



Six Traits of Writing

Dear Parents,

I am thrilled to have the opportunity to explore the joy of writing with your child. During this year's writing instruction, students will have many opportunities to share stories and ideas. As a class, we will spend approximately thirty minutes each day in a variety of writing activities.

During our first writing unit, the class will be introduced to the Six Traits of Writing. The traits are the qualities that are present in good writing. They consist of **Idea**, **Organization**, **Voice**, **Word Choice**, **Sentence Fluency**, **Conventions**, and the element of **Presentation**, where the students learn that writing neatly leaves an impression on the reader. In this unit, your child will participate in activities associated with each trait, preparing them to apply these traits in their writing throughout the school year.

Ideas for Home Support

As your child practices writing these narratives at school you might consider practicing at home with the following ideas:

- Regularly read common texts to discuss characters, settings, and themes.
- Encourage the use of a story journal to encourage creative writing.
- Give your child a story that repeatedly uses the words "and then". Ask your child to separate ideas in sentences with transition words that logically connect the events.
- Cook together and write down family recipes to reinforce organization, voice, and word choice.
- Create a word choice scavenger hunt. Provide a list of descriptive words to find inside and outside your home. Have your child take pictures of the objects as they are found.

Thank you for all your support!

Sincerely,

Idea Practice

1. **What is the topic of the paragraph? Which sentence(s) distracts from the *idea* of this writing?**

Birds are vanishing from North America. The number of birds in the United States and Canada has fallen by 29 percent since 1970. There are 2.9 billion fewer birds now than there were 50 years ago. Birds are intelligent animals. Experts have known that some bird species are at risk of extinction. A recent study shows steep losses of robins and sparrows.

2. **Does the following paragraph have a clear *idea*? If not, provide an explanation.**

There is a lot to know about birds. What is your favorite bird? Songbirds, parrots, and other species are common pets. Many bird species migrate to different places because of seasonal temperatures. Birds live in small family groups or large flocks.

3. **Does the following paragraph have a clear *idea*? If not, provide an explanation.**

Bird feathers are made of keratin, just like your fingernails. At the center of the feather is a hollow shaft. Connected to the shaft are lots of thin branches called barbs. Connected to the barbs are even smaller branches called barbules. All these small parts come together to make a lightweight structure that can catch the air and fly.

4. **Select the following statements that support the *idea* that different types of birds eat different things.**

- A. Seeds and berries are nutritious.
- B. Some birds feed on plants.
- C. Birds eat with their beaks.
- D. Fish, snakes, and rodents are food sources for birds.
- E. Some birds eat insects.
- F. Parrots and penguins are different types of birds.

Idea Practice

Answer Key

1. Which sentence(s) distracts from the **idea** of this writing?

Birds are vanishing from North America. The number of birds in the United States and Canada has fallen by 29 percent since 1970. There are 2.9 billion fewer birds now than there were 50 years ago. **Birds are intelligent animals.** Experts have known that some bird species are at risk of extinction. A recent study shows steep losses of robins and sparrows.

2. Does the following paragraph have a clear **idea**? If not, provide an explanation.

There is a lot to know about birds. What is your favorite bird? Songbirds, parrots, and other species are common pets. Many bird species migrate to different places because of seasonal temperatures. Birds live in small family groups or large flocks.

It's difficult to understand because it has different ideas that don't link together. There is no common thread.

3. Does the following paragraph have a clear **idea**? If not, provide an explanation.

Bird feathers are made of keratin, just like your fingernails. At the center of the feather is a hollow shaft. Connected to the shaft are lots of thin branches called barbs. Connected to the barbs are even smaller branches called barbules. All of these branches make a light structure that can gather air to fly.

This paragraph has a clear idea and makes sense.

4. Select the following statements that support the **idea** that different types of birds eat different things.

A. Seeds and berries are nutritious.

B. Some birds feed on plants.

C. Birds eat with their beaks.

D. Fish, snakes, and rodents are food sources for birds.

E. Some birds eat insects.

F. Parrots and penguins are different types of birds.

Organizing a Paragraph

The paragraph is out of order. Rewrite the paragraph to reflect a topic sentence, details in order, and a concluding sentence.

I felt my face turn bright red as I realized my mistake. I was so excited because I love penguins, and I knew everything about them. It was the most embarrassing moment of my life! But as soon as I stood up to speak, I accidentally called them "pengroos" instead of penguins! Everyone started laughing, even the teacher! When I was in fourth grade, I had to give a presentation about my favorite animal in front of the whole class. I tried to correct myself, but the damage was done. From that day on, whenever someone mentioned penguins, everyone would giggle and say, "Don't you mean pengroos?"

Organizing a Paragraph

Answer Key

When I was in fourth grade, I had to give a presentation about my favorite animal in front of the whole class. I was so excited because I love penguins, and I knew everything about them. But as soon as I stood up to speak, I accidentally called them "pengroos" instead of penguins! Everyone started laughing, even the teacher! I felt my face turn bright red as I realized my mistake. I tried to correct myself, but the damage was done. From that day on, whenever someone mentioned penguins, everyone would giggle and say, "Don't you mean pengroos?" It was the most embarrassing moment of my life!

Name _____ Date _____

Topic Sentence and Conclusion Practice

They love munching on fruits like bananas, apples, and oranges. Just like us, they enjoy snacks, like nuts and seeds, too. But guess what? Monkeys are also adventurous eaters! They sometimes chow down on insects, leaves, and even flowers. It's like they have their own jungle buffet! And you know what's really funny? Some monkeys even eat small animals, like bugs and birds.

First, find a safe place to practice, like a park or an empty parking lot. Make sure your bike is the right size for you and that your helmet is on tight to keep your noggin safe. Next, hop on your bike and put your feet on the pedals. Push off with one foot and start pedaling slowly. Keep your eyes on where you're going and try to balance by keeping your body straight. If you feel wobbly, don't worry! Just keep practicing and soon you'll be riding like a pro. Remember to use your brakes gently when you want to stop and always look out for obstacles like rocks or other people.

Topic Sentence and Conclusion Practice

Model topic sentences and conclusions

Monkeys are super cool because they eat all kinds of yummy stuff! They love munching on fruits like bananas, apples, and oranges. Just like us, they enjoy snacks, like nuts and seeds, too. But guess what? Monkeys are also adventurous eaters! They sometimes chow down on insects, leaves, and even flowers. It's like they have their own jungle buffet! And you know what's really funny? Some monkeys even eat small animals, like bugs and birds. It might sound weird, but for monkeys, it's just another tasty treat!

Riding a bike is super fun and easy once you get the hang of it! First, find a safe place to practice, like a park or an empty parking lot. Make sure your bike is the right size for you and that your helmet is on tight to keep your noggin safe. Next, hop on your bike and put your feet on the pedals. Push off with one foot and start pedaling slowly. Keep your eyes on where you're going and try to balance by keeping your body straight. If you feel wobbly, don't worry! Just keep practicing and soon you'll be riding like a pro. Remember to use your brakes gently when you want to stop and always look out for obstacles like rocks or other people. With a little patience and practice, you'll be cruising around like a champ in no time!

Name _____ Date _____

Sentence Fluency Practice

One day I learned to ride a bike. My uncle was there. My bike was new. It was a nice day. My uncle ran alongside. I noticed I was riding all by myself.
