

Strong
Verbs

The Chocolate War Excerpt

On the third play, he was hit simultaneously by three of them: one, his knees; another, his stomach; a third, his head—the helmet no protection at all. His body seemed to telescope into itself but all the parts didn't fit, and he was stunned by the knowledge that pain isn't just one thing—it is cunning and various, sharp here and sickening there, burning here and clawing there. He clutched himself as he hit the ground. The ball squirted away. His breath went away like the ball—a terrible stillness pervaded him—and then, at the onset of panic, his breath came back again. His lips sprayed wetness and he was grateful for the sweet cool air that filled his lungs. But when he tried to get up, his body mutinied against movement. He decided the hell with it. He'd go to sleep right here, right out on the fifty yard line, the hell with trying out for the team, screw everything, he was going to sleep, he didn't care anymore . . .

"Renault!"

The coach's voice scraped like sandpaper against his ears. He opened his eyes flutteringly. "I'm all right," he said to no one in particular, or to his father maybe. Or the coach. He was unwilling to abandon this lovely lassitude but he had to, of course. He was sorry to leave the earth, and he was vaguely curious about how he was going to get up, with both legs smashed and his skull battered in. He was astonished to find himself on his feet, intact, bobbing like one of those toy novelties dangling from car windows, but erect.

Cormier, Robert. 1974. *The Chocolate War*. New York: Dell Publishing, 7-8.

each group take a turn acting out a different word. Be sure to inform them that they will have to perform as a group. Otherwise, each group will elect its own class clown. Given the gift of physical comedy, that kid will immediately know what to do and will need no practice. The result is that the entire group will not be acting but sitting around. To alleviate performance anxiety, brainstorm some different ways groups can prepare their ensemble "performance." These are some typical ideas:

Verb Chart

Accentuate	Engulf	Jut	Smack
Babble	Escort	Lurk	Sneer
Bellow	Exasperate	Mesmerize	Spark
Beseech	Excavate	Mingle	Spew
Bide	Flail	Mock	Spring
Blab	Flicker	Muffle	Squabble
Blast	Forge	Perplex	Squint
Bombard	Garner	Pilfer	Squirm
Bristle	Gleam	Ponder	Stalk
Burst	Glimpse	Postulate	Sting
Chirp	Glisten	Premonition	Stride
Clench	Gnash	Prod	Strum
Clobber	Goggle	Pulse	Subside
Clutch	Grapple	Putter	Succumb
Collar	Grimace	Ravage	Surge
Compel	Grovel	Resurrect	Surmise
Conceal	Harpoon	Scatter	Swarm
Conceive	Haunt	Scoff	Tantalize
Conjure	Hiss	Scrutinize	Thrash
Corral	Hobble	Scurry	Throb
Cringe	Hound	Seethe	Traipse
Dart	Hurl	Sever	Trudge
Dash	Immobilize	Shiver	Twinkle
Demolish	Impale	Shudder	Vow
Dictate	Infiltrate	Shun	Worship
Disintegrate	Interrogate	Sidle	Wrench
Distend	Intervene	Skewer	Writhe
Divert	Inundate	Slam	
Drawl	Irk	Slouch	
