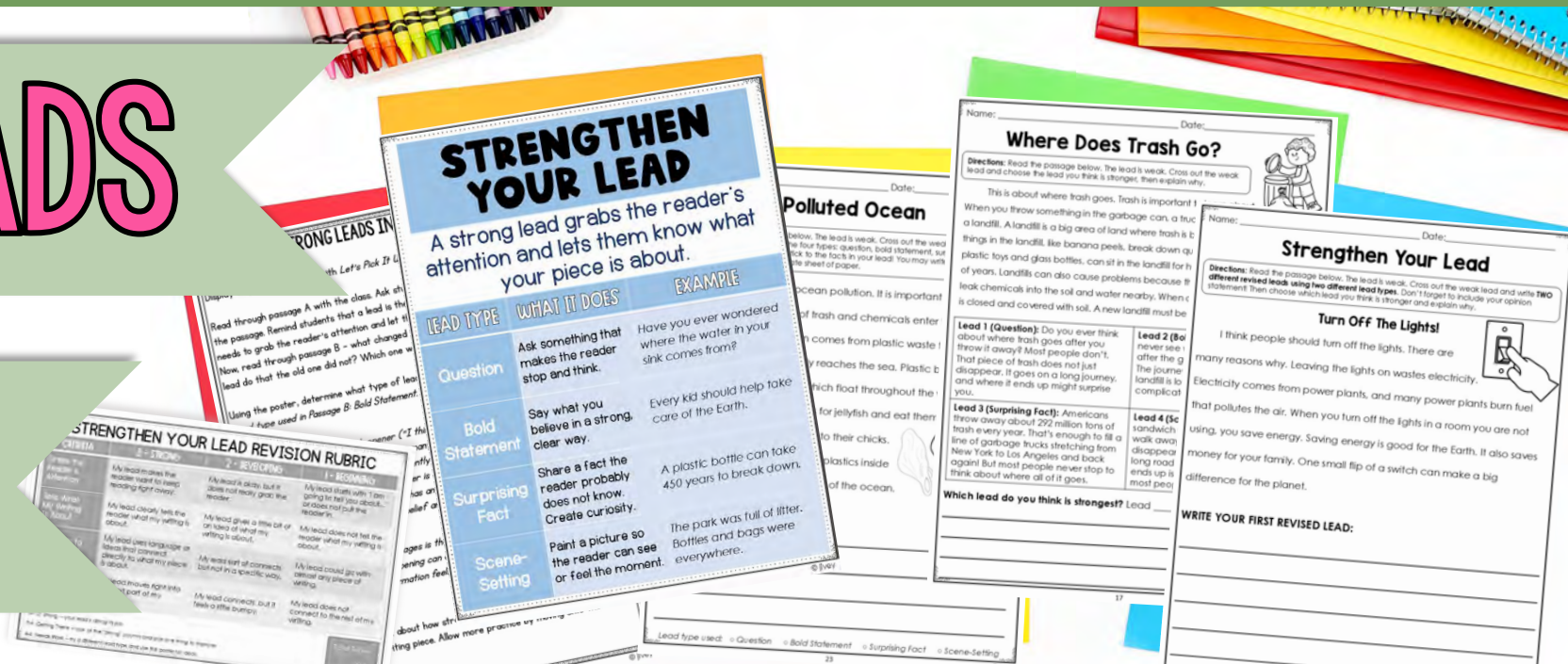


WRITE ON!

STRONG LEADS

GRADES 2-3



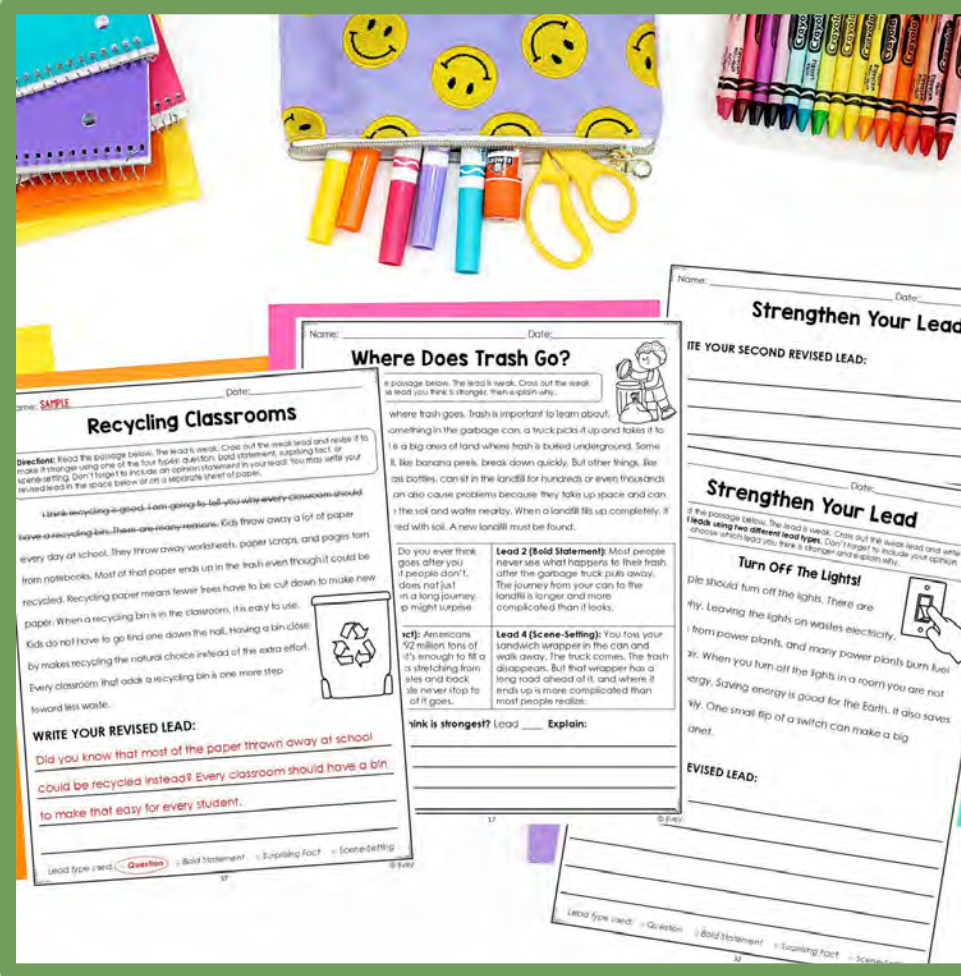
Model-Based Revision Practice
For Informative & Opinion Writing Genres



TEACHING REVISION

Revision is one of the hardest writing skills to teach because “make it better” is not a strategy. Students need to know what to look for, what to change, and what a stronger version actually looks like. Research on writing instruction is clear: students revise more effectively when they are taught specific, named strategies with **models and guided practice**. Analyzing a model helps students recognize what skilled writers do.

WHY USE THIS RESOURCE?



This resource teaches students to **revise weak leads** using one of four named types: **question, bold statement, surprising fact, and scene-setting**. Students first study the difference between a weak and a strong lead in model passages, then practice writing their own across three scaffolded activities. The goal is not to produce one correct lead. It is to help students understand that there are multiple strong ways to open a piece of writing, and that choosing deliberately is part of the craft.

INFORMATIVE & OPINION

This resource covers the revision strategy in both informational and opinion writing. The lead works differently in each genre, and students need to see and practice that difference. An informational lead draws the reader in with curiosity about facts and ideas. An opinion lead pulls the reader toward a point of view. Practicing the skill in both genres separately is recommended.



WHAT'S INCLUDED?

Each genre section begins with a **Notice activity**. Students see two versions of the same passage side by side: Notice (A) with a weak, formulaic lead, and Notice (B) with a strong one. The body of both passages is identical. Only the lead changes. This is intentional. Keeping the body the same lets students focus on exactly one thing: what the writer changed, and why it works better.

Exploration Phase

This lesson will enable students to notice and compare the difference between a weak lead and a strong lead in two versions of the same passage. This helps students recognize what a strong lead looks like and analyze what makes it effective.

Application Phase

Move from exploration to application, where students use what they've learned. This resource includes activities for students to write TWO different leads for the same passage using different lead types, then evaluate which is stronger and explain why. This builds decision-making skills, not just writing skills. Use these ideas to extend application:

Lead Swap: Students trade their two leads with a partner. Each partner reads both leads and picks the one they think is stronger, then explains their reasoning. Compare: Did the writer and the reader agree?

Lead Gallery Walk: Post student-written leads around the room (without names). Students walk around with sticky notes and mark leads they would want to keep reading. Discuss patterns in what made certain leads effective.

Lead Revision in Current Drafts: Have students go back to a draft they have already written and revise only the lead. They should try at least two different lead types before choosing one.

EXPLORE STRONG LEADS IN INFORMATIONAL WRITING

Display or provide students with *Clean Water* - Notice (A) and (B).

Read through passage A with the class. Ask students to share what they notice about the passage. Remind students that a lead is the first thing the reader sees, so it needs to grab the reader's attention and let them know what your piece is about. Now, read through passage B - what changed from passage A? What does this new lead do that the old one did not? Which one wants to make you keep reading?

Using the poster, determine what type of lead was used. Discuss the changes:
Lead type used in Passage B: Scene-Setting.

The new lead creates a picture the reader can see right away, which pulls them in before the information begins. The lead in passage A, "This is about how animals need clean water," tells the reader the topic, but gives them no reason to care about it yet. Passage B's lead does both: it shows the problem and makes the reader feel something.

Notice that the body of both passages is the same. The only difference is the lead. This shows how much a strong opening can change the way a reader experiences a piece of writing.

Encourage students to think about how strong leads engage the reader from the start and introduce the writing piece. Allow more practice by moving onto the Application Activities. Remind students that informational writing explains, describes, or reports. It does not persuade or tell readers what they should do or think. When writing leads, stick to the facts. If your statement can be verified, it's not a belief. It's a fact!

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

STRONG LEADS APPLICATION ACTIVITIES:

Activity 1: Choose a Lead

Students read a passage and evaluate four pre-written leads, one of each type. All four are genuinely strong. Students choose the one they think is strongest and explain their reasoning. The goal is not finding one right answer. It is building the habit of reading leads critically and naming what makes one more effective than another.

Activity 2: Write Two Leads and Choose One

Students write two leads for the same passage using two different lead types, then compare them and explain which is stronger. This is where evaluation becomes production.

Activity 3: Revise With a Strong Lead

Students cross out a weak lead and use what they've learned to write one strong replacement.

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

INFORMATIVE
APPLICATION:
Three activities
per genre move
students from
exploration to
independence.

Name: SAMPLE Date: _____

Where Does Trash Go?

Directions: Read the passage below. The lead is weak. Cross out the weak lead and choose the lead you think is stronger, then explain why.

This is about where trash goes. Trash is important to learn about.

When you throw something in the garbage can, a truck picks it up and takes it to a landfill. A landfill is a big area of land where trash is buried underground. Some things in the landfill, like banana peels, break down quickly. But other things, like plastic, remain for a long time in the landfill. Landfills are even the source of some bad smells and gases. These gases can be dangerous because they take up space and can leak chemicals into the soil and water nearby. When a landfill fills up completely, it is closed and covered with soil. A new landfill must be found.

Lead 1 (Question): Do you ever think about where trash goes? It will never disappear. That piece of trash does not just disappear. It goes on a long journey, and where it ends up might surprise you.

Lead 2 (Bold Statement): Most people never think about where trash goes. After the truck takes the trash away, the journey from your can to the landfill is longer and more complicated than it looks.

Lead 3 (Scene-Setting): If you are a sandwich wrapper, it can be a long walk away. The trash can is a long walk away. But that wrapper has a long road ahead of it, and where it ends up is more complicated than most people realize.

What lead do you think is stronger? (SAMPLE ANSWER: LEAD 2) Accept reasonable answers. The explanation should identify something specific about what the lead does not just say "it sounded good" or "it was interesting."

Name: SAMPLE Date: _____

Strengthen Your Lead

Directions: Read the passage below. The lead is weak. Cross out the weak lead and write TWO different revised leads using two different lead types. Make sure to stick to the facts! Then choose which lead you think is stronger and explain why.

Trees Help Our Planet

I am going to tell you about trees. Trees are important. There are many things to know about trees. Trees give us the air we breathe. They also give animals a place to live. Trees help keep the air clean. They give us shade. Inside tree trunks, away from the sun, there is a special place called the cambium. It gives trees the strength to grow. It also makes paper. A small amount of carbon dioxide from the air goes into the cambium. What if every tree on Earth disappeared? There would be no oxygen for the people and animals on Earth.

Lead type used: ☐ Question ☐ Bold Statement ☒ Surprising Fact ☐ Scene-Setting

Which lead is stronger? Explain your thinking:

I think the first lead is stronger because it makes you imagine a world without trees, which makes you realize how much we need them before you even read the facts.

Name: SAMPLE Date: _____

Polluted Ocean

Directions: Read the passage below. The lead is weak. Cross out the weak lead and revise it to make it stronger using one of the four types: question, bold statement, surprising fact, or scene-setting. Don't forget to stick to the facts in your lead! You may write your revised lead in the space below or on a separate sheet of paper.

This is about how polluted the ocean is. It is important to know.

Every year, millions of tons of trash and chemicals enter the world's oceans. A lot of this pollution comes from plastic waste that washes off the shore and ends up in the ocean. Plastic waste breaks into small pieces called microplastics, which float throughout the water. Sea turtles mistake plastic bags for jellyfish and eat them. Scientists have even found microplastics inside animals living in the deepest parts of the ocean.

What if every piece of plastic that was ever made disappeared? The ocean is huge, but pollution is reaching every part of it. Humans are changing what life in the ocean looks like.

Lead type used: ☐ Question ☒ Bold Statement ☐ Surprising Fact ☐ Scene-Setting

-ANSWER KEYS & SAMPLES PROVIDED-

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

OPINION
APPLICATION:
Three activities
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Name: **SAMPLE** Date: _____

Germ Fountains

Directions: Read the passage below. The lead is weak. Cross out the weak lead and choose the lead you think is stronger, then explain why.

I think schools should have water bottle filling stations. Water fountains are old and sometimes contain germs. Some kids do not even want to drink from them. A water bottle filling station lets kids fill up their own water bottles with clean water. When kids drink more water, they can feel better. Kids who fill up their water bottles at school can go home with a full water bottle. They can bring a reusable bottle from home instead.

Lead 1 (Surprising Fact): Studies show that water fountains are old and sometimes contain germs. Some kids do not even want to drink from them. A water bottle filling station lets kids fill up their own water bottles with clean water. When kids drink more water, they can feel better. Kids who fill up their water bottles at school can go home with a full water bottle. They can bring a reusable bottle from home instead.

Lead 2 (Bold Statement): Old water fountains belong in the past. Every school should have a water bottle filling station that lets students clean water and help cut down on plastic waste at the same time.

Lead 3 (Surprising Fact): Studies show that water fountains are old and sometimes contain germs. Some kids do not even want to drink from them. A water bottle filling station lets kids fill up their own water bottles with clean water. When kids drink more water, they can feel better. Kids who fill up their water bottles at school can go home with a full water bottle. They can bring a reusable bottle from home instead.

Lead 4 (Scene-Setting): The lead of the water bottle filling station and half of the class are still waiting away without drinking. Nobody wants to put their mouth that close. Schools can do better, and they should.

Which lead do you think is stronger? (SAMPLE ANSWER: Lead 2. I accept reasonable answers. The explanation should identify something specific about what the lead does, not just say "it sounded good" or "it was interesting.")

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Name: **SAMPLE** Date: _____

Strengthen Your Lead

Directions: Read the passage below. The lead is weak. Cross out the weak lead and write TWO different revised leads using two different lead types. Don't forget to include your opinion statement. Then choose which lead you think is stronger and explain why.

Turn Off The Lights!

I think people should turn off the lights. There are many reasons why. Leaving the lights on wastes electricity. Electricity costs money. Leaving the lights on pollutes the environment. Using you save money. Leaving the lights on makes a difference for the planet, or a lot of money. It makes a real difference.

Strengthen Your Lead

WRITE YOUR SECOND REVISED LEAD:

You walk out of a room and leave the light on behind you. It seems like nothing, but it adds up when millions of people do it every single day.

Lead type used: ☐ Question ☐ Bold Statement ☐ Surprising Fact ☒ Scene-Setting

Which lead is stronger? Explain your thinking:

I think the second lead is stronger because it makes you picture yourself leaving the light on, which makes you realize you might do this too. It makes the problem feel real before it tells you what to do about it.

Accept reasonable answers. Students may prefer either lead as long as they explain why. Lead 1 is stronger because it makes you realize you might do this too. It makes the problem feel real before it tells you what to do about it.

Name: **SAMPLE** Date: _____

Recycling Classrooms

Directions: Read the passage below. The lead is weak. Cross out the weak lead and revise it to make it stronger using one of the four types: question, bold statement, surprising fact, or scene-setting. Don't forget to include an opinion statement in your lead! You may write your revised lead in the space below or on a separate sheet of paper.

Every classroom should have a recycling bin. There are many reasons. Kids throw away a lot of paper every day at school. They throw away worksheets, paper scraps, and pages from old books. When a recycling bin is in the classroom, it is easy to use. Kids do not have to go find one down the hall. Having a bin close by makes it easy to recycle. Recycling paper means fewer trees have to be cut down to make new paper. When a recycling bin is in the classroom, it is easy to use.

Recycling Classrooms

Did you know that most of the paper thrown away at school could be recycled instead? Every classroom should have a bin to make that easy for every student.

Lead type used: ☒ Question ☐ Bold Statement ☐ Surprising Fact ☐ Scene-Setting

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-ANSWER KEYS & SAMPLES PROVIDED-

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

BEFORE YOU

BEFORE YOU PUBLISH...

✓ CHECK YOUR LEAD!

BEFORE YOU PUBLISH...

✓ CHECK YOUR LEAD!

- ☐ Does my lead grab the reader's attention?
- ☐ Does my lead tell the reader what the piece is about?
- ☐ Does my lead connect to the content of the piece?
- ☐ Did I use language specific to the topic of my piece?

BEFORE YOU PUBLISH...

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STRENGTHEN YOUR LEAD

A strong lead grabs the reader's attention

STRENGTHEN YOUR LEAD

A strong lead grabs the reader's attention and lets them know what your piece is about.

LEAD TYPE	WHAT IT DOES	EXAMPLE
Question	Ask something that makes the reader stop and think.	Have you ever wondered where the water in your sink comes from?
Bold Statement	Say what you believe in a strong, clear way.	Every kid should help take care of the Earth.
Surprising Fact	Share a fact the reader probably does not know. Create curiosity.	A plastic bottle takes 450 years to break down.
Scene-Setting	Paint a picture so the reader can see or feel the moment.	The park was full of litter. Bottles and bags were everywhere.

STRENGTHEN YOUR LEAD REVISION RUBRIC

CRITERIA	3 - STRONG	2 - DEVELOPING	1 - BEGINNING
Grabs the Reader's Attention	My lead makes the reader want to keep reading right away.	My lead is okay, but it doesn't really grab.	My lead starts with "I am going to tell you about..." or does not pull the reader in.
Tells What My Writing Is About	My lead clearly tells the reader what my writing is about.	My lead gives a little bit of an idea of what my writing is about.	My lead does not tell the reader what my writing is about.
Connects to the Content	My lead uses language or ideas that connect directly to what my piece is about.	My lead sort of connects, but not in a specific way.	My lead could go with almost any piece of writing.
Flows Into the Rest	My lead moves right into the next part of writing.	My lead connects, but it feels a little bumpy.	My lead does not connect to the rest of my writing.

Scoring Guide

10-12: Strong – your lead is doing its job.
7-9: Getting There – look at the "Strong" column and ask: what am I missing?
4-6: Needs Work – try a different lead type and use the poster for ideas.

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TOOLS AND CLASSROOM SUPPORT

SAVE WITH THE BUNDLE!

WRITE ON!
Model-Based Revision Practice For
Informative & Opinion Writing Genres

**BUNDLE FOR
GRADES 2-3**

least by jivey

SKILLS COVERED IN THE BUNDLE:

- Strengthen Your Lead
- Write a Conclusion That Does More Than Repeat
- Support It with Proof
- Explain Your Evidence (The “So What?” Sentence)
- Use Transitions That Match Your Structure
- Replace Vague Words with Specific Ones
- Vary Your Sentence Beginnings
- Cut the Clutter