

Elaboration Module

Series of Lessons



- Defining Elaboration
- Asking the Questions that Lead to Elaboration
- Recognizing Elaboration
- Show, Don't Tell
- Specific, Concrete Details versus General Language
- Elaboration within Sentences
- Layering -- Elaboration Using Multiple Sentences
- Criteria for Assessment

■ ASKING QUESTIONS THAT LEAD TO ELABORATION

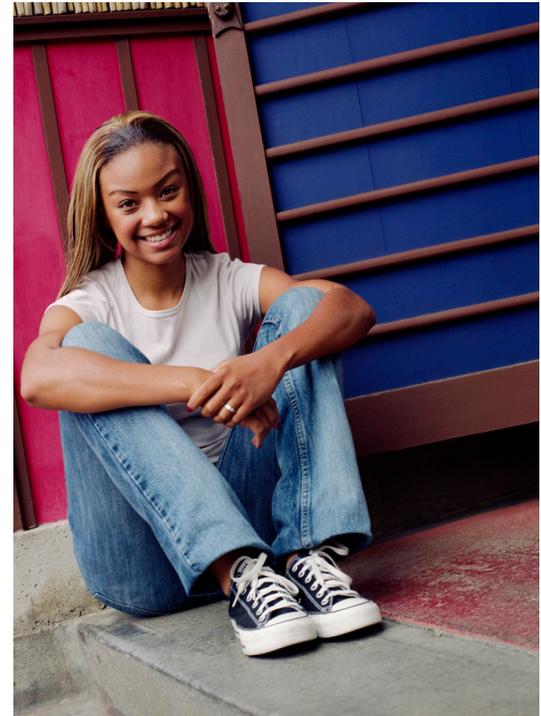
Lesson 2



Elaboration answers questions for the reader.

What problems?

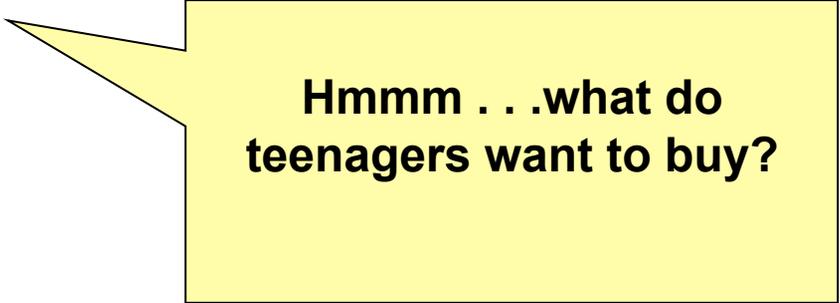
Teenagers have problems.



Lesson 2

Elaboration answers questions for the reader.

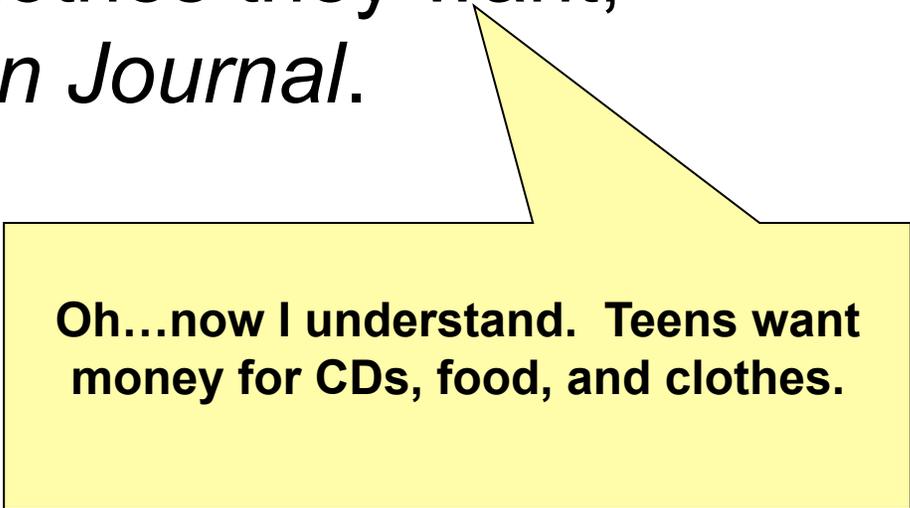
- Teenagers have problems. For example, teens don't always have enough money to buy what they want.



Hmmm . . .what do teenagers want to buy?

Elaboration answers questions for the reader.

- Teenagers have problems. For example, 80% of teens don't always have enough money to buy CD's, food for after school, and the kind of clothes they want, according to *Teen Journal*.



Oh...now I understand. Teens want money for CDs, food, and clothes.

Elaboration answers questions for the reader.

Turn to your partner and add even more elaboration to the previous slide. Discuss what kind of CDs, food, and clothes teens may want to buy.

Think about who will read what you write. What information will help them understand your idea/argument more clearly?

Elaboration answers questions for the reader.

Perhaps your samples sounded like this.

Teenagers have problems. For example, 80% of teens don't always have enough money to buy CD's, like the new CD from Clutch, snack and junk food for after school, and the kind of clothes they want like expensive jeans from Abercrombie and Fitch, according to *Teen Journal*.

Lesson 2

Partner Practice

Think about an activity, a sport, or a class you believe should be offered to the students at school. Write a multiple-paragraph letter to the principal persuading him or her why this activity, sport, or class should be available.

- After reading the paragraph on the next slide, taken from a 7th grade WASL paper, write questions that you would need answered to understand what class the writer is proposing. What do you want to know more about? What do you wish the writer would have told you?
- Discuss your questions with your classmates.

Lesson 2

Huh?! I want to know

I wonder if this paper is going to be about affirmative action or women's rights?

Sounds like their school has some problems with how kids interact – too bad!

... should all have equal rights and should be treated the same; not looking down on those who are younger than us.

I'm curious what kind of teasing she's talking about? Pranks or really bad stuff. . .

Eighth and ninth graders and don't give them the respect they want to be given.

Media?? MEDIA? I wonder if this is like a newspaper class. This threw me off. . . I hope she explains.

... the seventh grade students should be given a collective "Media."

Lesson 2

Your Turn

- Think about the questions you discussed on the previous slide.
- Rewrite that paragraph from the previous slide using elaboration strategies from Lesson One. Include information that the reader wants and needs to know. Make up any information you need in order to elaborate effectively for your principal.

[See student sample - Media Class](#)

Elaboration Module

Series of Lessons



Defining Elaboration



Asking the Questions that Lead to Elaboration



Recognizing Elaboration



Show, Don't Tell



Specific, Concrete Details versus General Language



Elaboration within Sentences



Layering -- Elaboration Using Multiple Sentences



Criteria for Assessment

RECOGNIZING ELABORATION

Lesson 3



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Where is the elaboration?

The main reason I love Halloween is the candy. Oh my gosh, it's like heaven—even for big kids. What I'm trying to say is that my mom lets me collect and eat all the mini candy bars, fruity treats, and sour chewies that I can. When I get to heaven, it will have all those kinds of candy. Last year, I was running out the door at 5:30, pillowcase in hand, hitting the houses in my neighborhood with my friend Steven. You might not believe it, but I got 237 individual servings of candy, and it was my highest record yet. I figure at 20 pieces a day it will take me 12 days to polish it all off. There's nothing better than candy if you're a kid.

Lesson 3

Where is the elaboration?

- What I'm trying to say is that my mom lets me collect and eat all the mini candy bars, fruity treats, and sour chewies that I can.

– DEFINE

The writer is attempting to define how getting candy on Halloween is like heaven.



Where is the elaboration?

- Last year, I was running out the door at 5:30, pillowcase in hand, hitting the houses in my neighborhood with my friend Steven.

- ANECDOTE

The writer is including a bit of a narrative story with personal experience to make his point about how he was going to get candy.



Where is the elaboration?

- You might not believe it but I got 237 individual servings of candy, and it was my highest record yet. I figure at 20 pieces a day it will take me 12 days to polish it all off.

– STATISTICS

- The writer is making up or remembering statistics that make his point about getting a large amount of candy.



Recognizing Elaboration

- If you can find elaboration strategies in someone else's writing, you become more aware of them.
- If you are more aware of them, you will become more thoughtful about threading it into your writing to. . .

TELL THE READER MORE.



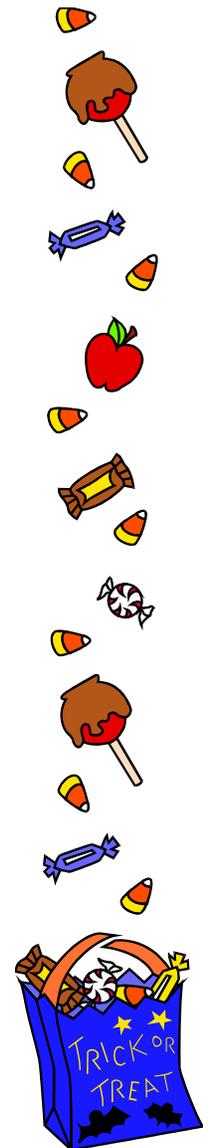
Recognizing Elaboration with a Partner

- The following paragraphs are also about Halloween. With your class divided into small groups, mark the types of elaboration on each of the four paragraphs.

[See student sample - Halloween paragraphs](#)

- Discuss what kinds of elaboration are effective? Easy to recognize?

Lesson 3



Your Turn

- Find the types of elaboration in the following paragraph written about adding a home economics class to the school curriculum.

[See student sample - Home Economics](#)



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□ SHOW, DON'T TELL

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Show, don't tell.

- What is the difference between these two sentences? Which one is better and why?
- A. The room was a mess.
- B. Rumpled bedspread, piled up clothes, and jumbled dresser greeted me as I pushed my way into the room.

Definition of *Telling* and *Showing*

- *Telling* is the use of broad generalizations.
- *Showing* is the use of details, facts, statistics, examples, anecdotes, quotations, dialogue – *elaboration*– to develop, persuade, explain, or enliven a story.

Show with Description

- **White shirts are dumb.**



- **White shirts are hard to clean, show pizza stains, and make you look like a waiter in a cheesy restaurant.**

Lesson 4

Telling vs. Showing 1

There are many fascinating things to see at the Farmer's Market, which has been around for a long time.

Rows of tangerines, crisp red apples, long purple eggplants, and succulent strawberries invite the shopper to stop at every farmer's stand. Many of the farmers in the Farmers' Market have sold their home-grown vegetables and fruits since the early 1900's when the market was the only place to buy fresh food in the city. Now the market has expanded to include bakeries, funky antique stores, and a comic book vendor. The market is a visual feast for tourists and a keepsake for our town.

Telling vs. Showing 2

The Beatles started a new trend in music in the mid-sixties.

For many Americans the evening of February 9, 1964, was a turning point in musical history. On this evening the Beatles made their debut in America on the Ed Sullivan television show. Kathi Anderson, then sixteen in Chicago, remembers, “My friends and I sat shaking and hugging each other on the couch in my living room as the Fab Four bounced out onto the stage. Their shaggy hair shook as they sang ‘I Want to Hold Your Hand’ and ‘She Loves You’ with an energy and sound we’d never heard before. We were instantly and forever in love.” That night the British Invasion, as it was called, began.

Telling vs. Showing 3

The Seattle Sonics, led by Ray Allen, won Friday's game.

The Seattle Sonics game against the Minneapolis Timberwolves on Friday night ended with the Sonics beating the Timberwolves 107-102 in overtime. Ray Allen, the Sonics' star, struggled all night with his shot, but he ended up scoring 32 points for the game. Allen averages 31.5 points per game. According to the *City Daily News*, "Allen was 7-for-24 from the field in regulation, but went 3-for-4 in overtime, including two 3-pointers, and scored all but two of Seattle's points in the extra five minutes." With that win, Seattle won the first game of the new season.

Telling vs. Showing 4

Manastash Field is dangerous.

Manastash Soccer Field has caused more injuries to players than any other in the valley according to Tony Vela, the director of the North Valley Soccer Association. “The field is nothing more than sand and hard clay. Clouds of dust explode into the air when players kick the ball. My players say it’s hard to see and breathe. When they fall, they end up with bloody shins.” Vela called upon the North Valley Parks Department to spend its money on fixing fields rather than on useless advertising.

Lesson 4

Some General Sentences

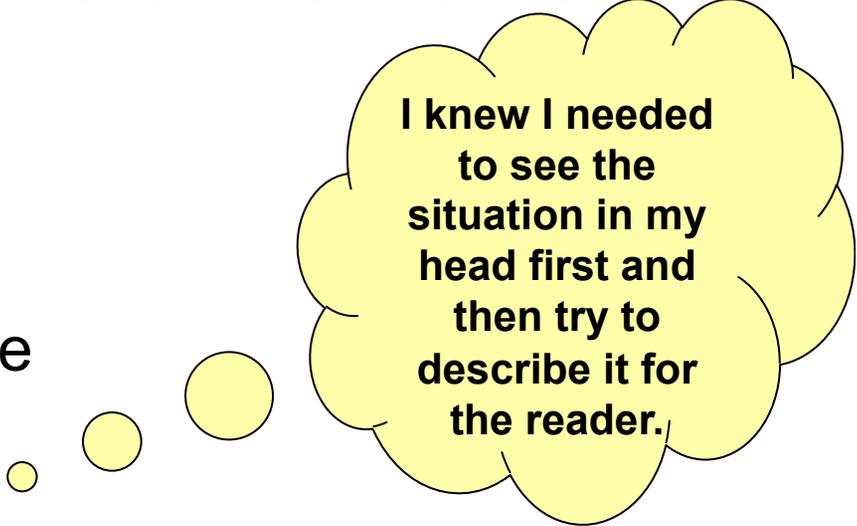
With a partner, discuss how to make these sentences show, rather than tell.

**The man in the car was angry.
I was tired last night.
The pizza was delicious.
The car was filthy.**

Pick two and rewrite them on your own.

Not So General Sentences

Each group should select one revision from the previous slide to share with the class.



I knew I needed to see the situation in my head first and then try to describe it for the reader.

[See student samples - General vs. Specific](#)

[Reflections HS](#)

[Reflections MS](#)

Lesson 4

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Reflections



Lesson 4

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Your Turn

- Think back to the examples from the Beatles, the Farmers' Market, Ray Allen, and the Manastash Soccer Field. Discuss with your partner which example appealed most to you. Why?
- Which example might your principal or one of your parents like? Why?

Lesson 4

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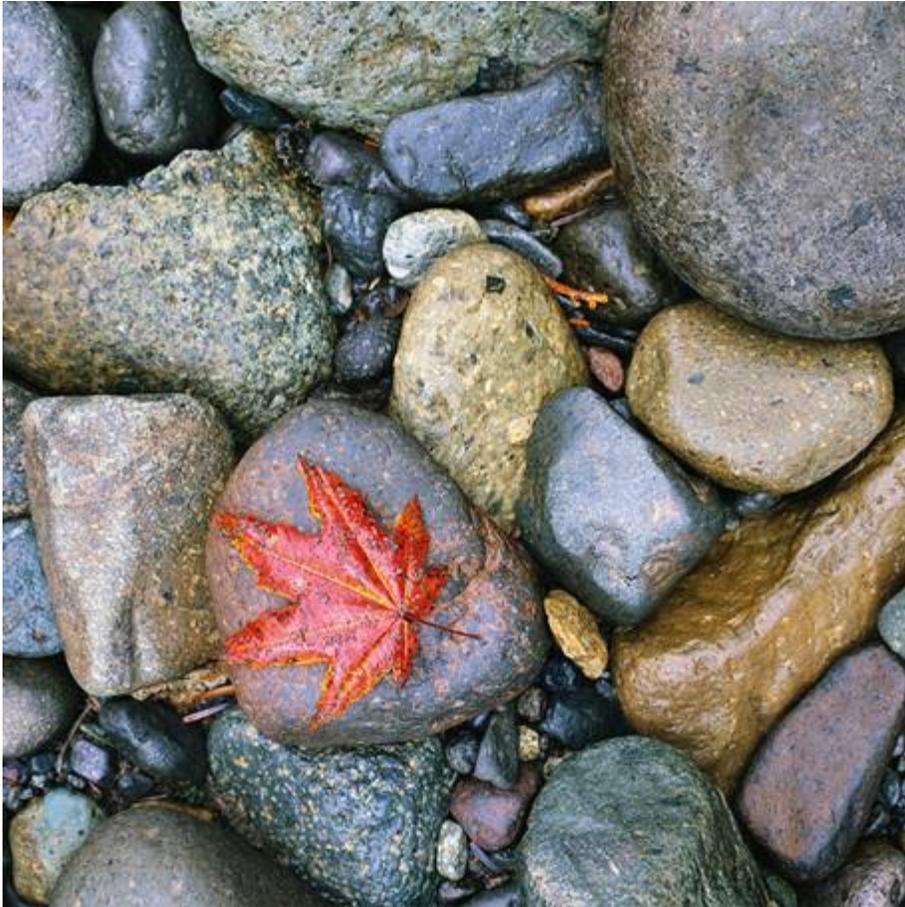
■ SPECIFIC, CONCRETE DETAILS vs. GENERAL LANGUAGE

Lesson 5



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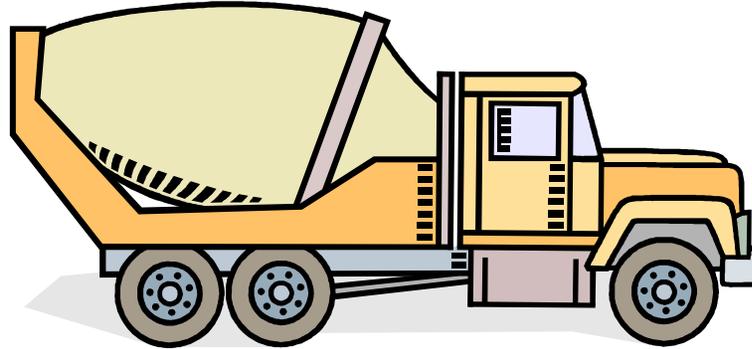
Words are like rocks.



They come in all sizes. Small rocks represent small words. Big rocks represent big words.

BUT . . .

Rocks are not as strong as
CONCRETE.



**CONCRETE details are the
specific, exact names of things.**

Using **CONCRETE details** will make your paper stronger, just like CONCRETE makes a building stronger. Concrete details are SPECIFIC.

Look for the SPECIFIC details.

- [redacted] and [redacted] slammed their lockers and ran down the [redacted] Hall toward the lunchroom. How much longer until they would have their official [redacted] [redacted] and could eat off campus? They could barely stand the thought of eating hot lunch [redacted] cup [redacted] washing it down with a 6-ounce carton of [redacted] [redacted] more months [redacted] they turned 16. As [redacted]

Using Specific Details

**School lunches
are (good) (bad).**

Choose either side.

**Rewrite the sentence on the
left, using specific language.
Write more than one
sentence to elaborate.**

See student samples -
Grade 10 Lunch
Grade 7 Lunch



Lesson 5

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Be specific.

- Your word choices do not have to be
 - Big words
 - Fancy words
 - Words from a thesaurus
- Remember, to elaborate powerfully and effectively, you need to be **SPECIFIC**.
- Use concrete, specific details.



Lesson 5