

# Six Traits Writing Workshop

WNY School Support Center UB Buffalo Public Schools

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# Voice

# Voice

**Voice is reader-writer connection—that something that makes a reader feel, respond, and want more. It gives writing life, energy, individuality, and zest. Writing that’s alive with voice is hard to put down; voiceless writing is a chore to read. Voice is the personal imprint of the writer on the page, and so is different with each writer. Each voice is unique. Voice is part concern for the reader, part enthusiasm for the topic, and part personal style. Voice also differs with purpose and audience.**

# Teaching the Trait of Voice

- Sounds like a person wrote it, not a committee
- Writer seems involved, not bored
- Sounds like *this* particular writer
- Brings topic to life
- Makes me feel part of it
- Makes me feel connected to the writer
- Makes me respond to the writing
- Lots of energy

# Voice Rubric



- 4 That's it! It's me! Individual, expressive...hear it?**
- a. You could tell this was mine if you knew me. It's personal and unique, like fingerprints.**
  - b. I have put my personal stamp on this paper.**
  - c. I'm speaking right to the reader. I picture my reader. I imagine how he/she will feel reading this.**
  - d. I want the reader to feel what I feel, to see what I see.**
  - e. Because I'm fascinated by this topic, my reader will be curious and involved, too. It's a journey of discovery for both of us.**

# Voice Rubric



## **3 Almost there**

- a. The tone (humorous, serious, businesslike, friendly) and style (casual and chatty, or formal and professional) are just right for my topic and for my audience.**
- b. I hear myself in spots. My voice booms through for a moment here and there, then fades to a whisper.**
- c. I don't think you'll fall asleep, but isn't strong enough yet to make you laugh, cry, or pound the table.**

# Voice Rubric



## **2 On my way–Ready for serious revision**

- a. I feel OK about this topic. I might like it more if I knew more or connected it to my own experience.
- b. My writing is right on the edge of being funny, scary, dramatic, or strong. I just can't seem to get there.
- c. Sometimes I'm speaking to the reader, but most times, I don't even think about having a reader.

# Voice Rubric



## 1 Just Beginning

- a. I don't feel engaged by this topic, so how can I get the reader interested?
- b. If you didn't know, I'm not sure you could tell who wrote this. There isn't much of me in here.
- c. This writing might be flat, but it feels safe. I'm not taking any risks here.
- d. To tell the truth, this topic bores me. I guess it shows.
- e. I've hidden behind a lot of generalities. "School is important." "We should all get an education." "War is brutal."
- f. I've said what millions of others have said. It's not personal or individual.

# Voice

**Voice is the writer's own interest added to the writing—what makes a reader feel, respond, and want more.**

## **Key Abilities:**

- **Write with interest and enthusiasm**
- **Match level of formality with purpose and audience**
- **Hold the reader's interest**

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## **Key Strategies:**

- **Clarify your purpose**
- **Visualize your audience**
- **The feeling factor: Match your voice and others with your purpose and audience**
- **Try to move the reader by expressing your interest, feeling, and insight in the voices you're using**

