

ARMS Revision Strategy

Developed for educators to support effective writing instruction, the ARMS strategy helps students revise their work with purpose and clarity.

What is ARMS?

ARMS is a mnemonic that guides students through the process of revising their writing: improving content and structure

Action	Purpose	Example Prompt for Students
Add	Add new information, details, or examples	"What else can I include to make this clearer or more interesting?"
Remove	Eliminate unnecessary or repetitive words	"Is there anything that doesn't belong or is said twice?"
Move	Rearrange words, sentences, or paragraphs	"Would this idea make more sense earlier or later?"
Substitute	Replace weak words or phrases with stronger ones	"Can I use a more vivid or precise word here?"

Why Use ARMS?

- Encourages deeper thinking about content and structure
- Builds metacognitive awareness in student writers
- Provides a clear, repeatable process for revision
- Supports peer and self-assessment with shared language

Classroom Resources

- Anchor charts or posters for writing centers
- Peer conferencing checklists
- Color-coded revision activities (e.g., highlight each ARMS step)
- Mini-lessons focused on one ARMS component at a time

Teacher Tip: Model the ARMS strategy with your own writing or a shared class text. Think aloud as you revise, showing students how real writers make decisions.