The writing you get out of students is only as good as the classroom literature that surrounds and sustains it. Ralph Fletcher

Picture books can be the best teaching tool to model the writer’s craft. Teacher’s can analyze pieces of literature to show the six traits of writing.

Six traits is a language to help kids talk about writing. The foundation for early reading and writing is in language. Use language with students and give them opportunities to use language.

The Writing Process

Prewriting
First Draft
Revising
Editing
Publishing Doesn’t always have to go down to the bottom.

Prewriting begins with choosing a topic that is worthwhile to explore. First Draft is where the pencil meets the paper. Revising deals with organization, sequencing, voice and word choice. Editing deals with conventions. “Fixing the writing is courteous to the reader.” Only 1 out of 10 pieces of writing should be published. - Donald Graves
6-Traits of Quality Writing

Ideas - The content of the piece
• Clarity - makes sense
• Focus - relevant details, manageable size
• Elaborate - Quality Details - beyond obvious and general

Organization - The internal structure
• Catching opening
  • Sequencing - logical and effective
  • Transitions - linking ideas and paragraphs
  • Effective ending
***Bold beginnings, mighty middles, and excellent endings.

Voice - Personal Quality - Who is the writer?
• Flavor or tone appropriate to the purpose and audience
• Emotions - a strong consistent emotion or a range of emotions
  • Involvement, enthusiasm and integrity

Word Choice - Correct and Accurate use of language
• Vivid, precise and memorable words
  • Try a new way to say things
  • Sensory words
• Effective, original use of everyday words - no boring words (went, like, said)

Sentence Fluency - How it sounds when read aloud
• Rhythm and cadence - how does it sound?
  • Smooth and easy flow
• Variety of sentence beginnings, length and patterning - highlight
  • Read sentences aloud

Conventions - Mechanics of the writing
• Beginning conventions - concept of print, letter direction, spaces
  • Spelling - accountability for high frequency words
  • Punctuation - use to enhance meaning
• Capital letters - proper nouns, beginning of sentences

In Kindergarten and 1st grade practice a lot of these skills with shared or interactive writing. Class books (each child does a page) are also an easy way to practice “the writer’s craft” with young children.
You Have To Write - Janet S. Wong

366 ideas to share. Have kids keep a list in their writing folder. Parents can complete a list of things they would want their child to write about this year.

Get kids to practice writing, by having them practice speaking. With partners have them share about 1 of a few topics you give them to choose from.

"Hi, Pizza Man! " - Virginia Walter
Use this book to show it doesn’t always have to be great words, have great picture.

Pigeon Finds a Hot Dog - Mo Willems  Pigeon Wants a Puppy - Mo Willems
Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus - Mo Willems

These are great books to show kids another reason to write. Tell the reader about something you want. Great for teaching conventions of writing.

Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge - Mem Fox
Get kids to write about memories. Something warm, something from long ago, something that makes you cry, something that makes you laugh, something as precious as gold, something...

Bring things in to spark memories to write about.

I'm in Charge of Celebrations - Byrd Baylor
Have kids create a special "holiday" that they want to celebrate.

It's OK to Be Different - Todd Parr
Have kids draw things about themselves (or collage magazine pictures).
Write about what makes you different from classmates.
It's OK to _____.

If Dogs Were Dinosaurs - If You Hopped Like a Frog - David M. Schwartz
If Frogs Made the Weather - Bauer
Write about "What if...?"

Imagine a Day - Sarah L. Thomson
Write about something that is impossible. This is a great book for teaching kids to use their imaginations.

The Perfect Pet - Margie Palatini  A Dog Needs a Bone - Audrey Wood
I Wanna Iguana -Orloff  Not Norman - A Goldfish Story - Kelly Bennett
Have students write a letter of persuasion about why they should get something (a pet, a baby sister, etc.).
Dear ________________,

(Child’s name)

I would love it if you would write about these things this year.

1. ______________________________________________________

2. ______________________________________________________

3. ______________________________________________________

4. ______________________________________________________

5. ______________________________________________________

6. ______________________________________________________

7. ______________________________________________________

8. ______________________________________________________

9. ______________________________________________________

Love,

____________________
All the Places to Love – Patricia MacLachlan
  Students write about their “special place.” This provides lots of opportunities for using details to describe the place.

Just Another Ordinary Day – Rod Clement
  The words in this book are ordinary; the illustrations are not ordinary. Get kids to write about ordinary happenings, but have them illustrate with crazy things.
  First, read the book without showing the illustrations.

Nothing Ever Happens on 90th Street – Roni Schotter

Too Many Toys – David Shannon

Alphabet City – Stephen Johnson
  Authors can see things differently than others. Go on a walk. What do you see that other people don’t see? Letters on building, numbers, shapes, etc.
  Good for ideas and details.
City By Numbers – Stephen Johnson

I Am America – Charles R. Smith
  This is another great book to celebrate diversity. Have children write about how they are alike and different.

Plot Chickens – Auch Tells all the elements of a good story.
The Best Story – Spinelli
  Write about what ever is important to you. I story that is from the heart.

The Mysteries of Harris Burdick – Chris Van Allsburg
  This book has pictures with just one sentence. The kids have to figure out if it was the beginning, the middle or the end of the book.

Grown-ups Get To Do All the Driving – William Steig
Don’t Grown-Ups Ever Have Fun? – Jamie Harper
The Secret Knowledge of Grown-Ups – David Wisniewski
17 Things I’m Not Allowed to Do Anymore – Jenny Offill & Nancy Carpenter
Never Take a Shark to the Dentist – Judi Barrett
  Have the children make up a book about the things that babies, children or teachers get to do (or don’t do).
**Maybe a Bear Ate It** - Robie Harris
- What happened to your homework?

**Scaredy Squirrel** - Melanie Watt
- This book mixes elements of fiction and nonfiction writing. It shows how writing can be organized in a variety of ways.

**Diary of a Fly** - Doreen Cronin
**Diary of a Spider** - Doreen Cronin
**Diary of a Worm** - Doreen Cronin

**Bear Snores On** - Karma Wilson
**Bear Feels Sick** - Karma Wilson
- The momentum keeps building in this book as the animals keep coming while bear keeps sleeping. Great description of feeling sick.

**The Rain Came Down** - David Shannon
- Cause and effect is shown clearly shown in the organization of this imaginative story with exaggerated illustrations.

**Storm is Coming** - Tekavec
- Everything leading up to the storm.

**Click, Clack Moo: Cows That Type** - Doreen Cronin
- Stories need problems to be solved. This book shows organization as the letters keep coming back and forth between the farmer and the cows.

**Q Is For Duck** - Mary Elting
- Shows relationship.

**Tomorrow's Alphabet** - George Shannon
- Shows cause and effect. Make a class book

**Milo and the Magical Stones** - Pfister
**Milo and the Mysterious Island** - Pfister
- These books teach organization because they have 2 endings: happy and sad.

**Wolves** - Emily Gravett
- This book has a wonderful sad or happy ending.
Wolf’s Coming - Emily Gravett
The kid’s will be so surprise when they find out why everyone is so excited that the wolf is coming.

Matzo Ball Boy - Lisa Shulman
This book doesn’t end the way the kids think it will. This is a wonderful tool for teaching about voice.

Fortunately - Remy Charlip
Have kids write one flip of something good that happens and why it was bad.

My Lucky Day - Keiko Kasza
Feel the excitement of the wolf, as he gets ready to eat the pig! You will laugh out loud. You can also use this book to teach about the visual craft of extra lines.

Tuesday - Weisner
Practice transition words by adding your own to this almost wordless book. A great shared writing or interactive writing chart.

Secret Shortcut - Mark Teague
Transitional words help this book flow easily and show organization.

Train To Somewhere - Eve Bunting
Historical fiction should be introduced in the younger grades. This book lets the reader hear the voice of fear, grief and hope of young orphaned children on a train to a new home.

Dog Breath: The Horrible Trouble With Hally Tosis - Dave Pilkey
Dogzilla - Dave Pilkey
Humor is the voice that kids identify in these 2 crazy books.

Scrambled States of America - Laurie Keller
This is a wonderful way to show voice. All of the states have there own voice.
Always and Forever – Alan Durant
   This is a book about death from the viewpoint of woodland animals that have lost a friend, Fox. Sadness, terror, anger and relief are heard throughout this book.

Straight to the Pole – Kevin O’Malley
   O’malley’s voice-hilarious, silly, outrageous, funny is heard through the dialogue, exaggeration, phrasing and the fun surprise ending.

Voices in the Park – Anthony Browne
   A story told from 4 different perspectives

Dirty Laundry Pile – Poems in Different Voices – Paul Janeczko

Watch Out for These Weirdos – Rufus Kline
   Great way to teach describing words.

Toad – Ruth Brown
   This book is loaded with descriptive words.

Beetle Bop – Denise Fleming

Never Ever Shout in a Zoo – Karma Wilson

Tough Boris – Mem Fox
   Make a class book to describe pirates.

Walter Was Worried – Laura Vaccaro Seeger
   Letters are hidden in the faces that spell the emotion they are feeling. See if your kids can create their own faces.

A to Z Do You Ever Feel Like Me? – Bonnie Hausman

In November – Cynthia Rylant
   Use the 5 senses to describe the months.

And Here’s To You – David Elliot
   Follow the pattern of the book and write you own.

Fancy Nancy – Jane O’Connor  Fancy Nancy’s Favorite Fancy Words – O’Connor
   Fancy Fridays - The kids use fancy words. On every 4th Friday the kids can wear 1 fancy thing and they walk fancy and talk fancy all day.

Max’s Words – Kate Banks  The Boy Who Loved Words – Roni Schotter
   Have kids collect their own favorite words.
Big Words For Little People - Jamie Lee Curtis

Carmine: A Little More Red - Melissa Sweet

The Important Book - Margaret Wise Brown
   This book has a strong pattern and flow.

Bullfrog Pops! - Rick Walton  Verbs
A Very Hairy Scary Story - Rick Walton  Adjectives
Just Me and 6000 Rats: A Tale of Conjunctions - Rick Walton
Suddenly Alligator An Adverbial Tale - Rick Walton
Around the House the Fox Chased the Mouse: A Prepositional Tale - Rick Walton

Merry-Go Round: A Book About Nouns - Ruth Heller
A Cache of Jewels and other Collective Nouns - Ruth Heller
Many Luscious Lollipops: A Book About Adjectives - Ruth Heller

In the Small, Small Pond - Denise Fleming

Suddenly - Colin McNaughton
   You might have to limit the number of times the kids can use the word “suddenly” after reading this book.

Piggie Pie! - Margie Palatini
   This book is rich in nouns, verbs and adjectives. It also works well for teaching about sentence fluency, voice, ideas and even organization as well.

Once There Was a Bull…Frog - Rick Walton
   Compound words will be flowing in our students writing.

Henny-Penny - Jane Wattenberg
   The language in this book is so rich and inviting.

Things That Are Most In the World - Judi Barrett
   You can teach about the -est ending easily with this fun book.
Pig Pigger Piggest - Rick Walton
Achoo! Bang! Crash! A Noisy Alphabet! - Ross MacDonald
   Onomatopoeia is filling this alphabet book.
Alphabet Under Construction - Denise Fleming
This alphabet book shows verbs in action.

One Tiny Turtle - Nicola Davies
This provides practice to understand the concept of a complete sentence.

Bad Dog - Nina Laden
The sentence fluency and word choice will have you laughing out loud.

Punctuation Takes a Vacation - Robin Pulver
Punctuation takes a vacation. What a mess! This book shows how important punctuation is needed.
Penny and the Punctuation Bee - Moira Rose Donohue

Eats, Shoots and Leaves - Lynne Truss
Why is it important to put punctuation in the right place? This is a funny view of what it means in the wrong place.
Twenty-Odd Ducks: Why Every Punctuation Mark Counts - Lynne Truss
The Girl's Like Spaghetti: Why You Can't Manage Without Apostrophes - Lynne Truss

Yo! Yes? - Chris Raschka
What would this book be like without punctuation?

No, David! - David Shannon
Have your students make their own NO books using their own names. What would it be like without the punctuation?

My Friend is Sad - Mo Willems
Practice what punctuation ends each sentence.

Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day - Judith Viorst
This is the perfect book for teaching about commas.

Duck on a Bike - David Shannon
Can you change the characters names to proper nouns?

The Great Fuzz Frenzy - Janet Stevens
Most of this book is dialogue so it is the perfect book to teach about punctuation. The story is a pure delight.
In April

By ___________________

April sounds _________________________________

April looks _________________________________

April smells _________________________________

April taste _________________________________

April feels _________________________________

April is _________________________________

________________________________________
LIST OF RELATED CITATIONS

“WRITING MINI-LESSONS USING CHILDREN’S LITERATURE”

SHARI SLOANE


