

## The Wonderful World of Word Choice

Words play a key role in our daily lives in speech, but more importantly, writing. As we express our thoughts through communication with one another, we search for the correct words or phrases deemed appropriate for that situation. Word choice is significant to writing because it allows writers the ability to convey their thoughts, emotions, or ideas to an array of audiences. Here are a few simple reminders on how to successfully choose words while writing.

- Words used in daily conversations and slang rarely formal enough for academic writing.  
Ex. Nathan was being silly and horsing around when he fell off of the trampoline and broke his foot.  
  
Both “silly” and “horsing around” can be replaced by words such as “unreasonable” or “acting inappropriately” to create a more formal tone.
- The more, specific you are with wording, the more understandable the text is to readers.  
Ex. I saw an *animal* in my backyard today. (general)  
  
I saw a *bird* in my backyard today. (specific)  
  
I saw a *woodpecker* in the park today. (more specific)
- Identify whom you are addressing in your paper (audience) and what type of writing will best be understood by them.
- To decrease wordiness in a paper, be careful of redundancy.  
Ex. I learned **to cook** spaghetti and meatballs **in my cooking class** last night.  
  
To correct this problem, you can simply delete one of the phrases about cooking.
- If you are unsure of a meaning for a word or would like some extra information, look it up!  
Consult a dictionary to reach a better understanding of the meaning of a word before using it.