

The Devil's in The Details

- Course Activity Description
 - My students take vague, bland sentences and transform them into specific, detailed versions that provide concise, useful information. In groups, they work together to create not just specific sentences using creative situations of their choosing, but that together tell a cohesive narrative. Then, each group reads three sentences aloud and we discuss the strengths and areas of improvement.
- Rationale
 - This activity builds student confidence in their own writing. My students often describe a lack of creativity in past writing classrooms, and by giving them that freedom they become personally invested.
 - They practice rhetorically strong writing by using specific, vivid language and an entertaining narrative. This also scaffolds students for their literary narrative, in which they must balance rhetorically strong analysis and reflection of their own writing practices and ideas with telling an engaging narrative. Through this process they learn from one another's strengths and weaknesses.
 - Finally, it builds group work skills! They learn how to write in diverse ways, as well as how to communicate varying or conflicting ideas about the structure and creative direction of their stories.
- Student Learning Experiences
 - The best part of the experience is my student's excitement to share their narrative sentences. I've had students chase me down because they had that one sentence they didn't get to share.
 - The biggest challenge is getting full investment. While most students are excited, some feel intimidated by the idea of having to tell a story.
- Strategies for Revising the Activity
 - Providing a few optional scenarios for students who are intimidated by the premise of writing a mini narrative could help them feel more comfortable in writing creatively!