

# Revision Bingo for Narratives

Choose three of the bingo boxes to help you revise your narrative. You can choose any three as long as they line up horizontally, vertically, or diagonally!

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>First Impressions</b></p> <p>Grab the reader’s attention in the first few sentences or opening paragraph of your narrative.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(see page 2)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>In Your Feelings</b></p> <p>Bring your descriptions of feelings to life by elaborating with examples.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(see page 3)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>It’s in the Details</b></p> <p>Draw your reader in by adding three sensory details.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(see page 4)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Sweet Sounds</b></p> <p>Make your narrative sing by including repetition or alliteration.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(see page 5)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Leave a Message</b></p> <p>Make sure that the ideas in your narrative build up to your main message, or theme.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(see page 6)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Words Come to Life</b></p> <p>Add personification to your narrative in 2–3 places.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(see page 7)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>My Voice</b></p> <p>Make your personality shine on the page.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(see page 7)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Choose Your Words</b></p> <p>Change at least 3 boring or ordinary words into exciting or extraordinary ones.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(see pages 7–8)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Final Thoughts</b></p> <p>Change how your narrative ends to create a lasting impact on the reader.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(see page 8)</p>

# Helpful Tips

Use the tips below to help you use Revision Bingo for Narratives to revise your writing!

**First Impressions:** When you read the first lines of a short story, a memoir, or other narrative work, what makes you want to keep reading? How do your favorite authors draw you in?

Writers use a wide range of strategies to keep their readers reading. Think about how you want your audience to enter the world you are creating for them.

Reread your first line and revise it to make it stronger. To help you choose an approach, take a look at some of the examples below:

1. Create a clear image of the world that you're inviting your reader into.

**Example:**

“**Lennox Library**, I read on the metallic plaque outside the building. The uppercase letters were bold and big. The coldness of the metal resembled the weather; it was windy and arid. It was the first time I was visiting this library. All the libraries that I had previously visited had a twenty-first century modern style. This one could not have been more different. The white pillars in front emanated an appearance of high intellect that greatly contrasted with the old-fashioned red brick walls.” (from “[Booking an Adventure](#)” by William, 826LA)

2. Start with a simile (a comparison between two things using the words *like* or *as*).

**Example:**

“I’m from Chicago. All of Chicago is like my house, but with a lot more people. It is a place where I can enjoy myself and have a lot of fun. It is also a place where I know people who care about me, love me, protect me from evil, and lead me to the good things in life. The people are nice, funny, fun, kind, and joyful toward others. Here, we are all family and act like one. We work together and respect each other the way we want to be respected.” (from “[We Are All Family](#)” by Rafael, 826CHI)

3. Begin with a hyperbole, or an exaggeration, to create a sense of drama!

**Example:**

“One day at my house, we had nothing to eat. We were starving. Then my dad started making a sandwich for us with whatever he could find in the fridge.” (from “[And Soon: Musings on Food Memories](#)” by Armaan, 826CHI)

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**In Your Feelings:** Thoughts, opinions, and feelings in writing create a bridge between the writer and the reader by tapping into our shared experiences as humans. They are part of what makes writing so impactful! When you write powerfully, you give other people a glimpse into what it is like to live like you—an experience that is singular.

Find the places in your piece where you have expressed a thought, opinion, or feeling. Crack open these moments in your writing to really let your reader in. Here are some strategies you can use (with some examples to guide you!):

1. Add supporting details to explain.

**Before:** I like my city because it has a purpose.

**After:** “Despite my city’s issues, I think of the word purpose. If it wasn’t for Chicago I wouldn’t have a place to call home. Sirens go off, lights are flashing, traffic is moving, and the wind is blowing. The sunset of my city gives me a reason to turn the other cheek and see the beauty of life.” (from “[My Home, My Life](#)” by Iliana, 826CHI)

2. Add a real-life example.

**Before:** Teamwork is important.

**After:** “That day we became the class that got the closest to ever beating the teachers’ team. I was able to bond with my team members so I had a great time. That day showed the unbelievably strong connections that we have in our class. Even our classmates in the crowd were cheering and supporting us throughout the tournament. I also learned that in order to have a successful team, you must be able to communicate with each member. Everyone plays an equal and important role in the team’s achievements, because a chain is only as strong as its weakest link.” (from “[It’s All About the Teamwork](#)” by Victor, 826CHI)

# Helpful Tips

Use the tips below to help you use Revision Bingo to revise your draft poem!

**It's in the Details:** Whether you are telling about a real-life event or building a new reality, your writing creates a world of experiences for your reader. When you describe what the forest smells like, the taste of your favorite meal, or the way that a scarf is soft and warm, you are inviting your audience to use all of their senses to experience your writing.

Find at least three places where you can enhance your piece by adding sensory details. Remember, sensory details describe what someone can taste, hear, smell, see, or feel.

Take a look at how these sentences change when sensory language is included!

**Instead of:** We swam in the ocean. It was scary.

**Try this:** We swam in the briny ocean, kicking our feet against the powerful current. The salt stung our eyes. Our arms grew tired from fighting nature's pull.

Can you see the difference? How did the details in the second version help you *feel* a scary ocean?

To help you choose the words that best fit your writing, use the sensory detail word bank below as a starting place. The words are categorized to help you, but some can apply to more than one sense!

<b>Taste:</b>	spicy sour	bland tangy	salty zesty	rotten creamy	mild buttery	bold earthy	bitter sweet
<b>Sight:</b>	brilliant colorful	dazzling distorted	blinding blurry	faded dull	dingy vibrant	glittering lush	dark plain
<b>Touch:</b>	rough delicate	smooth warm	hairy sticky	abrasive waxy	balmy dry	slippery frigid	slimy icy
<b>Sound:</b>	cacophony whisper	murmur whine	whistle roar	bellow splash	crackle muffled	boom quiet	faint raspy
<b>Smell:</b>	musty pungent	fresh floral	perfumed dank	stinky stale	citrusy fragrant	smoky moldy	foul acrid

# Helpful Tips

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**Sweet Sounds:** Sound devices like repetition or alliteration aren't just for poetry! Adding these elements to your narrative writing can make your writing sing.

*Repetition* is when the same element occurs more than once in your writing. You can repeat words, sounds, or phrases to emphasize an idea. Here's an example:

"I ask my teacher if I can go to the bathroom, and she says it is fine. I wash my face, and when I am washing my face, I look at my clothes. I am wearing blue skinny jeans, an army green shirt, white and black Converse sneakers, and a blue sweater. I smile and say, 'It's going to be fine. Everything is fine.'" (from "[The Thing that Changes My Life](#)" by Liliana, 826DC)

See how the author repeats the idea that everything will be fine? As a reader, we might slow down and pay attention. Why does the narrator tell themselves twice they're going to be fine? Are they trying to convince themselves, or are they trying to convince us, the readers?

*Alliteration* is when words that are next to each other or very close to each other begin with the same letter. This can create a musical quality for your writing and add dimension to the sounds of your words.

Here are some examples of alliteration:

- The cars careened down the cracked road coming to a stop inches before they crashed.
- She held my hand and helped me hope again.
- My silly sister slipped again.
- We ate delicious, decadent donuts.

Find the places in your piece where you can add repetition or alliteration to add emphasis or interest.

# Helpful Tips

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**Leave a Message:** Narratives often have a *theme*, or a message about life or big ideas that are central to the human experience. Think of this as the big takeaway for your reader. What specific conclusions about common experiences does your narrative point to?

Start by considering the *thematic topic* of your narrative. The list of topics is nearly endless, but here are a few to help you start thinking about your piece:

love	heartbreak	friendship	teamwork	identity	self
family	betrayal	community	endings	beginnings	justice

Then, think about what specific message you are communicating to your reader about this topic. For example:

- About *love*: Self-love is difficult but worthwhile.
- About *friendship*: Friends can come in many different varieties
- About *community*: Creating a community requires effort and intention.

Finally, look at the moments and ideas throughout your narrative. Do they support your theme? Do they help build your message? Here is one way that small moments in a written work can help build to a theme:

Theme: Self-love is difficult but worthwhile.

- Moment/idea 1: The narrator is struggling to accept something they don't like about themselves. They hate the way they talk.
- Moment/idea 2: The narrator faces a challenging moment where they confront their biggest insecurity. They have to present in front of the class. They try but give up because they are too scared that other people will make fun of them.
- Moment/idea 3: The narrator learns to love themselves. They see other people take on difficult challenges and they decide that they can, too. They finally stand up in front of the class and proudly share their ideas with the world.

Reread your narrative and strengthen your theme by adding to or refining the moments that help build your main message.

## Helpful Tips

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**Words Come to Life:** Adding personification to your writing can make ideas come to life in a new way. *Personification* is when the writer gives human actions or feelings to a non-human thing, such as a building, neighborhood, or part of nature. For example:

- The sun smiled down on us that day.
- During the block party, my neighborhood came to life, swaying and vibrating along with the people dancing.
- “But the real love of my life is a batch of fresh, organic jalapeños. Why? Because they’re spicy. They’re rebellious. They don’t play by your rules. If you double-cross a jalapeño, you get the seeds.” (from “[jalapeño + love](#)” by Calvin, 826michigan)

Try it out! Find three places where your writing can be enhanced by adding personification.

**My Voice:** What do you sound like when you speak? Are you playful and funny? Do you speak seriously and use lots of big words?

When you bring some of your personality and attitude to your writing, you are adding your *voice*. Having a voice helps make your writing authentic and shows the reader that there is a real person behind the words.

There’s no right way to show off your voice in your writing. Here’s a helpful tip: reread your piece out loud. Does it sound like *you*—your real authentic self? If not, what changes can you make? Add in words or phrases that you often use in your everyday life. Infuse your writing with your opinions, feelings, and beliefs. Let yourself out on the page!

**Choose Your Words:** Sometimes, the default words we use to describe are *boring* words. We might describe actions, feelings, and places using ordinary language. For example, you might say that someone was running “very fast” or that someone was feeling “a little sad.” How can powerful words amp up our descriptions to bring our readers into the worlds of our poems? Instead of “very fast,” try “he ran nimbly.” Instead of “a little sad,” try “she was downcast.”

Replace three ordinary words in your piece with something more specific or unique. See the next page for a word bank!

# Helpful Tips

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## Words to Consider

snake-like	brisk	ponderous	nimble	colossal	spine-tingling
towering	whimsical	dreary	hysterical	despondent	melancholic
paltry	microscopic	hardened	doughy	tender	indestructible
leisurely	steady	stagnant	supersonic	zippy	searing
balmy	frigid	glacial	numbing	tropical	blustery

**Final Thoughts:** The final part of your narrative piece brings all of your ideas home. Think about what you want to leave your reader thinking about. Here are some ways you might improve your ending:

- Describe how your character has grown. What qualities do they have now that they didn't have at the beginning of the narrative?
- Describe how your world has changed. What did you learn about yourself? What did you learn about the people around you?
- End with an image the reader can picture in their mind. Use descriptive words to paint the details clearly.
- State a strong opinion. Tell the reader what you really think and help them hold on to that idea.