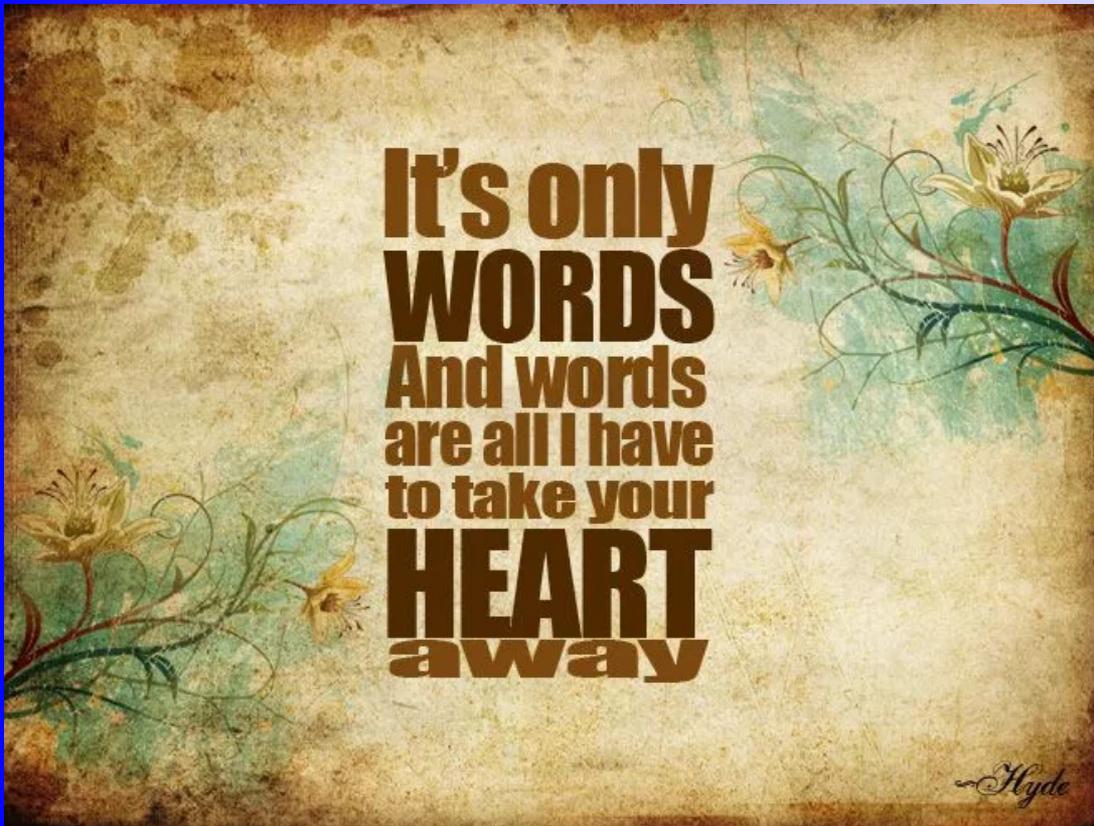
With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

### Essential Questions:

- How can I make my writing more powerful and impact my audience?
- What am I trying to show about myself through my memoir?
- What life lesson did I learn and want to share with my audience?
- How did I change as a result of this experience?

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**CONNECTION:** You have been doing an awesome job of revising your memoirs and ensuring that you are delivering a powerful message to your readers about not only yourselves but about life, in general. Today we will work on revising our pieces by trying to discover a metaphor or a symbol that can help us create and deliver our powerful life messages.



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TEACH: One of my favorite movies is the Sound of Music. At the start of the movie, Maria is learning to become a nun and runs into difficulties because when she is supposed to be in prayer sessions, she instead heads to the hills where she breaks into song, singing, "The hills are alive with the sound of music..." In this particular monastery, traipsing through the mountain meadows isn't nun like behavior. She isn't solemn enough. At one point, the nuns gather and trying to find the words to describe the way that Maria can't be contained in the confines of the abbey, they sing, "How do you hold a moonbeam in your hand?"



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When I write I often have the same trouble. The meanings that I want to convey sometimes well up inside me and the more important those meanings are, the harder it is to find the words for them. They are like moonbeams—I feel them but I don't know how to pin them down. I sit beside the page and think of big, elusive meanings and the question I ask is, essentially, "How do you hold a moonbeam in your hand?" How does Adam find the words to capture what his house felt like after his brother had driven off? Writers often take a tiny detail from their lives often something that can be very ordinary and we let that one detail represent the whole big message of our story or our memoir.



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Remember that when an author has a big content he or she wants to convey in a story, they do so by embedding that big meaning into an object, a *metaphor or symbol*.

In "Eleven," notice that the red sweater is much more than just a stretched out, ugly garment that the narrator knows isn't hers. It's the focal point of the burden of being a young girl who feels powerless in the face of authority--the teacher figure. When Rachel is unable to convince her teacher that the sweater isn't hers, it's repugnance grows and grows, just as her years in her mind shrink. The sweater becomes representative of the feeling of having all your younger years well up in you. It has become a symbol. Rachel, who has lost her voice, pushes the sweater away and with it, tries to push away the frustrations of being "ten, nine, eight, six, seven, five, four, three, two and one."

If you consider "Eleven" in its entirety you might also notice that it can read as a metaphor for growing up. Rachel who has turned eleven the day of the sweater incident, imagines she should feel her new age right away but doesn't. What she is grappling with is the knowledge that growing up is a gradual process and a new age doesn't erase who you were each prior year of your life. She says wisely, "...the way you grow old is kind of like an onion or like the rings inside a tree trunk or like my little wooden dolls that fit one inside the other, each year inside the next one." Rachel names growing up with the images she can understand; physical things with layers--the circles of an onion, the rings of a tree trunk, her nesting dolls--and so creates her own metaphor for age and experience. By the end of "Eleven," Rachel has learned something else about age, she's learned that having many years and a position of authority, as does her teacher doesn't mean being or right all-knowing.

"Eleven" is rich with simile and metaphor and there's much we can all identify with--Rachel's feelings who are too big to voice. Rachel's ways of naming those feelings using images she understands--"sleeves all stretched out like...a jump rope," "Animal noises," "a runaway balloon," etc. We can find tangible, physical pieces in our lives that can represent bigger ideas and who we are.



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ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT: The art of writing narratives that represent something big about our lives, we are each making metaphor. Today let's try to bring out the "metaphoric"-symbolic aspects of our

"Justin, your turn," Mrs. S. said. I stepped up and walked to the brown chair. I sat down. Chills scattered through my bones as I cradled the book in my hands like a feather floating down the water. My stomach was tossed around. I opened my mouth...nothing came out. I tried again as if every word on page 106, chapter 8 would come tumbling out. Still nothing.

I tried one last time. Only a squeak came out. I wish all my troubles disappeared like a popped bubble. They started laughing, then, "Stop! You can't laugh at someone if they did not laugh at you!" I could not believe it. Thanks Danny.

He stood up for me after he had no reason. The teacher lost her temper and ended reading short. I got up and walked over to my locker.

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At the end of the story, Justin wanted his readers to know that he and Danny started to become friends. So what do you think Justin could have himself do or have Danny do at the end of the story? What could one of them do or say that would show that they became friends? TURN AND TALK.



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I shut my locker and walked down the hall with Danny talking. "So friend what's New?"

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Turn and talk to your partner about how you may incorporate a metaphor--an object, action or symbol or even an extended metaphor into your memoir to help create a strong message and meaning? THEN GET TO WORK AND CONTINUE REVISING YOUR PIECES TO HELP CREATE AN EVEN MORE POWERFUL MESSAGE THAN YOU BEGAN WITH--TRY AND ENHANCE WITH A METAPHOR OR SYMBOL.



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REMINDER: As you continue revising continue to do the following:

- Re-write parts that are confusing in the margin or on separate paper
- Adding on to sections by using an asterisk (\*) in places where we want to add more and writing the new parts on separate paper or in our notebooks.
- Taking away parts that are unnecessary, confusing or don't match the message.
- Placing carats in places we want to add a word or where there is a word missing.

## Proofreading Marks Cheat Sheet

Mark	Meaning	Example
	Add	We went <sup>to</sup> the mall.
	Capitalize	<u>j</u> im went shopping.
	Close The Gap	sledge <u>  </u> hammer
	Remove It	Leaving <del>at</del> the mall.
	Lowercase	Jim can't <del>S</del> leep.
	New Paragraph	¶ Jim enjoys shopping at the mall with his friends on the weekend.
	Transpose	Jim <u>find</u> can't his shoes.

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MID WORKSHOP INTERRUPTION: USING REFRAINS.

Writers, can I stop you? As I've walked around, I've noticed that you are focused on crafting powerful lines as you compose--lines that hold enormous meaning. Writers often search their writing for lines such as these--looking for ways to highlight them, because highlighting a particularly strong line can also highlight a particularly strong idea. One way to make a powerful line stand out is by repeating it here and then across a piece of writing. You've seen it in stories like "When I was Young in the Mountains" and "My Mama Had a Dancing Heart." In "Eleven," Sandra Cisneros repeats the line, "Mama is making a cake for me tonight and when Papa comes home everybody will sing, Happy birthday, happy birthday to you. Each time I read that line, I get goosebumps because I understand there is enormous idea behind it. One idea that the author may be trying to show through this line is that birthdays are supposed to be wonderful occasions that celebrate the beauty of growing up. She repeats the line across her writing somewhere near the beginning and then again towards the ending. She wants us to pay attention to this idea across the entire piece so she repeats it to help us say, "Yes, yes. I see what you're trying to say." So right now writers, can you take a moment to reread your writing for lines that could be highlighted. When you find one, think about where else you might try writing it so that it helps your ideas really stand out.

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SHARE: Who would like to share with us what they tried to do as a writer today? Who was able to create a significant ending, incorporate a metaphor, symbol or repeated line into their writing to enhance their overall message-meaning?



HOMEWORK: Describe your writing process. As you continue to revise your pieces, you will reflect back on the process with your in-depth self-assessment that will be due with your final drafts. Think about what you learned about the writing process. You've been shifting between writing, rewriting, planning and writing some more. Think about how the process has gone for you. As you revise, answer the following questions:

- Are you able to create movies in your mind--remembering and envisioning and reexperiencing?
- How are you ensuring that all moments can be "played out" in your readers' minds?
- What was necessary to go back and revise--and why?
- How were you able to deepen meaning with metaphor, repeated refrains and other important strategies?
- How are your strategies of writing different at the start vs. the end of a process?
- How has that changed during this unit?
- How are you growing as a writer?

TEACHER PAGE:

IF YOUR STUDENTS FEEL LIKE THEY'RE FINISHED REVISING...have them meet with a partner to discuss their revision decisions they've made. They can reread their drafts, and mark the crafting techniques they've used in their writing. They can discuss how each technique helped deepen their message. They can lean on each other to make further revision plans. They may ask each other questions like, "What work has my partner tried that I might try" Or "What have we learned that I've yet to apply in my writing." Remember that writers try to reimagine their writing and sometimes the revision work they do pays off and sometimes it doesn't. What's important to remember is that stretching one's way of thinking will lead to new discoveries.

IF YOUR STUDENTS SPRINKLE FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE ON THEIR WRITING BUT IT DOESN'T REINFORCE THEIR IDEAS...you could teach them to identify places where they might have used similes, metaphors or another form of figurative language and ask themselves, "How does this writing help to show my idea?" Make sure the use of figurative language is purposeful in furthering your message and not interfering by taking the reader off track.