

The SCOPE 100: "3 Billys: 1 Tony" • Issue: October 5, 2009

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Viable Verbs

One quality of strong writing is careful word choice. Rather than use the first word that comes to mind, it's often better to pause and think of a more colorful, precise, or descriptive word. A common mistake is to overuse the verb "to be" (*is, are, was*). Often, a more active verb will liven up your writing and paint a more complete picture for your readers.

Examples:

| Boring | vs. | Better! |
|-----------------------|------------|---|
| The candle is bright. | vs. | The candle burns bright. |
| The racecar is fast. | vs. | The racecar accelerates to incredible speeds. |
| Kenneth was excited. | vs. | Kenneth bubbled over with excitement. |

Directions: The sentences below contain some cool facts about the teens who share the title role in *Billy Elliot: The Musical*. Liven up each sentence by rewriting it without the "to be" verb. We've done the first one for you.

1. *Billy Elliot: The Musical* is about a boy whose love of dancing changes his life.
Billy Elliot: The Musical tells the story of a boy whose love of dancing changes his life. _____
2. David Alvarez, Trent Kowalik, and Kiril Kulish are the three young actors who play Billy on stage.

3. The son of Cuban parents, David is the recipient of a prestigious scholarship to study at the American Ballet Theatre in New York City. _____

4. Trent, of Wantagh, New York, is an Irish step dancer.

5. At age 11, Trent was the World Irish Dancing Championship winner.

6. By age 3, Kiril was able to do all the dance steps his sister taught him from a routine she was choreographing in college. _____

7. Kiril is a ballet and ballroom dancer too.

8. David, Trent, and Kiril are similar to Billy because they love dance.

9. Unlike the character Billy, they are not going to hide their talent from anyone!

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