Improving your writing by:
- Adding adjectives
- Adding adverbs
- Adding prepositional phrases
- Replacing verbs
- Combining sentences

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Add adjectives to describe a
person, place, or thing.

*Left* and *rear* are
adjectives. They describe
the word *wheel*.

The wheel came loose.

The *left, rear* wheel came loose.
Great: wonderful, stupendous, prodigious, admirable, terrific, super-duper, exceptional, awesome, first-class, marvelous

Find lots of interesting words!
Which adjectives would you choose to improve the following sentence?

The dog barked at the cat.

scruffy  black  fluffy  solid  portly  calico
hound  hunting  friendly  evil  pesky  rugged
boisterous  loud  rambunctious  tan  tiny
List five adjectives that might describe each of the following.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Washington DC</th>
<th>a tree house</th>
<th>your best friend</th>
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<tbody>
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Revise each sentence below by adding adjectives.

1. The **insect** mosquito stung me.
2. The **skilled** builder nailed the boards together.
3. The leaves of the **corn** plants rustled in the wind.
4. The worker at the end of the **assembly line** packaged the games.
Add adverbs to tell how or when the action is done.

*Never and loudly are adverbs. They tell when and how Rover barked.*

Rover barked.

Rover *never* barked *loudly.*
Look up one ordinary word.

now: immediately, straightaway, at this time, directly, at once, promptly, on the double, pronto

Hint: Use a thesaurus to find interesting adverbs, too.

Find lots of interesting words!
Which adverbs would you choose to improve the following sentence?

My baby brother talked and chewed his food.

never quickly neatly now actively happily afterwards soon slurpily independently rudely sloppily concurrently
List five adverbs that might describe each of the following actions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>talking</th>
<th>racing</th>
<th>planting</th>
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</table>
Revise each sentence below by adding adverbs.

1. I sang.  
2. Please carry this box to the basement.  
3. The tractor-trailer rounded the curve.  
4. Jill and Bret argued about who would get to try the new game first.
Add prepositional phrases to give more information.

*On my uncle’s house* is a prepositional phrase. It adds important information to the sentence.

The tree fell.

The tree fell *on my uncle’s house.*
Hint:
There are many prepositions that you can use to begin a prepositional phrase. Here are some of them.

in  of  for  on  since  with  from  between  after  across  behind  after  during  following  into  under  through  toward  without  over
Which prepositional phrases would you choose to improve the following sentence?

He found his shoe.

after the game  under the table
in the laundry basket during a time out
in his brother’s room on the roof
in the trunk behind the garage
before gym class in his sock drawer
Write a prepositional phrase that begins with each of these prepositions.

- under
- after
- into
- before
Revise each sentence below by adding prepositional phrases.

1. The lion prowled.
2. The plane flew.
3. I raised my hand.
4. Barry strolled but JoJo sprinted.
Replace common verbs with more specific ones.

*Serenaded* is a more specific verb than *sang*.

Ryan sang.

Ryan serenaded Josie with a romantic ballad.
Look up one ordinary word.

sing: warble, whistle, harmonize, chant, serenade, belt out, croon, chirp, vocalize

Find lots of interesting words!

Hint: This is another good time to use a thesaurus.
Which verb would you choose to replace the ordinary verb in the following sentence?

Nettie said, “Are we there yet?”

asked yelled whispered complained
questioned announced responded repeated
mentioned answered told communicated
List one more interesting verb to replace each common verb below.

talk    yell
call    run
write   carry
say     build
Revise each sentence below by replacing common verbs with more specific ones.

1. The farmer **worked** in the field.
2. Mom **cooked** me a special birthday cake.
3. I **washed** the dog and then I **fixed** my bike.
4. I **said** the answer.
Combine simple sentences to make longer, more interesting ones.

*Because* is a conjunction that is used to combine sentences.

My backpack was heavy. I sat down to rest.

I sat down to rest *because* my backpack was heavy.
Here are some conjunctions that you can use to combine sentences.

**Coordinating Conjunctions**
for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so

**Subordinating Conjunctions**
because, since, when, if, after, before, unless, until, while (and there are more)
How would you combine the following sentences?

I took my driver’s test. I didn’t get my license yet.
List five coordinating conjunctions and five subordinating conjunctions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coordinating Conjunctions</th>
<th>Subordinating Conjunctions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
1. The frog jumped. The snake slithered.
2. Tom slid into home. Bill caught the ball.
3. I bought a new cell phone. I didn’t buy a new service plan.
4. It thundered. I ran inside.
Revise each sentence below in whatever way you think makes it sound the best.

1. The cricket chirped.
2. I did my homework. I washed the dishes.
3. Zack walked to the store.
4. I sang.
Now you know five ways to revise and expand your sentences . . .

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It’s time to try using them in your own writing!
More Resources from Classroom in the Middle

PowerPoint Presentations
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The Writing Process
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Analogies
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Puzzles
And more

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