

HORTONVILLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT – 6-POINT WRITING RUBRIC GRADES 2-12

	1 <i>Experimenting Skills</i>	2 <i>Emerging Skills</i>	3 <i>Developing Skills</i>
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unclear topic No supporting detail and information provided Demonstrates no understanding of purpose or audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identified topic but broad Limited details and information are vague, irrelevant and/or inaccurate Demonstrates little understanding of purpose and audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear focused topic overshadowed by undeveloped text Limited details and information but relevant Demonstrates general understanding of purpose and audience
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Missing transitions No lead or conclusion; starts right in, just stops Pacing is not yet being considered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transitions unclear, missing or not helpful in linking ideas Lead and/or conclusion attempted but ineffective Pacing feels awkward; the writer slows to a crawl when the reader wants to get on with it, and vice versa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mechanical, predictable transitions Lead is routine or misleading; conclusion is routine or abrupt The writer lets one part of the piece dominate and loses control of the pacing
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The writer speaks in a kind of monotone that flattens all potential highs or lows of the message The writer is not concerned with the audience The writing is lifeless and mechanical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The writing sits on the surface and doesn't reach out past the most clichéd of phrases The writing is "risk free"; the writer doesn't really connect with the audience There are chances to engage the reader that are missed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The writer keeps the reader a safe distance away No special moments stand out; little connection to the audience A glimmer of voice is found here and there
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Words chosen to fill the page Vocabulary is limited and simple The language often makes no sense Language does not relay a message to the reader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repetition and misuse of common words dominate the piece Functional vocabulary includes passive verbs and ordinary nouns Language relays basic meaning to the reader but may be easily misconstrued A limited message comes through 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Words feel like a rote response and reflect a lack of craftsmanship Weak verbs, commonplace nouns and overused modifiers outnumber strong moments Few attempts are made at colorful or figurative language and even those work at a limited level The reader gets meaning from the words in only the most general way Vague words or wordiness water down the message
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Piece consists of non-sentences The text cannot be read without the writer's help Hard to tell where sentences begin/end 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Piece contains abundance of run-ons, choppy sentences With effort sections of the text can be read Sentences begin the same way and follow the same patterns (e.g. subject-verb-object) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sentences are simple in structure and length Text is readable but lacks rhythm and cadence Repetitive beginnings, little variety in sentence structure and length
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Errors in conventions repeatedly distract the reader and make the text difficult to read Spelling errors are frequent, even on common words Punctuation often missing or incorrect Capitalization is random Paragraphing is missing Errors in grammar and usage are very noticeable and affect meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The writer stumbles in conventions even on simple tasks and almost always on anything trickier Spelling is phonetic with many errors present Except for simplest punctuation (periods, question marks), the other punctuation is usually wrong or missing Writer shows correct use of capitalization on easiest of rules Paragraphing is inconsistent or random Serious grammar and usage problems throughout text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conventions are sometimes handled well and enhance readability; at other times, errors are distracting and impair readability Spelling correct on common words Punctuation is spotty and inconsistent Capitalization rules applied in random fashion The piece may start off with a paragraph or two, but the rest is one big glob of sentences Several grammar and usage errors evident; may be inappropriate for formal writing

NAME: _____

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	4 <i>Effective Skills</i>	5 <i>Strong Skills</i>	6 <i>Exceptional Skills</i>	RATING
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic is clear and focused more often than not • Details and information show basic knowledge of topic • Demonstrates clear understanding of purpose and audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear and focused topic throughout • Details and information reflect thorough knowledge of topic • Purpose demonstrates connections and insights to audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear, focused, compelling topic holds readers attention • Important details and information go beyond the obvious or predictable • Prompts readers own thinking 	
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helpful transitions often suggest connections • Effective lead and conclusion • Pacing is fairly well controlled, though the writer sometimes lunges ahead too quickly or spends too much time on details that do not matter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thoughtful transitions clearly connect ideas • Strong and inviting lead; satisfying conclusion, provides closure • Pacing makes main idea stand out and is under control, though there are still places the writer needs to highlight or move through more quickly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transitions suggest connections readers might not consider • Provocative opening; enlightening conclusion • Unexpected turns, surprises lend creative twists 	
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The writer makes a strong attempt to communicate with the reader, although the best moments fade in and out • One or two moments move the reader; the writer seems aware of the audience, but discards personal insights in favor of safe generalities • The reader senses the voice the writer was striving for but must rely on their own intuition to “read into it” rather than the writer being in control of voice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The writing communicates in an earnest manner • Moments of insight make the piece come alive; the writer pays attention to tone • The voice is strong throughout the piece, but the best moments fade in and out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reader feels a strong interaction with the writer, sensing the person behind the words • The tone and voice give flavor and texture to the message and are appropriate for the purpose and audience • The writer’s voice is controlled and consistent throughout 	
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contains words and expressions that are occasionally clear, precise with some evidence of originality and flair • The writing is marked by passive verbs, everyday nouns and adjectives, and lack of interesting adverbs • Familiar words and phrases communicate meaning but rarely capture the reader’s imagination; use of simplistic imagery • The language is functional, lacks energy; writer’s message generally clear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There’s care and attention paid to selecting the best words to fit the piece • Contains mostly active verbs and striking phrasing; words chosen to fit the piece effectively • Well-chosen words enhance message; concise • Words often appeal to senses, create clear images strengthening the meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contains words and expressions that are consistently powerful, vivid, varied and precise • Powerful, stunning verbs, precise nouns and modifiers add depth and specificity; unique phrasing • Words are powerful and engaging, capturing what is hard to express • The words and phrases create pictures that linger in the reader’s mind, clearly conveying meaning 	
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentences are constructed correctly with varied structure and length • Text can be read easily; parts of the text invite expressive oral reading • Variation in sentence beginnings and structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong and varied sentence structure and length results in rhythmical flow and cadence • Easy-going rhythm, flow, cadence; text can be read with expression • Sentences are purposeful, varied in structure and length; beginnings add energy; fragments, if present, add emphasis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentences vary in structure and length creating an extremely effective text; fragments, if present, appear deliberately and effectively chosen for stylistic purposes. • Dialogue, if present, sounds natural • Sophisticated rhythm and cadence; Text begs to be read aloud. • Purposeful and varied sentence beginnings add energy 	
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conventions are generally handled correctly but more complex tasks in conventions may be incorrect, inconsistent or avoided. • Spelling on more difficult words may be problematic • End punctuation correct; internal punctuation is sometimes missing/wrong • Most words capitalized correctly; control over more sophisticated capitalization skills may be spotty • Paragraphing is evident but may run together or begin in wrong places • Problems with grammar or usage are not serious enough to distort meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The writer stretches and tries more complex tasks in conventions however makes a few mistakes along the way • Everyday words consistently spelled correctly, more difficult words are spotty • Punctuation shows strength and enhances the readability in all but a few cases • Writer takes risks with capitalization and is usually correct • Solid paragraphing skills are present; a few adjustments may be needed on more complex pieces • Grammar and usage are correct 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The writer demonstrates a firm grasp of standard writing conventions and uses conventions effectively to enhance readability • Spelling, even on more difficult words, is generally correct • The punctuation is accurate, even creative, and guides the reader through the text • Thorough understanding and consistent application of capitalization rules are present • Sound paragraphing reinforces the structure and organization and enhances readability • Grammar and usage unquestionably contribute to clarity, meaning and style 	

The 6-Traits Defined:

Ideas and Content - The ideas and content are the heart of the message, the main theme. Together with the details, the ideas and content enrich and develop that theme.

Organization - Organization is the internal structure of a piece of writing, the thread of central meaning, the logical and sometimes intriguing pattern of the ideas.

Voice - The voice is the heart and soul, the magic, the wit, along with the feeling and conviction of the individual writer coming out through the words.

Word Choice - Word choice is the use of rich, colorful, precise language that moves and enlightens the reader

Sentence Fluency - Sentence fluency is the rhythm and flow of the language, the sound of word patterns, the way in which the writing plays to the ear--not just to the eye.

Conventions - Conventions are the mechanical correctness of the piece-- spelling, grammar and usage, paragraphing, use of capitals and punctuation.

	1 <i>Experimenting Skills</i>	2 <i>Emerging Skills</i>	3 <i>Developing Skills</i>
C - I S - F O I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No main idea yet – random collection of thoughts Reader consistently goes back – no apparent link thought to thought Hard to “hear” the writer in the text Word choice confusing, general, repetitive, vague or incorrect Hard to tell where sentences begin or end – many problems Word-by-word editing needed <p><i>Persuasive Writing</i> – The writer needs to state an opinion</p> <p><i>Narrative Writing</i> – A new experience or suitable details should be found; reader cannot find a storyline</p> <p><i>Informative Writing</i> – Topic/key question is undefined; no informational base, reader left with many questions</p> <p><i>Descriptive Writing</i> – No sensory details or images provided</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reader must guess at main idea – few details or just a list Hard to follow, lead and/or conclusion missing Distant voice – writing to get it done Filled with tired, overused language – OR – overly written, wordy Problems with repetitive, awkward, or run-on sentences Line-by-line editing needed <p><i>Persuasive Writing</i> – The opinion is confusing and needs reasons</p> <p><i>Narrative Writing</i> – The writer should focus on one experience; a story is beginning to emerge but more detail needed</p> <p><i>Informative Writing</i> – Lists of undeveloped ideas provided; many questions unanswered</p> <p><i>Descriptive Writing</i> – Sporadic details; sensory details used in only minimal way</p> <p><i>P, N, I and D Writing</i> – List of “factlets” may be substituted for true development or expansion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main ideas can be inferred – a broad, unexpanded overview Some details/elements could be relocated – lead and conclusion are present, structure may be formulaic Voice comes and goes – or not always a good fit with audience and purpose Marked by tired, overused words, phrases – OR – overwritten Limited variety in sentence length, structure Thorough editing needed <p><i>Persuasive Writing</i> – The opinion needs to be clearer with more reasons; writer draws from some personal experience but too often settles for generalities and clichéd thinking</p> <p><i>Narrative Writing</i> - The basic story is clearly conveyed but details are told in a matter-of-fact way that doesn’t connect with the reader</p> <p><i>Informative Writing</i> – Details limited and sketchy; topic can be inferred</p> <p><i>Descriptive Writing</i> – Predictable, routine description provided with uneven use of sensory details</p>

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4	<i>Effective Skills</i>	5	<i>Strong Skills</i>	6	<i>Exceptional Skills</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear main idea, supported by details • Functional lead and conclusion; reader can follow story/discussion • Moments of strong voice speaks to reader • Functional, clear language carries general message • Clear sentences that can be read without difficulty • A good read-through needed to correct errors <p><i>Persuasive Writing</i> – The opinion is clear but more reasons would be helpful</p> <p><i>Narrative Writing</i> – The writing includes some clear ideas and details; further development needed to create an emotional response that connects to the reader</p> <p><i>Informative Writing</i> – Topic is easy to identify; writer offers some support for or expansion of main topic</p> <p><i>Descriptive Writing</i> – Offers more thoughtful description with some sensory details and images</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear, focused main idea with striking details • Strong lead and conclusion, structure that guides the reader • Individual, confident voice speaks to reader • Accurate, well-chosen words that make meaning clear • Clear, fluent sentences that make expressive reading possible • Very light editing needed <p><i>Persuasive Writing</i> – The opinion is clear and supported with well-thought out reasons and examples</p> <p><i>Narrative Writing</i> – Plot is attention-grabbing; rich ideas and details create some memorable moments</p> <p><i>Informative Writing</i> – Clear, focused topic answers important questions; offers credible, helpful support and examples</p> <p><i>Descriptive Writing</i> – Offers thoughtful, creative description using sensory details and images to show rather than tell</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear, focused main idea enriched with telling, unusual details • Inviting lead, satisfying conclusion; reader never feels lost • Irresistible voice that asks to be shared • Vivid, memorable, precise words – no waster words • Clear, fluent sentences that make expressive reading easy • Only minimal editing needed <p><i>Persuasive Writing</i> – The opinion and reasons are convincing; the writer’s knowledge, experience, insight or unique perspective lends the writing a satisfying ring of authenticity and compels reader to take action</p> <p><i>Narrative Writing</i> – An abundance of rich ideas and details help the reader experience the setting and events and make the story unforgettable; dynamic characters and intriguing plot create an element of surprise and emotion;</p> <p><i>Informative Writing</i> – Clear, focused and explicit; writer has a vision</p> <p><i>Descriptive Writing</i> – Offers thoughtful, creative description thoroughly using precise and vivid sensory details and images that paint a picture for the reader</p>

HOLISTIC RATING:

COMMENTS:

Culham, Ruth. *Tools of the Traits*.

Spandel, Vicki. (2009). *Creating Writers Through 6-Trait Writing Assessment and Instruction (Fifth Edition)*. Allyn & Bacon/Pearson Education, Inc.

Write Source (2009). Great Source Education Group.