

Supporting 6+1 Trait Writing with Pixie

During the 1980's, the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL) teamed up with teachers searching for a comprehensive way to assess student writing. The resulting guidelines consider six aspects of writing, including ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions, as well as how the writing is presented (presentation). In addition to providing a framework for evaluation, the 6+1 system helps students understand the characteristics of "good" writing and assists them in indentifying specific steps they can take to improve their writing.

If you use Pixie in your classroom, you already know how students can use this exciting creativity tool to combine text, clip art, original imagery, and voice recording to share work as booklets, comics, trading cards, online storybooks, and more. These engaging and motivating opportunities in Pixie can also help you support 6+1 writing instruction.

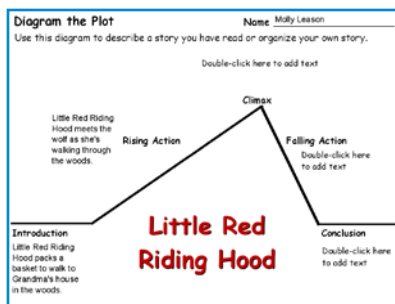
Ideas

This trait refers to the main message the student's writing is intended to convey. Ideas should be supported by details that are interesting, important and informative. Combining their writing with images they have drawn and stickers they have added can help them clarify their thinking, and encourages them to revise their writing to better reflect their vision. Students can also use the graphic organizer Activities in Pixie to brainstorm main ideas and focus on the message they are trying to convey.

Organization

Organization refers to the structure of the writing. In organized writing, events proceed logically, information is provided to maintain readers' interest, and the conclusion has a resolution to the problem. When writing an original story, or retelling and existing one, students can

use Pixie activities like Diagram the Plot to use organize their writing, ensuring that it includes key plot elements.



Voice

Effective use of helps writers show that a real person is talking, and that they care about the message the writing conveys. Voice is less about sharing the author's personality than it is about imparting a tone to the writing to achieve a specific purpose. To help students learn to convey passion in their writing, ask them to create public service announcements for topics they are passionate about. Pixie allows students to support their writing with images and recorded, narration, making it obvious how the narrator feels and wants the audience to feel about the topic.

Word Choice

Writers become truly effective when they are able to choose specific words to convey meaning. Interesting word choice and creative descriptions also help engage readers. Students can improve their word choices and vocabulary using visual learning strategies. Using Pixie, students can examine photos or images from Pics4Learning.com and describe what they perceive gives them the opportunity to explore words they might not otherwise use in their writing.

Fluency

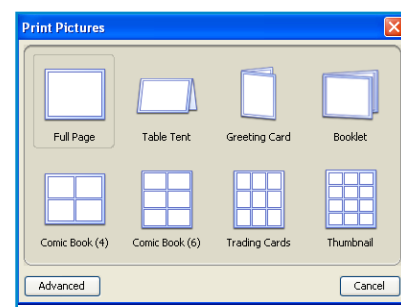
Fluency refers to the rhythm and flow of the writing. Pixie includes a recording feature students can use to capture their voices as they read their writing aloud. Adjusting the wording or punctuation in

places where they trip over words will improve the fluency of their writing.

Conventions

Writing conventions include spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar/usage, and paragraphing. Conventions often pose some of the biggest challenges as students work to become effective writers.

Pixie includes a spell check students can use to check the accuracy of a text object or selection. Students can also enable the inline spell check so they can learn to identify mistakes they mistake as they are typing.



Presentation

Presentation refers to how the writing looks on the page. Is there enough white space? Is the font large enough to read? Do illustrations support the content?

The wide variety of publishing option in Pixie, including comic books, trading cards, podcasts, and online storybooks provides numerous ways to make presentation a motivating part of the writing process. These creative presentation formats continue to engage students, encouraging their writing while providing an authentic context for their work.

Using the 6+1 traits is an invaluable way to focus student effort as they hone their writing skills. Pixie is a fun and motivating way to engage students in the process and encourage them to practice and build proficiency with each of the traits in the 6+1 model.