



# Six Traits of Writing

## An Introduction

*Best-practice strategies for teaching K-12 writing*

**SIMPLE & EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE ACHIEVEMENT IN WRITING**

### Online Workshop Overview

This dynamic online workshop utilizes video footage from a full-day Smekens workshop to equip K-12 teachers with the knowledge and tools they need to start teaching the Six Traits of Writing right away. Whether you need to learn a lot about the Six Traits in a hurry or want a “refresher” workshop to get you back on track, this introductory training led by Kristina Smekens provides teachers with the confidence and resources they need to begin implementing the Six Traits model.



### Workshop Topics

- Answers to the questions “What are the Six Traits?” & “Where did they come from?”
- Explanation of how to recognize the Six Traits in pictorial writing (K-1), intermediate writing (grades 2-5), and secondary writing (grades 6-12).
- How the Six Traits unify your instruction of state and national standards and the expectations of state/national writing assessments.
- Ways to introduce the trait language to students of all ages.
- Numerous trait-based mini-lesson ideas to target common writing weaknesses.

### When you complete the workshop you'll be able to

- ▶ Initiate an intentional Six-Traits introduction with your students.
- ▶ Establish a common language and understanding of the traits for the rest of the school year.
- ▶ Better articulate to your students what “good” writing looks and sounds like.
- ▶ Recognize the Six Traits within your students’ writing.
- ▶ Connect each lesson in your writing curriculum to a trait.
- ▶ Teach students *how* to improve their writing in each of the trait areas.

*“My mind has been blown. I can’t wait to start teaching the 6 Traits. I feel like I have somewhere to start now, and I feel confident about it.”*

**Jennifer Miller**, teacher at Eastside Elementary School, Brazil, IN

### Who benefits?

- K-6 Classroom Teachers
- 6-12 Language Arts Teachers
- K-12 High-Ability Teachers
- ELL Teachers
- Literacy Coaches / Coordinators
- Curriculum Directors
- Title I Teachers / Directors
- Principals & Assistant Principals

### WORKSHOP OUTLINE

#### Identify the Traits

- Describe “good” writing
- Utilize web resources & Six-Traits icons
- Identify the Traits:
  - Ideas, Organization, Voice, Word Choice, Sentence Fluency, Conventions, & Presentation

- Connect the traits to the standards

#### Introduce the Traits

- Plan an intentional trait introduction:
  - Six-Trait icons, Mentor texts, Trait characters, & Upper-Grade applications

- Initiate a yearlong visual display

- Provide daily writing experiences

- Juggle reading and writing experiences

#### Teach the Traits

- Trait-based mini-lessons:
  - Ideas, Organization, Word Choice, Voice, Sentence Fluency, & Conventions

#### Total time to complete:

*5-6 hours; (allotted time to complete the online workshop: 30 days)*

#### Instructor:

**Kristina Smekens**  
*President & Lead Consultant for Smekens Education Solutions*

# WHAT ARE THE Six Traits of Writing

## AND WHY SHOULD I TEACH THEM?

### Continuing Education Credit

With prior approval from the registrant's school district, participants may receive credit for 5 hours of professional development for this webAcademy online workshop. Attendees who choose the "Verified View" option may download a completion certificate after completing the online workshop. For possible Illinois-approved credit, please contact our office, support@smekenseducation.com or call (888) 376-0448.

### Graduate-Level Units

Thanks to a partnership with the University of the Pacific, educators who complete a webAcademy workshop are eligible to pursue 1, 2, or 3 nationally-accredited graduate-level semester units. To earn graduate-level units, participants must select the "Verified View" enrollment option. The cost of graduate-level units (\$62 per unit) is separate from the cost of the online workshop.

Graduate-level units offered through the University of the Pacific are non-degree units which are designed for professional certification renewals and salary step increases. (The units are post-baccalaureate professional development semester units of non-degree graduate level and are not applicable to a degree at University of the Pacific.) To learn more, contact our office—support@smekenseducation.com or call (888) 376-0448.

Primary-age students learn to use the traits in both pictures and words.

The Six Traits of Writing are rooted in more than 20 years of research which shows that all "good" writing has six key ingredients— ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions. These key components make up the Six Traits writing model, which is simply a framework for teaching and assessing all types of writing at every stage of writing development.

### Are the Traits of Writing part of a "program"?

The traits of writing are nothing more than six words. These six terms provide a common language between teachers and students and guide the instruction and assessment of writing. While there are many valuable tools available to support the traits model, this is not a "canned" program and does not require the purchase of additional resources.

### Do the traits align with the standards?

The College & Career-Ready Standards have the traits embedded within them. Regardless of the textbook or curriculum used, the traits of writing are inherently present. Teaching writing with the Six Traits as a framework does not mean abandoning the things that are already working in the classroom.

### What makes the Six Traits of Effective Writing training series unique?

Teachers who watch this series will receive the tools and motivation they need to begin implementing the traits in their own classrooms right away. Unlike any other Six Traits workshop in the country, this powerful online workshop is focused on strategies, not theory. Yes, the strategies are rooted in theory, but our mission is to equip teachers with practical, classroom-tested ideas for teaching and assessing the traits at any grade level.



### Writers utilize the Six Traits of Writing when they —



IDEAS

Elaborate effectively on a single topic to convey a clear message.



ORGANIZATION

Reveal ideas within a logical order, including a beginning, middle, and end.



VOICE

Increase reader engagement with intentional writer feeling, attitude, and emotion.



WORD CHOICE

Use the right word in the right place to convey just the right meaning.



SENTENCE FLUENCY

Improve the readability of a piece with complete thoughts and sentence variety.



CONVENTIONS

Make writing more correct by following rules of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and grammar.

### Direct Ties to Standards

The strategies shared during this webAcademy online workshop target the reading and writing standards outlined within the College & Career-Ready Standards.



Students of all ages can use the traits to assess all genres of writing and drive revision.

## ABOUT THE PRESENTER

# Kristina Smekens

Kristina Smekens is a full-time literacy consultant who has built a reputation for using enthusiasm, humor, and common sense to equip K-12 educators with practical, demystifying strategies for teaching reading and writing.

As president and lead consultant for Smekens Education, Kristina is constantly developing new strategies for helping teachers to meet the demands of today's College and Career-Ready Standards. She and her associates share those strategies with teachers across the United States and beyond through on-site professional development, regional seminars, and an always-growing pool of print, digital, and video resources.

### A PRESENTER

Kristina has a gift for making the complex seem simple—for showing teachers how to meet the needs of readers and writers by bridging the gap between education research and practical, classroom-tested strategies that work. When she presents at state and national conferences, teachers flock to her sessions because they know Kristina will share strategies they can use in their own classrooms the very next day.

But beyond providing teachers with practical classroom techniques, Kristina is also a master at giving educators the motivation and encouragement they need to return to their classrooms with confidence and excitement to execute change. To stay connected, Kristina sends out a weekly newsletter, "Big Ideas." Thousands of teachers watch their email each Tuesday for it to arrive.

### AN AUTHOR

Well known for offering innovative ideas, Kristina has created more than 50 "Smekens Originals," a compilation of books, guides, and classroom tools designed to help teachers implement best-practice literacy strategies. Among the most popular of these resources are her best-selling books, *Launching the Writer's Workshop: Grades K-2* and *Grades 3-12*. Other popular publications include *The Trait Mate: 6-Traits Starter Lessons*, *Connecting Comprehension*



*& Composition, Sing & Comprehend, Close Reading Questions for Literature, Close Reading Questions for Informational Text, Trait Trackers, and Serving Up Synthesis.* Additionally, Kristina is the author of *Trait-Based Writing: Lessons and Activities* (Scholastic, 2009).

### A CRAFTER

Beyond books and physical teacher tools, Kristina has also created a library of on-demand professional learning videos that are utilized by teachers around the world. With topics ranging from "Building Kid-Friendly Writing Rubrics" to "Achieving a Close Reading," each of Kristina's "webPD" videos uses a seminar-style format to capture her energy and enthusiasm while conveying her teacher-friendly ideas.

### BACKGROUND

Kristina earned her BA in English and education at Michigan State University. Prior to her full-time consulting career, she was an accomplished high school English and journalism teacher in Michigan and Indiana. A leader in state and national scholastic journalism endeavors, Kristina authored a journalism textbook and teachers' guide for Walsworth Publishing in 2002.

Over the years, she has been blessed to work and learn with hundreds of schools and thousands of teachers throughout the Midwest. She was awarded the Excellence in Reading Award by the Indiana State Reading Association in 2013 for her contributions to literacy in Indiana.

Kristina lives in Warren, Indiana with her husband and business partner Brady, their three teenage children, and a rambunctious family dog named Buddy.

*"Kristina just takes the guess work out of everything to make it ALL make sense!"*

**Nicki King**, teacher, Union Furnace Elementary, Logan, OH

*"Oh. My. Goodness. Kristina is an amazing and entertaining presenter! Her energy is SO motivating and inspirational! Loved it ALL!"*

**Staci Rooze**, teacher at Wea Ridge Middle School, Lafayette, IN

*"Kristina was fantastic! I learned new and exciting strategies to improve student writing."*

**Jenae McKnight**, instructional coach, Lake Ridge New Tech Schools, Gary, IN

*"I feel more prepared to dig deeper into skills that will help my students perform better on state testing. These skills will also help my students become better reading and writers."*

**Megan Joseph**, teacher at Warren Middle School, Vincent, OH

*"Kristina covered every topic I needed to bring back with me. I will be sharing several takeaways with not only the reading teachers—but the science and social studies teachers. She spoke to all levels of learning. Her knowledge of the material and the standards was spot on."*

**Julie Wandrie**, teacher at Saint Paul Lutheran School, Westlake, OH

*"After 33 years of teaching, I still am drawn back into Kristina's workshops because they are research-based, standards-focused, and very interactive."*

**Katie Cadle**, teacher, Paoli Community Schools, Paoli, IN

# Six Traits of Writing: An Introduction

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

District/Diocese: \_\_\_\_\_

School name: \_\_\_\_\_

School address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

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**WEBCADEMY WORKSHOP FEE:** Online workshop sharing not allowed.

One person **\$139**

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**More than 15?**  
Call us at (888) 376-0448 for custom pricing.

**PAYMENT:**

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TOTAL NUMBER OF REGISTRANTS: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE YOU WOULD LIKE TO START? \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

**TOTAL PURCHASE AMOUNT:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**CHOOSE A VIEWING OPTION:**

**Flexible View**  
No completion certificates are awarded, but you have the flexibility to jump ahead in the video.

**Verified View**  
A completion certificate is available for download at the end of the online workshop video, but you do not have the flexibility to jump ahead.

**WHO'S VIEWING THIS WORKSHOP?** To register more than 5, please submit this form with an Excel file that contains a list of the registrants' names and email addresses to [webacademy@smekenseducation.com](mailto:webacademy@smekenseducation.com).

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**TO ENROLL:**

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or EMAIL THIS FORM – with a school purchase order to [webacademy@smekenseducation.com](mailto:webacademy@smekenseducation.com)

## TERMS OF USE

We encourage enrolled participants to take advantage of all the features webAcademy has to offer. In doing so, participants agree to the following terms of use:

- 1 Login information and video access may NOT be shared with any individual who is not enrolled in the online workshop.
- 2 Unauthorized sharing of login access will result in a non-refundable cancellation of any and all active online workshops.
- 3 Subscribers are not permitted to reprint, republish, repost or otherwise distribute any content or images from an online workshop.

**MUST AGREE & SIGN**

\_\_\_\_\_

By checking & signing, you agree with the **Terms of Use**.

## Group Registration Process

To register a group of teachers, complete the form on this page and fax it with a purchase order to webAcademy at 888-376-0489. After a purchase order is received, a professional development specialist will email each registrant with instructions for accessing the online workshop.

## Satisfaction Guarantee

Every online workshop comes with a 100% money-back guarantee. If you aren't satisfied, contact Brady Smekens within the first 10 days of your purchase.

## Secret Site Digital Resources

Registrants receive lifetime access to a password-protected web page that contains a treasure trove of lessons, videos, and other resources for implementation.

