



NWREL

6-TRAIT ONE PAGER

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WORD CHOICE

Word choice is precision in the use of words—wordsmithery. It is the love of language, a passion for words, combined with a skill in choosing words that create just the mood, impression, or word picture the writer wants to instill in the heart and mind of the reader.

- 5 Precise, vivid, natural language paints a strong, clear, and complete picture in the reader's mind.
 - The writer's message is remarkably clear and easy to interpret.
 - Phrasing is original—even memorable—yet the language is never overdone.
 - Lively verbs lend the writing energy and power.
 - Striking words or phrases linger in the writer's memory, often prompting connections, memories, reflective thoughts, or insights.
- 3 The language communicates for the most part. It gets the job done.
 - Most words are correct and adequate, even if not striking.
 - A memorable phrase here or there strikes a spark, leaving the reader hungry for more.
 - Familiar words and phrases give the text an "old comfortable couch" kind of feel.
 - Attempts at colorful language are full of promise, even when they lack restraint.
- 1 The writer struggles with a limited vocabulary, searching for words or phrases to convey meaning—or over-writes as if trying to impress. The writing reflects more than one of these problems:
 - Vague words and phrases (*She was nice... It was wonderful... The new budget had impact...*) convey only the most general sorts of messages.
 - Redundancy inhibits clarity and creativity.
 - Cliches or jargonistic, inflated phrases weigh the text down.
 - Words are used incorrectly (*The bus impelled into the hotel*).
 - The reader has trouble grasping the writer's intended message.

Word Choice

- ✓ Phrasing
- ✓ Golden moments



SENTENCE FLUENCY

Sentence fluency is finely crafted construction combined with a sense of rhythm and grace. It is achieved through logic, creative phrasing, parallel construction, alliteration, absence of redundancy, variety in sentence length and structure, and a true effort to create language that literally cries out to be spoken aloud.

- 5 An easy flow and rhythm combined with sentence sense and clarity make this text a delight to read aloud.
 - Sentences are well crafted, with a strong and varied structure that invites expressive oral readings.
 - Purposeful sentence beginnings show how each sentence builds on the one before.
 - The writing has cadence, as if the writer hears the beat in his or her head.
 - Sentences vary in both structure and length, making the reading pleasant and natural, never monotonous.
 - Fragments, if used, add style.
- 3 The text hums along with a steady beat.
 - Sentences are grammatical and fairly easy to read aloud, given a little rehearsal.
 - Some variation in length and structure enhances fluency.
 - Some purposeful sentence beginnings aid interpretation of the text.
 - Graceful, natural phrasing intertwines with more mechanical structure.
- 1 A fair interpretive oral reading of this text takes practice. The writing reflects more than one of these problems:
 - Irregular or unusual word patterns make it hard to tell where one sentence ends and the next begins.
 - Ideas are hooked together by numerous connectives (*and...but...so then*) to create one gangly, endless "sentence."
 - Short, choppy sentences bump the reader through the text.
 - Repetitive sentence patterns put the reader to sleep.
 - Transitional phrases are either missing or so overdone they become distracting.
 - The reader must often pause and reread for meaning.

Sentence Fluency

- ✓ Rhythm and flow



CONVENTIONS

Almost anything a copy editor would attend to falls under the heading of conventions. This includes punctuation, spelling, grammar and usage, capitalization, and paragraphing—the spit-and-polish phase of preparing a document for publication. It does not (in this scoring guide) include layout, formatting, or handwriting.

- 5 The writer shows excellent control over a wide range of standard writing conventions and uses them with accuracy and (when appropriate) creativity and style to enhance meaning.
 - Errors are so few and so minor that a reader can easily overlook them unless searching for them specifically.
 - The text appears clean, edited, and polished.
 - Older writers (grade 6 and up) create text of sufficient length and complexity to demonstrate control of conventions appropriate for their age and experience.
 - The text is easy to mentally process; there is nothing to distract or confuse a reader.
 - Only light touch-ups would be needed to polish the text for publication.
- 3 The writer shows reasonable control over the most widely used writing conventions and applies them with fair consistency to create text that is adequately readable.
 - There are enough errors to distract an attentive reader somewhat; however, errors do not seriously impair readability or obscure meaning.
 - It is easy enough for an experienced reader to get through the text without stumbling, but the writing clearly needs editorial polishing.
 - Moderate editing would be required to get the text ready for publication.
 - The paper reads much like a rough draft.
- 1 The writer demonstrates limited control even over widely used writing conventions. The text reflects at least one of the following problems:
 - Errors are sufficiently frequent and/or serious as to be distracting. It is hard for the reader to focus on ideas, organization, or voice.
 - The reader may need to read once to decode, then again to interpret and respond to the text.
 - Extensive editing would be required to prepare the text for publication.

Conventions

- ✓ Editorial correctness

