

Six Trait Writing Rubric

Traits	Beginning (a bare beginning; writer not yet showing any control)	Emerging (need for revision outweighs strengths; isolated moments hint at what the writer has in mind)	Developing (strengths and need for revision are about equal; about half-way home)	Maturing (strength outweighs the weaknesses; small amount of revision is needed)	Strong (shows control and skill in the trait; many strengths present)
Ideas	Message lacks purpose or central theme. Thoughts are disconnected, random or repetitious. Insufficient writing.	Superficial content, but at times supported with details. May lack an ending or end abruptly. A thesis statement is attempted.	Ideas are expressed so that the reader can understand or explain about the writing. The thesis statement is present, but lacks clarity.	Ideas are clear with details that are interesting, important, and informative to the reader. A clear thesis statement is present.	Ideas are strong with rich details that draw the reader into the writing and create vivid images in the mind's eye. The thesis is clear and perceptive.
Organization	Organization is lacking so that the reader is often confused. No real introduction or conclusion. Insufficient writing.	A few ideas logically connected so the reader can follow most of the text. An attempt at an introduction or conclusion is made. Lacks transitions.	Organization is logical. Pacing is well-controlled and the main point or story line is supported. An introduction and conclusion are evident.	Organization is logically connected to the whole and enables the reader to easily follow the text. Transitions are used. Paragraphs easily inferred.	Organization enhances and showcases the central idea or theme. No lapses in flow. Thoughtful transitions enhance the writing.
Voice	The writer seems indifferent, uninvolved, or distanced from topic/audience. Writing is hum-drum and mostly "risk-free".	Voice is emerging in isolated moments. Limited depth. Uses repetitive nouns/verbs or adjectives/adverbs.	Writer seems sincere, pleasant and personable, but not compelling. Writing lacks consistent engagement of the reader.	The writer is engaged with their writing. The writer's personality comes through the text.	Revealing language imparts the interest and flavor that is the writer's. There is life in the writing that shows the writer's intense engagement.
Word Choice	The writer demonstrates limited vocabulary. Language is used incorrectly.	Word choice shows some isolated moments of interest and precision, but redundancy distracts the reader.	Words are adequate and correct. Familiar words or phrases communicate. Writing is functional with only 1 or 2 moments of sparkle.	The words are becoming refined throughout the writing.	Rich, colorful, language moves and enlightens the reader. Language and phrasing is natural, effective, and appropriate for the audience.
Sentence	The text does	Sentences are	Sentences are	Sentences vary	The writing has

Fluency	not invite expressive oral reading. Almost no sentence sense.	choppy and difficult to read. Awkward word patterns slow the reading.	routine, but constructed correctly. Sentence variety is attempted.	in length and style. They are easy to understand and rhythmic.	cadence, power, rhythm, and movement. Purposeful and varied sentence beginnings.
Conventions	Little, if any, attempts made at conventions. Extensive editing required. Paragraphing is missing.	Spelling errors are frequent, punctuation is often missing, and paragraphing is irregular.	Spelling errors are minor, but affect the reading of the text. Paragraphing is attempted, but still contains too many errors. Most words are capitalized correctly.	The writing is sufficiently complex to allow the writer to show skill in using a wide range of conventions that are grade/age appropriate.	The writer demonstrates a good grasp of standard writing conventions. Errors are almost non-existent. The piece is almost ready to be published.
Presentation	The reader receives a garbled message due to problems relating to the presentation of the text.	Attempts are made to use various font and font sizes. Organization of the project is emerging, but lacks organization.	The writer's message is understandable in its format. An attempt is made to integrate visuals.	The writer is "almost there" with their writing. Little editing is required for completion.	The form and presentation of the text enhances the ability for the reader to understand and connect with the message. It is pleasing to the eye.

Created by Ramona Huggins, Writing Committee Chair at the Kansas School for the Deaf, Olathe, Kansas, February, 2003. Adapted from materials prepared at the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, assessments by Vickie Spandel and Rick Stiggins; a teacher-made rubric from Mary Britton-Simmons, English chair at Woodinville High School in Washington state; and the TEAE Writing Rubric from the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning.