

SIX TRAITS OF WRITING	EXCELLENT	STRONG	COMPETENT	LIMITED	DEFICIENT
IDEAS & CONTENT	Clear, focused and interesting writing which holds the reader's attention. Main ideas stand out and are developed by supporting details suitable to audience and purpose.	The writing is clear and focused. The reader can easily understand the main ideas. Support is present, although it may be limited or rather general.	The reader can understand the main ideas, although they may be overly broad or simplistic. Supporting detail is often insubstantial, overly general or occasionally off-topic.	Main ideas and purpose are somewhat unclear or development is only minimally attempted. Insufficient, irrelevant or repetitive details are present.	The writing lacks a central idea or purpose. Attempts at idea development lack clarity or the paper is simply too short to demonstrate the development of an idea.
ORGANIZATION	The organization enhances the central idea(s) and its development. The order and structure are strong and move the reader through the text in a sensible way.	Organization is clear and coherent. Order and structure are present, but may seem a bit formulaic. Clear sequencing is present, although transitions could be enhanced.	An attempt has been made to organize the writing; however, there are occasional lapse in clarity, effective transitions, and mature sequencing of ideas.	Lacking a clear organizational structure causes the writing to either be too difficult to follow or simply too short to demonstrate control of any organizational skills.	The writing lacks coherence; organization seems haphazard and disjointed. The reader remains confused even after rereading several times. Sequencing and transitions are ineffective.
SENTENCE FLUENCY	The writing has an easy flow and rhythm. Sentences are carefully crafted, with strong and varied structure that makes expressive oral reading easy and enjoyable.	The writing flows; however, connections between phrases or sentences may be less than fluid. Sentence patterns are somewhat varied, contributing to ease in oral reading.	The writing tends to be mechanical rather than fluid. Awkward constructions may force the reader to slow down or reread at times. Sentence structure varies slightly.	The writing tends to be either choppy or rambling. Awkward constructions often force the reader to slow down or reread. Sentence patterns may be monotonous.	The writing is difficult to follow or to read aloud. Sentences tend to be incomplete, rambling or very awkward. Meaning obscured by confusing word order or disjointed sentence structures.
CONVENTIONS	Strong control of standard writing conventions, using them effectively to enhance communication. Errors are so few and minor that they do not impede readability.	The writing demonstrates control of standard writing conventions. Minor errors, while perhaps noticeable, do not impede readability.	The writing demonstrates a developing control of standard writing conventions, but errors are frequent enough to begin to impede readability.	The writing demonstrates little control of standard writing conventions. Frequent, significant errors impede readability.	Numerous errors in conventions distract the reader and make the text difficult to read. Reader is overwhelmed by the severity and frequency of errors; as a result main idea and message are lost.
WORD CHOICE	The intended message is conveyed in an interesting, precise and natural way appropriate to audience and purpose. Carefully chosen words are used for impact.	Words effectively convey intended message; a variety of functional and appropriate words are used. Experiments with language are rare, but do energize the writing when used.	Language is ordinary and functional. It may lack interest, precision and variety. In some places, word choices may feel unsophisticated or inappropriate.	Language is monotonous and/or misused, detracting from the meaning and impact. The writing often feels rushed, uninspired or immature.	An extremely limited vocabulary or frequent misuse of words obscure the purpose and meaning of the writing. Vague or imprecise language obscures the message of the writing.
VOICE	The voice is appropriate for the topic, purpose and audience; there is a real sense of "writing to be read." The writer is expressive, engaging and sincere.	A voice is present. The writer seems committed to the topic and has developed a suitable level of closeness to or distance from the audience.	A sense of the writer does emerge but can shift to a voice that can be inappropriately personal or mechanical at times.	The writer provides little sense of involvement or commitment. If a voice is present, it is often overly informal or personal.	The writing lacks a sense of involvement or commitment. The reader is not motivated to read because of the flat, lifeless tone of the piece.