6 Traits of Writing

A breakdown of the new 2014 Language Arts Indiana Academic Standards

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Evidence in Text:

- Writer selects topic he knows about and has recent knowledge of/experience with
  - Identify relevant personal experiences as sources of information on a topic. K.W.5
  - Find information on a topic or question of interest. 1.W.5, 2.W.5, 3.W.5, 4.W.5

- Writer addresses all aspects of the writing task
  - Write for a range of tasks and purposes. 6.W.1, 7.W.1, 8.W.1, 9-10.W.1, 11-12.W.1

- Topic narrowed to manageable proportions
  - Provide a clear main idea. 3.W.3.2, 4.W.3.2, 5.W.3.2
  - Express ideas precisely and concisely. 6.W.3.2
  - Refine and narrow the focus... 9-10.W.5, 11-12.W.5

- Ideas are focused (stays on topic)

- Sub-topics within the writing are developed (more than a list of undeveloped sentences)
  - Add simple details. K.W.4
  - Use words and pictures to develop a main idea. K.W.3.2
  - Give multiple reasons. 1.W.3.1, 2.W.3.1
  - Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying evidence for each. 9-10.W.3.1, 11-12.W.3.1

- Relevant and interesting details/examples/support included
  - Use words and pictures to provide reasons K.W.3.1
  - Identify relevant pictures, charts, texts, experiences, or people as sources of information on a topic. K.W.5

- Ideas and information are paraphrased
  - Record relevant information; summarize in own words. K.W.5, 1.W.5, 2.W.5, 3.W.5
  - Avoid overreliance on any one source. 9-10.W.5, 11-12.W.5

- Info is selected based on prior knowledge of the audience
  - Point out strengths and limitations of evidence, anticipating the audience's knowledge level and concerns. 9-10.W.3.1, 11-12.W.3.1
  - Develop the writing as appropriate to the audience's knowledge level of the topic. 9-10.W.3.2, 11-12.W.3.2
  - Address what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. 9-10.W.4, 11-12.W.4

- Reader questions are anticipated and answered
  - Anticipate audience's knowledge level and concerns. 9-10.W.3.1, 11-12.W.3.1

Evidence in Pictures:

- A main idea, action, or event expressed
  - Use words and pictures to suggest a particular course of action. K.W.3.1
  - Use words and pictures to develop a main idea. K.W.3.2
  - Use words and pictures to narrate a single event or simple story. K.W.3.3

- Characters depicted
  - A setting drawn
    - Describe places. K.SL.4.1, 1.SL.4.1

- Little, close-up picture details included
  - Provide some information about a topic. K.W.3.2
  - Add simple details. K.W.4

- Signs of movement included

- Multiple pictures tell a more complex story

- Pictures match words spoken (Listen to their details within their oral storytelling/explanation)
  - Describe people, places, things, and events. K.SL.4.1, 1.SL.4.1

Evidence in Early Writing:

- Pictures match letters/word-labels
  - Use words and pictures to develop a main idea and provide some information about a topic. K.W.3.2

- One, more than one, statement
  - Write sentences. K.W.6.1a, K.W.6.1b, 1.W.6.1c

- Listen for the expression of ideas and details (Oral storytelling happens before written stories)
  - Describe people, places, things, and events. K.SL.4.1, 1.SL.4.1
Evidence in Text:

- **Title grabs the reader’s attention**
- **Captivating/Inviting beginning or introduction**
  - Suggest/Propose an idea. K.W.3.1, 1.W.3.1
  - Introduce claim(s) and acknowledge alternate/counter-claims. 7.W.3.1, 8.W.3.1, 9-10.W.3.1, 11-12.W.3.1
- **Information revealed is unified and relevant (focused; stays on topic)**
- **Pacing is intentional— parts are developed thoroughly; others are skimmed**
- **Ideas are linked by fluid transitions**
  - Use temporal words to signal event order. 1.W.3.3, 2.W.3.3
  - Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one setting to another. 6.W.3.3, 7.W.3.3, 8.W.3.3
- **Sense of completion/resolution**
  - Organize ideas into a beginning, middle, and ending. 1.W.3.3
  - Provide a concluding statement. 1.W.3.2
- **Reader is satisfied with ending**

Evidence in Pictures:

- **Balance on the page— good use of white space**
- **Balance within pictures: proportion, sizing, two sides that match**
- **Use of a title (an early version of introductions)**
- **More than one event, drawn to show order**
  - Arranging ideas in order. K.W.3.3
- **Listen to their organization within their oral storytelling/explanation**
  - Tell a story or recount an experience in an organized manner. 2.SL.4.1
  - Give 2-step directions. K.SL.4.3
  - Give 3- and 4-step directions. 1.SL.4.3

Evidence in Early Writing:

- **Pictures and text that enhance one another**
  - Use words and pictures to develop a main idea. K.W.3.2
- **Use of a title or label**
- **Progression of drawn ideas: comparing two things**
  - Organize ideas into a beginning, middle, and end. 1.W.3.3
- **Words that suggest beginning: one day, yesterday, etc.**
- **Words that connect ideas: and, and then, next**
  - Use temporal words to signal event order. 1.W.3.3, 2.W.3.3
- **Words that suggest conclusion: the end, goodbye, thank you**
  - Provide a concluding statement. 1.W.3.2
Evidence in Text:

- **Writer is interested in the topic; he cares about the topic**
  — Identify a topic of interest. 2.W.5, 3.W.5
- **Writing may reflect the personality of the writer**
- **Reader can interpret the writer’s “attitude” toward the topic (e.g., playful, angry, frustrated, joyful, etc.)**
- **In expository writing, the writer sounds confident and authoritative (like an expert)**
  — Use appropriate language/vocabulary to support a tone and formality appropriate to the topic. 5.W.3.2
- **Reader can interpret a character’s “attitude” toward the situation (in narrative writing)**
  — Provide details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings. 2.W.3.3
  — Include dialogue. 3.W.3.3, 4.W.3.3
  — Reveal character personalities, feelings, and responses. 4.W.3.3, 5.W.3.3
- **Writing may demonstrate a creative perspective/attitude**
- **Tone is appropriate for purpose and audience**
  — Use language and vocabulary appropriate for audience. 4.W.3.2, 5.W.3.1, 5.W.3.2
  — Use a variety of techniques to... build toward a particular tone (e.g., a sense of mystery, suspense, growth, or resolution). 11-12.W.3.3
- **Awareness of audience (elicits a strong reader response)**
  — Write to a particular or identified audience. 1.W.3.1, 4.W.3.1, 5.W.3.1
  — Anticipate audience’s knowledge level and concerns. 9-10.W.3.1, 11-12.W.3.1
- **Writing that makes a connection to a personal memory of the reader**
- **Writing that communicates directly with the audience (e.g., questions, parentheses, etc.)**
  — Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements. 6.W.6.1e
- **Writing that anticipates readers’ questions**
- **A detail that makes the reader feel something**
- **Readers want to share the writing with others**

Evidence in Pictures:

- **Feelings conveyed through choice of color and close-up details**
- **Characters’ faces show feeling/voice**
- **Readers want to share the writing with others**
- **Listen to the voice within their oral storytelling/explanation**
  — Communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes. K.SL.1
  — Adjust the use of spoken language to communicate effectively. 1.SL.1
  — Add drawings to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings. 1.SL.4.2

Evidence in Early Writing:

- **Words that convey feelings (e.g., fun, cool, happy, sad, etc.)**
  — Correctly use exclamation mark. K.W.6.2b
  — Write exclamatory sentences. 1.W.6.1e
- **Voice-filled conventions (e.g., exclamation points, all-capital letters, underlined words, bold words, etc.)**
  — Correctly use exclamation mark. K.W.6.2b
  — Write exclamatory sentences. 1.W.6.1e
- **Attempts to increase feeling/attitude with really and very**
- **Language written into speech/dialogue bubbles**
- **Readers want to share the writing with others**
Evidence in Text:

- **Accurate words & phrasing (v. thesaurus pickers)**

- **Precise words & phrasing (v. vague/general)**
  - Use precise words to describe characters and actions. 1.W.3.3
  - Use vocabulary appropriate for topic. 4.W.3.2
  - Use appropriate vocabulary to convey meaning. 5.W.3.2
  - Use precise and expressive vocabulary for effect. 5.W.3.3

- **Original words & phrasing (v. clichés)**

- **Concise language**

- **Minimal redundancy**

- **Show, don’t tell**
  - Use descriptive details. 2.W.3.3, 3.W.3.3

- **Strong action verbs**

Evidence in Pictures:

- **Pretend writing (the squiggle line)**

- **Listen to student word choice within oral storytelling/explanation**
  - Describe familiar people, places, things, and events. K.SL.4.1, 1.SL.4.1

Evidence in Early Writing:

- **Language woven into picture (on signs, on shirts, on vehicles, etc.)**
  - Use words and pictures to provide logical reasons. K.W.3.1
  - Use words and pictures to develop a main idea. K.W.3.2
  - Use words and pictures to narrate a single event or simple story. K.W.3.3

- **Words written of any kind (e.g., single letters, letter strings, letter combinations, consonants only, etc.)**

- **Words you can read & make sense of**

- **Synonyms to replace**
  - nice, fun, cool, like, love, very, really, good

- **Specific verbs**
  - Write sentences that include verbs. K.W.6.1b, 1.W.6.1b
  - Write sentences using verbs to convey a sense of past, present, and future. 1.W.6.1b

- **Specific adjectives**
  - Use precise words to describe characters. 1.W.3.3
  - Write sentences that use adjectives and adverbs. 2.W.6.1c

- **5 sensory words**
  - Provide some details about the topic. 1.W.3.2
  - Recount an experience with careful attention to sensory details. 2.SL.4.1

- **Big words using s-t-r-e-t-c-h-e-d o-u-t spelling strategies**
  - Spell words phonetically. K.W.6.2c, 1.W.6.2c
Evidence in Text:

- Easy to read aloud the first time through
- Varied sentence lengths/structures (simple, compound, complex)
  — Revise to improve sentence fluency. 3.W.4, 4.W.4, 5.W.4
  — Use varied syntax. 11-12.W.3.1
- Varied sentence beginnings
- Varied sentence types (declarative, interrogative, exclamatory)
  — Recognize that there are different kinds of sentences. K.W.6.1e
- “Deadwood” has been cut; every word counts
- Use of parallel structure
  — Identify and use parallelism in all writing to present items in a series and items juxtaposed for emphasis. 9-10.W.6.1e
- Use of figurative language
  — Use figurative language for effect. 5.W.3.3, 11-12.W.3.2
- Natural ordering of words in a series
  — Order adjectives according to conventional patterns. 4.L.1d
- Vary sentences for impact/effect
  — Use appropriate sentence variety to convey meaning; for effect. 5.W.3.2
  — Vary sentence patterns for meaning, reader interest, and style. 7.W.6.1e

Evidence in Pictures:

- Listen to the fluency of their oral storytelling/explanation
  — Use complete sentences to describe familiar people, places, things, and events. K.SL.4.1

Evidence in Early Writing:

- Writer can read back what the writer wrote
- Reader can read the writing without the writer’s help
- Appearance of sentence (word groupings or conventional sentence)
- Multiple sentences, patterned or not
- Varied sentence beginnings
- Mixture of statements and questions and exclamations
  — Recognize that there are different kinds of sentences. K.W.6.1e
  — Write complete simple declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory sentences. 1.W.6.1e
  — Correctly use a period, question mark, and exclamation mark at the end of a sentence. 1.W.6.2b
- Mixture of long and short sentences
- Dialogue/Speech bubbles that echo the way people really speak
Evidence in Early Writing:

- Letters that appear upright and closed
- Letters that face the right direction
- Left to right and top-to-bottom orientation
  — Write by moving from left to right and top to bottom. K.W.2.2

- Distinction between upper & lowercase (whether correct or not)
  — Identify and name all uppercase and lowercase letters. K.RF.2.4
  — Write all uppercase and lowercase letters. 1.W.2.1

- Association of letters with sounds (phonics)
  — Understand and apply knowledge of phonics. K.RF.1, 1.RF.1, 2.RF.1
  — Spell simple words phonetically. K.W.6.2c
  — Review (edit) writing for correct spelling of simple words. K.W.4

- Readable spelling

- Utilize environmental print for spelling support
  — Correctly spell high-frequency words. 1.W.6.2c, 2.W.6.2c

- Writing on a line

- Spaces between words or lines
  — Space letters, words, and sentences appropriately. 1.W.2.1
  — Space words and sentences properly. 2.W.2.1
  — Leave space between letters in a word, words in a sentence, and words & the edges of the paper. 3.W.2.1

- Use of the capitalized “I”
  — Capitalize the pronoun “I.” K.W.6.2a, 1.W.6.2a

- Beginning sentence capitals
  — Capitalize the first word of a sentence. K.W.6.2a, 1.W.6.2a
  — Edit writing for basic capitalization. 1.W.4
  — Recognize the components of a sentence (e.g., capitalization). 1.RF.3.4

- Use of end punctuation
  — Recognize and name end punctuation. K.W.6.2b
  — Correctly use periods, question marks, and exclamation marks at the end of a sentence. 1.W.6.2b
  — Edit writing for end punctuation. 1.W.4
Evidence in Text:

• Appropriate use of capitalization in different situations

• Correct use of sentence punctuation
  — Recognize sentence fragments and run-ons. 6.W.6.1e, 7.W.6.1e
  — Use commas
    • in dates and to separate items in a series. 1.W.6.2b
    • in letter greetings & closings, dates, & items in a series. 2.W.6.2b
    • in locations and addresses; to mark direct speech; and for coordinating adjectives (e.g., a small, red bicycle). 3.W.6.2b
    • before a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence. 4.W.6.2b
    • for appositives, to set off the words yes and no, to set off a tag question from the rest of the sentence, and to indicate direct address. 5.W.6.2b
    • with subordinate clauses. 7.W.6.2b
  — Use punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause, break, or omission. 8.W.6.2b
  — Use semicolons to connect main clauses and colons to introduce a list or quotation. 6.W.6.1b
  — Use a semicolon and a conjunctive adverb to link two or more closely related independent clauses. 9-10.W.6.2b
  — Use an apostrophe to form contractions and possessives. 2.W.6.2b, 3.W.6.2b, 4.W.6.2b
  — Punctuate dialogue/speech. 3.W.6.2b, 4.W.6.2b
  — Apply correct use of apostrophes and quotation marks in writing. 5.W.6.2b
  — Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements. 6.W.6.1e

• Paragraph indenting is appropriate
  — Write a logically connected paragraph. 2.W.3.1, 2.W.3.2
  — Organize sentences and paragraphs logically. 5.W.3.2

• Spelling correctness
    • Correctly spell words with common spelling patterns. 1.W.6.2c
    • Correctly spell common irregularly spelled and grade-appropriate high-frequency words. 1.W.6.2c, 2.W.6.2c
    • Correctly spell words with short and long vowel sounds, r-controlled vowels, and consonant-blend patterns. 2.W.6.2c
    • Use conventional spelling for high-frequency words and other studied words and for adding affixes to base words. 3.W.6.2c
    • Use spelling patterns and generalizations when writing. 3.W.6.2c, 4.W.6.2c
  — Apply correct spelling patterns and generalizations when writing. 5.W.6.2c
  — Apply conventions learned previously. 6.W.6.2c, 7.W.6.2c, 8.W.6.2c, 9-10.W.6.2c, 11-12.W.6.2c

• Correct use of grammar and mechanics
  — Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb tense. 4.W.6.1b, 8.W.6.1b
  — Use a variety of pronouns; recognize and correct vague pronouns. 6.W.6.1a
  — Recognize and correct problems with subject/verb agreement. 7.W.6.1b
  — Recognize and correct misplaced and dangling modifiers. 7.W.6.1d
  — Form and use active and passive voice. 8.W.6.1b
  — Form and use verbs in indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive moods. 9-10.W.6.1b

• Level of convention formality matches the purpose, audience, topic, and genre of the writing
  — Use appropriate language, vocabulary, sentence variety to support a tone and formality appropriate to the topic. 5.W.3.2

• Manipulate conventions for stylistic effect