

Activity Plan to Guide Peer Response



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Aim: To utilize active verbs in our writing.

Motivation: Which sentence works better and why?

- A. The sun crawled across our faces as the car sped into Port-au-Prince.
- B. It was afternoon when we got to Port-au-Prince.

Presentation: Discuss the value of active verbs in creating strong images.

Note that the Haitian American author Edwidge Danticat capitalizes on the strength of the verb “crawled” to paint a picture of the scene and the contrasting verb “sped” to tap into the hustle and bustle of city life.

Ask students to brainstorm a list of the verbs most frequently used in adolescent conversation. Write them on the board. (to be, to get, to have, to do, etc.)

In small groups, students will have one minute to generate more active verbs that might express the same meaning. They will write these verbs on the board. (alternatives to “be” include to live, to breathe, to exist, to occupy, to think, to believe, etc.)

The class will discuss the merits of using one verb over the other and generate sentences that would feature the strength of the verbs.

Guided practice: Students will draft a sample paragraph advertising Homecoming Week activities using active verbs and read them aloud to the class.

Closure: As a writer, how do you decide which verb will work best for you?