Word Choice: Definition

Word Choice is the use of rich, colorful, precise language that communicates not just in a functional way, but in a way that moves and enlightens the reader. In good descriptive writing, strong word choice paints pictures in the reader’s mind. In informational writing, strong word choice clarifies, explains, and expands ideas. In persuasive writing, strong word choice compels the reader to see things clearly and, sometimes to agree with the reader. Effective word choice is characterized not so much by exceptional vocabulary as by the ability to use everyday language naturally and in a fresh or unexpected way.  

Word Choice in Young Writers

What to look for in pictures:
- Striking labels or titles
- Speech (often enclosed in bubbles)
- Language woven into the picture- for example, via signs

What to look for in text:
- Words of any kind
- Words you can read and make sense of
- Words that replace old, tired standards- for example, something other than nice, good, fun, cool, neat, really, very
- Strong verbs- the heart of good writing
- Words that paint a picture
- Sensory words that help you hear, smell, feel, or touch the moment
- A stretch to use a new or unusual word
- The right word at the right moment-for example, “My socks are soggy” (compare wet)


### RSU 21 K-3 Developmental Continuum for Word Choice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>K Standard</th>
<th>Grade 1 Standard</th>
<th>Grade 2 Standard</th>
<th>Grade 3 Standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recognizable words</td>
<td>Uses general or ordinary words</td>
<td>Uses specific words</td>
<td>Words create clear pictures in places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May attempt descriptive words or phrases</td>
<td>Attempts new words but they don't always fit</td>
<td>May borrow interesting words or phrases from literature or environment</td>
<td>Uses some precise nouns and/or strong verbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familiar written language</td>
<td>Uses favorite words correctly</td>
<td>Experiments with precise nouns and/or strong verbs</td>
<td>Uses adjectives effectively- no adjective overload</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picture enhances words or phrases</td>
<td>Attempts to use descriptive or interesting words</td>
<td>Experiments with adjectives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*June 2010*
# Word Choice

## Exemplars for Kindergarten Standard

Exemplars are based on where students should be at the end of the year. Exemplars for Word Choice are only provided for grade level standards K-3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kindergarten Standard</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recognizable words</td>
<td>Boom Boom</td>
<td>The writer uses many recognizable words and repetitively uses a verb to describe an event. Picture enhances words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May attempt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>descriptive words or</td>
<td>Rising Sun</td>
<td>This paper has many recognizable words. The writer uses story language and experiments with descriptive words ('rising high')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phrases</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familiar written</td>
<td>Rice</td>
<td>This piece has many recognizable words. The writer experiments with descriptive words and uses repetition to add expression to her writing. Pictures enhance the writing and are very detailed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>language</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picture enhances</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>words or phrases</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Boom - Sa-Sa - Boom Boom !

The Storm Tock Down The Trees
and Tock Down The Flu For Pozs

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp
Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

3-16-2010
One day the sun was rising high in the sky. And I was playing in my back yard on the swing.
Yuck I do not like rice
but I do like carrots
and a sandwich but
no rice no no no no no
rice yes for samwich
and carrots the end
# Word Choice

## Exemplars for Grade 1 Standard

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 1 Standard</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uses general or ordinary words</td>
<td>Swimming Monkey</td>
<td>The writer uses story language and specific language (scientist’s). The illustrations enhance the story with detail and speech bubbles. Words untypical to grade level (daydreamed, townspeople) make this piece exemplary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempts new words but they don’t always fit</td>
<td>Bella</td>
<td>The writer uses story language and favorite words correctly. The writer uses descriptive words and detailed illustrations to enhance the story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses favorite words correctly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempts to use descriptive or interesting words</td>
<td>Snakes</td>
<td>The writer uses specific descriptive words related to the topic (slither, guide, reptile, venom). Favorite words (snake) are used correctly.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The monkey who could swim #12

one day there was a monkey

and he wanted to learn to swim.

He did not know how to yet.

He daydreamed everyday.
One day some sinists
came to the town. They put
a sign on a tackle swimming pool: Monkey
swimming lessons. And so
he took them.
And so from that day on, all the townspeople then called him:

The Monkey who can swim.
The Dog Named Bella
Once there was a dog, hoo was very well trained. Its name was Bella.
She was acting fun.

One day she had a baby. The baby was very cute.
Bella named coco. The puppy's name was coco. Then they did tricks outside when they got tired. They went to bed.
Snake by S-1

Snakes are a 'cute' of reptile. Snake slither to get around. Some snakes eat bugs or mice. Some snake can glide to tree
Sum snake live in the desert or forest. There are thousands of kinds of snakes. One snake is cold the lizard. One other is cold the rattlesnake. Sum snake are venom. Sum snake live in the
Oshin by rocks. Snake can mole live anywhere on earth. About the author I like snakes. Snake are cool.
# Word Choice

## Exemplars for Grade 2 Standard

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 2 Standard</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May borrow interesting words or phrases from literature or environment</td>
<td>The Mouse &amp; The Tow Truck</td>
<td>Uses specific words &amp; precise nouns (gear shift, tow truck, Karate &amp; Bob). Uses strong verbs (crept &amp; struggled).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiments with precise nouns and/or strong verbs</td>
<td>Mount Washington</td>
<td>Includes specific words &amp; precise nouns (Mt. Washington &amp; characters names). Has strong verbs (chosen, screamed &amp; boarded). Borrows interesting phrases (OMG!). Experiments with adjectives (color words, huge &amp; bumpy).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Adventure

I was going to Mars. I needed air, food, water, a space suit, a rocket, a cup. I got into my rocket and blasted off! I was going into space! When I landed on mars I realized I brought along some items that I didn't need. I had brought a umbrella, a pet, and some hand sanitizer. I met an alien! He was in trouble. His specie was under slavery because of an evil mastermind! We went around freeing the people! Then it was time for us to do the last thing. We went and destroyed the slavery machine 2000! And we defeated the master mind! Then I went back to earth with my own little secret.
One day a mouse kept out of his hole. He found a tow truck. He found a key. He put the key in the slot. Then he tried to start the tow truck. But he couldn't. He struggled with it. Then a man picked the tow truck up. Well the mouse's name was Bob. And he was good at karate.
so he kicked. But he landed on the gear shift. He finely strated the car. But he hurt his foot. Suddenly the car stopped. He had forgot to pull the pedel down.
His foot hurt too much that he went home. Then his mom healed his foot. And that is the End of the story.
Ahhhh! Niky screamed. "We have been chosen to go mountain climbing on Mt. Washington." Omg! said Michie who was on her cell phone. Abby was on her purple bean bag chair. Abby don't sit there! lets pack" said Michie who was the most excited. Niky had brown hair. Her favorite color was green. Abby had black hair. Her favorite color is baby blue. Michie had blond hair. Her favorite color was pink. They
were all packed up. The friends took a taxi to the airport. The plane was a huge white thing. "Wow," said Nitty, "that's a big plane." They boarded the plane. It took hours to get there. When they got there, Abby checked in. They unpacked. "Let's go," said Michelle. When the three friends got there, they hitched up, holding on to the bumpy rocks. It was like holding onto sandpaper. They were up really high. Just then in...
In a blink of an eye Abby's hook snapped. "Ahhhhhhhh" she yelled. Nicky threw her extra rope down just in time. They were stuck they couldn't keep climbing. Just then a helicopter came the people in it saved them. "Yay!" they went back home. Just as some other girls were also getting news of going mounting climbing.
Word Choice

Exemplars for Grade 3 Standard

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 3 Standard</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Words create clear pictures in places Uses some precise nouns and/or strong verbs Uses adjectives effectively- no adjective overload</td>
<td>Being an Anaconda</td>
<td>Uses precise nouns (craving, Anaconda, Brazil &amp; Guinness Book of World Records) and uses strong verbs (slithered&amp; gardening) to create clear pictures. Uses adjectives to enhance the visual imagery (slimy &amp; swampy).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Gift</td>
<td>Uses descriptive words that create a clear picture (“My eyes started swelling…”) Precise nouns and strong verbs are used (fascination, rushed, muttered, running buddy). Uses a good variety of nouns and verbs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Infinite Gift</td>
<td>Uses words to create a clear visual image, including precise nouns, strong verbs, and adjectives (infinite gift, green orb, purple sparks, disintegrating).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Being An Anaconda

By S-14

One morning I woke up and I was a long, fat, slimy anaconda. I slithered through my house and broke the stair way. All
of a sudden I had a craving for rabbits. I went outside and ate a rabbit. I slithered all the way to Los Angeles, California. I slithered down to a swampy area and then went back to the city. I went to Mexico next. In Mexico I slithered through
the desert. Then I found myself in Brazil. I slithered all the way to Brazil!!! I got on a boat and sailed all the way to Spain!!! I didn't last long there. I went to China
next I was set in the Guineas Book Of World Records there. I was the planet's biggest snake. I bite a person there. I went to India next I saw a bunch of people dancing there. I tried to dance to but everyone ran away. I went to Vietnam
next. A bunch of people were gardening there. It was getting late so I went back home. I went up in my bed and hoped that I was going to change back. I woke up the
next morning and I did. The end. About the Author: I like riding my bike.
The Gift

I have a friend named Lydia. She's moving in July and she's very sad and I want to cheer her up. It all started a couple months ago. I had just got to school, and then my other friend Emma rushed over and said "Lydia's moving." I thought just another joke in the morning. I laughed and muttered "yay, right. No your wrong." Emma said upset. She walked back slowly very slow. Lydia turned to me and whispered "I really am moving!" It was so quiet know around could hear. I joke I said quickly. "NO said Lydia. My eyes started swelling up like squeezing a banana and junk comes out yay exactly like that. I even felt like crying because she was my first friend ever in my life well sort of. Lydia was a person who completely loved herself but I can't believe I had fascination in her. When I told my mom she was upset because she and Lydia's mom (Dana) were best running buddies. Now I feel they have no time to be together. She always invites I to slumber parties we always have fun. I can't wait to go to her house and ride to New York City on a train. I'm give my friendship for her and I
Know she will Cheer up.
The Infinite Gift

The last thing I wanted to do was destroy another city. We've moved three times because I was claimed of having "robbed a bank" or "burning a skyscraper". But I swear it wasn't me! It was my lucky black thread. So one day I thought "this thing is ball of threads raid of destruction gotta come to an end some day, right? " So I turned it into a blanket. But then I thought "Wait...I didn't kill it" I thought "I just gave it another body." So then I said "Ahhhh I got other things to think about. Like what my mom said: to make up for what you've done give someone a gift. I didn't know what to give but then it hit me: the universe. and I'd give it to my mom. and I knew just how to get it: the thread. That night I ran outside and threw the blanket up. at first nothing happened except for the blanket hanging in the air. Just then purple sparks were in the air as the universe was disintegrating. a green orb"A.K.A. the universe flew into the blanket. Then I knew the blanket wasn't so bad after all. I ran inside and woke up my mom. "Mom take this" "What is it?" she asked "The universe"

The end