

Try this with your class! Revising Together

There are many areas to consider for revision. For revision to be effective, the teacher should concentrate on the area being taught. For example, if you have just taught a lesson on opening sentences, the students should focus on just this during revision.

Directions:

1. With the class compose a story on either chart paper or the chalkboard. Choose a topic which allows all children to participate. Social studies, science, and current event topics work well.
2. Read and discuss this first draft with your students, drawing attention to these questions:
 - a. Organization: does this paper have a good beginning, middle, and end?
 - b. Ideas: what sentences belong together? Are there any sentences that don't seem to fit into the story?
 - c. Sentence Fluncy/Voice: Can we build one longer sentence out of two shorter ones?
3. Indicate the students' changes by drawing arrows, crossing out, and inserting where appropriate. Emphasize that revision is messy.
4. Recopy the revised story and have the class read it aloud.
5. A variation of this exercise would be to provide students with tape, glue, scissors, colored pens, white-out, etc., for making their own revisions.

Revision Example for the Overhead

First draft:

THE GROUNDHOG

A groundhog is a small, furry animal. He looks for his shadow once a year. Woodchuck is another name for groundhog. The day he comes out is February 2. If he sees his shadow there are six more weeks of winter. A groundhog lives in a burrow. A groundhog sleeps all winter.

Second draft:

THE GROUNDHOG AND HIS DAY

A groundhog is a small, furry animal. A groundhog lives in a burrow. A groundhog sleeps all winter. Woodchuck is another name for groundhog. He looks for his shadow once a year. The day he comes out is February 2. If he sees his shadow there are six more weeks of winter.

Third draft:

THE GROUNDHOG AND HIS SHADOW

A groundhog is a small, furry, brown animal that sleeps in a burrow all winter. Woodchuck is another name for groundhog.

This little animal comes out of his burrow on February 2. If he sees his shadow, there are six more weeks of winter. If he doesn't see it, it is time for spring.

--Mrs. Russell's 4th grade