Y6 Editing For Effect

KS2 Y6 English · Follows the national curriculum

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

1. Worked example

Edit for effect: 'The forest was very scary. There were lots of trees.'

Step 1 · Show, don't tell 'scary'

What made it scary? Darkness, sounds, shapes.

Step 2 · Precise noun for 'lots of trees'

twisted oaks

Step 3 · Rewrite

Twisted oaks crowded the path, their branches clawing at the sky.

Answer: Twisted oaks crowded the path, their branches clawing at the sky.

Check: The reader now feels the fear without being told.

2. Now try one with the steps

Vary the sentence openings: 'We got up. We packed. We left. We drove for hours.'

Step 1 · Problem

Step 2 · Use a fronted adverbial

Step 3 · Combine and vary

Answer:

3. Practice

Have a go at each one. There is space underneath to work it out.

1. What is the difference between editing for effect and proofreading?

2. Replace with one precise verb: 'ran very fast'.

3. Replace with one precise verb: 'said very quietly'.

4. Replace with one precise verb: 'looked at it for a long time'.

5. Show, don't tell: 'Kai was happy.'

6. Show, don't tell: 'The room was messy.'

7. Which word should usually be cut or replaced: 'It was very big.'?

8. Why might a writer use a very short sentence after several long ones?

9. Improve: 'The dog was big and scary and horrible.'

10. Rewrite with a fronted adverbial: 'The fox crept across the lawn moon rose.'

11. Add a dash for a dramatic pause: 'I opened the envelope and it was empty.'

12. Rewrite in the passive to create mystery: 'Someone had moved the painting.'

13. Cut the repetition: 'Suddenly, the lights went out. Suddenly, someone screamed.'

14. Edit for effect: 'It was a nice day and the sun was out and it was warm.'

4. Before you hand it in

Adding more and more adjectives: 'the dark, gloomy, spooky, creepy, eerie house'.
Choose one or two precise ones: 'the silent, shuttered house'.

Only proofreading and calling it editing.
Read aloud and ask: does this make my reader feel what I want?

Replacing every word with a 'posh' synonym.
Only change words that are weak or vague.

Making every sentence short for 'tension'.
Vary length: build up with longer sentences, then hit with a short one.