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Teaching and Assessing Student Writing: The 6 Traits of Writing

The 6 Traits of Writing is a framework for teaching and assessing student writing. It helps students develop their writing skills in six key areas: ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions.

1. Ideas

- Question: What is the writer trying to say?
- Answer: Writers use details, examples, and evidence to support their main ideas.

2. Organization

- Question: How is the writing structured?
- **Answer:** Writers use headings, subheadings, and paragraphs to make their writing easy to read and understand.

3. Voice

- Question: What is the writer's unique perspective?
- Answer: Writers use their own language and style to connect with readers.

4. Word Choice

- Question: Does the writer use precise and engaging words?
- Answer: Writers use specific nouns, verbs, and adjectives to create vivid images and ideas.

5. Sentence Fluency

- Question: Do the sentences flow smoothly and sound pleasing to the ear?
- **Answer:** Writers use a variety of sentence structures and transitions to create a smooth and engaging writing style.

6. Conventions

- Question: Are the spelling, grammar, and punctuation correct?
- Answer: Writers use correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation to enhance the clarity and readability of their writing.

Assessment

Using the 6 Traits of Writing, teachers can assess student writing in a comprehensive manner. Each trait is assessed on a 4-point scale, with 1 being the lowest and 4 being the highest. By providing students with specific feedback on each trait, teachers can help them identify areas for improvement and develop their writing skills.

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