



## Improving Writing with Synonyms for “tired” words and “Show not Tell” vivid details

**Step one:** Write a boring narrative about a fun day such as this one:

The Fun Day

Our class had a fun day when we went to the fire station. We saw many neat fire trucks. The firemen were really nice. There was a lot to see at the fire station. We really liked the uniforms they wear. Our favorite part was the siren. The hoses were cool. The trip to the fire station was really fun.

**Step two:** Identify and highlight the “tired” words and list synonyms for them:

- Fun:** amusing, interesting, enjoyable
- Cool/neat:** fascinating, spectacular, astounding
- Liked/favorite:** preferred, most entertaining

**Step three:** Identify and highlight in a different color the details that need description.

fire trucks	firemen	uniforms	siren	hoses
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- Have students share to find ways to describe what they saw with sensory details or specific actions that occurred.
- Assign one item to each small group of students. They may draw on a white board or just discuss. You may assign a note taker.
- Have each group share out and list their ideas under each of the items you’ve identified.

fire trucks	firemen	uniforms	siren	hoses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ gleaming red</li> <li>▪ shiny</li> <li>▪ huge</li> <li>▪ covered with important equipment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ enthusiastic</li> <li>▪ friendly</li> <li>▪ tall</li> <li>▪ shining the truck</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ heavy</li> <li>▪ lots of buckles</li> <li>▪ big pockets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ blast</li> <li>▪ loud</li> <li>▪ felt the roar in our stomachs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ long</li> <li>▪ heavy</li> <li>▪ snaked</li> </ul>



**Step four:**

Use shared writing and the synonyms and details generated by the group to revise the initial boring paragraph into a well written one with plenty of vivid detail and excellent word choice:

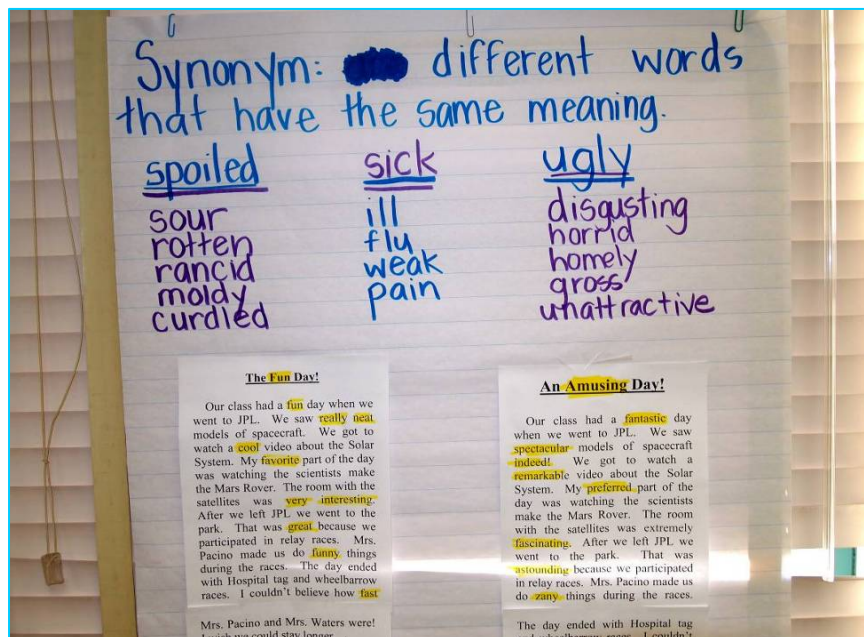
### Firestation **Fascination**

By Room 6

We've been studying community helpers in our social studies text book, but last Friday we finally got to go explore a real working firestation. When we arrived, the first thing we noticed were the **gleaming red** firetrucks covered with important equipment. The long hoses snaked along the side of the huge trucks, and **impressive** ladders sat on top ready to go. The firemen were **enthusiastic** about showing us everything and even let some of us try on the heavy uniforms. Carlos almost fell over then they helped him into the fire-proof jacket. At the end of our visit, they warned us to cover our ears before they gave us a blast from one of the sirens. We could feel the roar in our stomachs it was so loud! We thanked the firemen for letting us visit their **fascinating** world.

**Step five:**

When this is finished, go back and highlight the replacement words for the "tired words" and where vivid details were added to describe the items selected. Leave this exemplar hanging up throughout the narrative writing unit as a reminder about improving word choice and adding detail to writing.



Opinion/Argument



Informative/Explanatory



Narrative Language



Standards that apply in the Common Core Standards  
Writing: W 5 and Language: L5

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