

Step Up to Writing Strategy Spotlight



Analyzing a Paragraph (Strategy 10-9 in the Step Up Manual, Tool 10-9a)

Asking students to analyze their own paragraphs is made easier by using the Analyzing a Paragraph strategy. Provide students with a copy of Tool 10-9a or give one large sticky note to each student. Younger students should do only one or two categories at a time; older or more capable writers can revise based on multiple categories.

Other paragraph or essay issues to analyze:

Type of sentence (declarative, imperative, exclamatory, interrogative)

Sentence Variety from strategy 3-11 (Where or When + What's Happening; Number; And But, or So; However; A Few Good Prepositions; Compare/Contrast; Rhetorical Questions; Occasion/Position, etc.)

Transition words

Adequate elaboration (examples, evidence, expert opinion, explanation, experiences, events)

<u>1st Word</u>	<u># Words</u>	<u>Verb</u>	<u>Descriptive</u>
1. The	1. 7	1. show	1. big
2. I	2. 5	2. saw	2. helpful
3. I	3. 9	3. want	3. red, blue
4. Some	4. 7	4. consider	4. n/a
5. Then	5. 8	5. wish	5. many
6. I	6. 7	6. want	6. awesome
7. If	7. 9	7. help	7. n/a

Begin by having students write down the first word of the first sentence, followed by the first word of each subsequent sentence. Look for patterns. If the same word was used to begin more than two sentences, challenge students to revise the sentences.

Next, teach students to count and record the number of words in the first sentence, followed by the number of words in each remaining sentence. Look for variety, and if lacking, challenge students to vary the length of their sentences when they revise.

Third, record the verbs for each sentence and challenge students to replace passive "to be" verbs with action or strong verbs. Finally, have students check each sentence for descriptive vocabulary. After students tally their word choices, provide guidance about needed revisions to young or novice writers. More experienced writers can self- or peer-edit and recommend revisions.

You decide which categories are most important! Customize Tool 10-9a to meet your students' needs or "stick" to sticky notes to make your own categories.