

SENTENCE MODELING – IMITATION

Sentence modeling is a technique used to encourage students to use variety and complexity in their sentence structures.

Procedures:

1. Write this sentence on the board, underlining as shown.

“This is a snail shell, full, round, and glossy as a horse chestnut.” -Anne Lindbergh

2. Ask the students to substitute each underlined word or phrase with other words that perform the same function in the sentence.
3. Compare the student’s sentences and show them these examples.

“This is a waterbed, cool and sloshy as a bowl of jello.”

“ This is a book’s cover, mysterious and subtle as a secret passage.”

“ This is a hot-air balloon, colorful and fat as a circus big top.

4. This exercise can be extended by using sentences from any text. Select your quotes to emphasize the syntactic device you want to teach.

Some quotes to get you started:

The wretched prisoners huddling in the stinking cages of the lock-ups, the grey, cowed faces of the long-term convicts, the scarred buttocks of the men who had been flogged with bamboos—all these oppressed me with an intolerable sense of guilt.

—George Orwell, “Shooting an Elephant”

The faster the plane, the narrower the seats. —John H. Durrell

Rather than love, than money, than fame, give me truth. —Henry David Thoreau

It is better to break sod as a serf than to lord it over all the exhausted dead. —Homer

Let every nation know, whether it wished us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty. —John F. Kennedy

Though they are close together—separated by only a few blocks—the two neighborhoods could be in different countries. —John Kenneth Galbraith

It is good to be old early: to have the fragility and sensitivity of the old, and a bit of wisdom, before the years of planning and building have run out. —Martin Gumbert