

6-Traits Icon

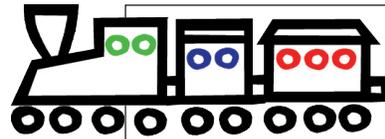
RATIONALE

When thinking of how to introduce the traits to your writers, consider incorporating a building-wide set of visual icons that represent each trait. Not only do students hear the same trait words from year to year, but they see the same graphics. This begins to develop building-wide consistency in implementation and writing expectations.



IDEAS

The light bulb is used for **ideas**. It represents the **topic** of the writing. Depending on the size of the light bulb, it can also represent how **narrow the topic** is. If you think of the light bulb on a dimmer switch, it can be compared to the number of **details** — few details, the light is low; many details and the light is bright!



ORGANIZATION

For **organization**, the concrete image of a **three-car train** reminds students they can have multiple sentences/paragraphs within the body of their writing (**middle cars**), but they should always have an engine (**beginning**) and caboose (**ending**). Note also that the train cars are in order (**sequence**), and they are hooked together (**transitions**).



VOICE

A writer's **voice** can change, depending on the topic he is writing about. A **reader** should be able to "hear" a writer's voice, tone or **attitude about the topic**— *frustrated, hopeful, confident, serious, etc.* The use of **facial expressions** can help students determine voice. How do they *feel* about the topic?



WORD CHOICE

Specific vocabulary or **word choice** comes down to the right word in the right spot. Think of this as exact language, **right on target**, bull's-eye writing. The outer ring of the target represents the general and vague words (e.g., blue). The middle ring represents a more specific word, (e.g., light blue), but still not exact word choice. The center ring identifies the **specific word choice or WOW words** that are exact and precise (e.g., periwinkle blue).



SENTENCE FLUENCY

Sentence fluency is an auditory trait. You don't read fluency; you hear it. You hear the **variety of sentences** and the way they play off each other. You hear the music of **figurative language**. You hear the **ease and readability** of the piece. In the classroom, teachers often have students reread their writings aloud into a whisper phone to check for sentence completeness and whether or not it "sounds good." Hearing it back through a **phone** is how many check for fluency.



CONVENTIONS

All writers utilize tools from their **conventions toolbox**. These include **capitalization, spelling, punctuation, grammar, paragraph indents, word spacing**, etc. These tools are designed to help the reader through the writing more easily.