Six + One Writing Traits

1. Organization

Organization is just the way it sounds, organizing a paper so it is easy for the reader to follow. The trait of organization is the hardest for novice writers to master. They have trouble seeing the big picture in their writing. Often being aware of methods or shortcuts to good organization is key.

2. Ideas and Content

Ideas and Content are in a sense the heart of the writing. Everything that is said comes back to ideas and content. The two keys are clarity and details. Making a topic clear and manageable is so important. Details can make or break any piece of writing. Ideas and content focus on clear writing that presents details in an interesting, fresh manner.

3. Word Choice

Word choice is a trait that shows the power of language. Sometimes novice writers are so caught up in their ideas, organization, and grammar that word choice may take a backseat. The use of good word choice will open to a whole new world of writing.

4. Conventions/ Mechanics

Conventions are the editing and revising component of writing. Often this trait is taught throughout the six traits writing process. Many people would say that this trait is the most time consuming of the six because of its depth and importance.

5. Sentence Fluency

Sentence fluency is a trait based solely on the ear. Writers need to tune their ears to the rhythm and cadence that can be accomplished with sentence fluency. Using the natural

flow of poetry can add clarity to this trait.

Focusing on variety in sentences can help attain fluency.

6. Voice

Voice is the author’s fingerprint on the page. By using voice the reader feels more in touch with the writer’s emotions, opinions, and personality. Voice is a favorite trait of writers. Especially if they love to read books with lots of voice, which in turn carries over to their writing.

(+1) Presentation

Presentation zeros in on the form, type of paragraph, layout of the text and readability; the piece should be pleasing to the eye.