

## Masterpiece Sentences Step 5

Step five is to paint your words. And we've got some pretty good words going on here, but we can always improve it. There's so many combinations of words out there and so many ways to express yourself that if you really think about it and you really tinker with these words, you can get really close to exactly the idea that you're trying to express.

And I think the secret to being a good writer is to think very hard about almost every single word you use and make sure it's exactly the right tone, and connotation, and feeling that you're going for. And a good way to start improving the words in a sentence is to look at the verbs. The verbs are the engine of a sentence, and a sentence doesn't really go anywhere without them.

Our two verbs in this sentence are emerge and fly. Emerge is a pretty nice verb. Fly is kind of ordinary.

So what we could do is break out our thesaurus. And here's a list of synonyms for the word fly that I found. And the secret to using a thesaurus is you don't want to use words that you've never heard before or that you don't really know what they mean.

So maybe you pull up the thesaurus and you type in fly, and it says evanesce. And you think, oh, that sounds kind of smart. Maybe I'll try that word. But you're not really sure what it means.

It's an easy way to make mistakes, and you actually don't get the idea that you're going for. So when you use the thesaurus, try to stick to words that you know. Maybe the thesaurus will remind you of a word that you forgot about.

Some of these words are somewhat useful. Here we go. Glide is a nice one. Sail-- the birds sail over the sea. That sounds nice. They whisk over the sea. They advance over the sea.

Ooh, how about soar? They soar over the waves. That sounds pretty good. So you can use a thesaurus to figure out what word you want to improve. And sometimes you look at all the synonyms, and you like the one you started with.

So let's see what other words we can maybe work on here. We have waves. That sounds pretty ordinary. Over, birds-- still kind of ordinary sounding.

Can we say anything more about these birds? I mean, they are silhouetted, and so it's hard to see them. But I think if we look close, we can maybe see what kind of birds they are.

Those look like sea gulls to me. So I think we can be more specific than just saying birds, and we can call them sea gulls. And maybe we could do better than waves.

So let's see if we can do a mind map. Maybe you've done one of these before. So what you

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would do is you would put the word here in the middle, and you would draw a circle around it. And then all the synonyms you could think of you would attach as spokes.

So what are some synonyms to waves? Maybe we could say the sea, the ocean, the shore, the coast, the tide. All right. So then we have some synonyms here. You might be able to think of some more.

And what you do is you would take your time and swap some of these words in and out and just see where the music comes from, see what really, really gets the sentence going and making it sound beautiful. So after we go through this process and we replace some of the words, we can bring out our new sentence here, which says, "at sunset, with wings outstretched, a pair of silhouetted sea gulls emerge from the clouds and soar above the rolling tide." Now, that's starting to sound pretty nice. So let's finish this up in step six.

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