

Extreme Close Up
Six Traits: Developing Conventions and Presentation

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Grade level: Intermediate – High School

Content areas: English Language Arts
Six Traits Writing – Developing Conventions and Presentation

Invitation: As you see, the Northwest Regional Education Laboratory includes a seventh trait in their six-traits model. They call it the +1 trait – presentation. This final trait addresses aesthetic appeal of the writing.

Assessment: Teachers will know students understand ways the importance of adhering to conventions of English language and presentation as they proof and publish original narratives.

Technology Tools

Dana by AlphaSmart or Dana Wireless
Printer
Computer
AlphaWord software

Additional Resources

Internet sites:

Learn about Six Traits writing from the Northwest Regional Education Laboratory
<http://www.nwrel.org/assessment/scoring.asp?odelay=3&d=1&r=1#definition>

List of common English language mistakes
<http://www.wsu.edu/%7Ebrians/errors/errors.html>

National Standards for Students

National Educational Technology Standards

- Understand basic concepts and operations
- Practice responsible use

- Use technology tools to enhance learning, collaborate, publish and promote creativity.
- Use telecommunications and a variety of media and formats to communicate.

National Council of Teachers of English

- Employ a wide range of writing strategies
 - Apply knowledge of language structure and conventions
- Conduct research
 - Use technological and information resources
 - Participate in literacy communities

For a detailed explanation of NETS for Students visit: http://cnets.iste.org/students/s_stands.html
Learn more about NCTE Standards at: <http://www.ncte.org/about/over/standards/110846.htm>

Step-by-Step

Step 1: Preparation

Study the six traits of writing. Several sites offer resources and teaching ideas. The Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory offers extensive resources for the six traits. Access their site at <http://www.nwrel.org/assessment/departement.asp?d=1>.

Study the list of common English language errors at <http://www.wsu.edu/%7Ebrians/errors/errors.html> to locate those errors most common in your classroom. Click any term to learn more and in some cases, find a rule of thumb to help you remember. For example:

To help students remember that "a lot" is two words, post this rule:

You wouldn't write alittle, so don't write a lot.

To help students remember the difference between carat and carrot, post this rule:

If you can't eat it, it's not a carrot.

For the your/you're confusion, post this rule.

Your writing will improve if you're careful about contractions.

Step 2: Teach editing skills

Beam a sample passage with spelling errors and sentence fragments. Have students edit the piece in the following order:

1. Read the document silently.
2. Launch the AlphaWord spell check and check the document.
3. Read document aloud paying attention to punctuation markings.

Step 3: Edit and publish

Once the document is proof read and edited, focus on publishing. Do you need *italics* here? Will a **bold font** help make your point? What about underlining? If students HotSync, they can format using AlphaWord and HotSync to a computer. If students do not HotSync their Danas, they should send to a computer and format using the computers word processing formatting tools.