Writing Mini-Lessons

Exploding the Moment-

Have students do a quick write on everything they did so far today. Students can write in their Writer’s Notebook or loose leaf and their writing can be timed for 15 minutes. They are not to stop writing for that 15 minutes. Once the 15 minutes are up ask them to read through what they have written and select the most significant event. Whichever event they choose they will saturate with details. They should think about what the event looked like, what it sounded like, felt like, smelt like and/or tasted like. They should include as many details they can think of. Let them know this is done in writing by authors to indicate an event is significant, to slow down the text and to create suspension.

Avoiding Common Adjectives –

Ask students to write down a lost of words associated with how a character might feel (happy, sad, mad, etc.). Now have a volunteer in the class act out one of these emotion words. The students should be asked to make note of what the student did to demonstrate how they felt. Write down the students responses that describe the actions of the student who acted out the feeling word. Remind them that authors often describe how a character is feeling through their actions, what their face looked like and the things they said instead of them simply saying he was mad, sad, etc.

Increasing Vocabulary –

Do a brainstorm of the word said. Include any word that could replace ‘said’ and would still make sense in the same sentence. Record their responses on the board. Remind them most often these terms are more specific and descriptive and provide the reader with more information. Have them consider using these words instead of ‘said’ in their writing.