6 Traits: Building a Foundation for Writing, K–2

Course Description

6 Traits: Building a Foundation for Writing, K–2 is an interactive, online, and in-person course designed for primary teachers who are currently using or preparing to use the 6 Traits Writing Model in their classrooms and schools. The 6 Traits are an assessment model that works within the writing curriculum to guide instruction so that all students can successfully meet their writing goals. The seven online sessions of the course focus on determining primary writers' developmental abilities, learning to use analytical assessment, exploring the six writing traits, and implementing trait-based writing activities.

- **Session 1** provides teachers with background on the 6 Traits Writing Model, explains how to use the traits within the writing process, and provides guidance for using the scoring guides to assess student writing. This session also explores how to use criteria to set writing standards for students and for teacher assessment.

- **Session 2** introduces teachers to the Ideas Trait and provides suggestions for launching the trait with the class. The session explores how to teach students to strengthen the ideas in their writing, as well as how to assess student work for ideas. The session concludes with methods for connecting writing and reading by using picture books to model the Ideas Trait.

- **Session 3** guides teachers in learning to teach the Organization Trait effectively. The session begins by defining the Organization Trait and continues by explaining the Organization Scoring Guide. The session provides teachers with strategies for teaching organization and using picture books to improve student understanding of organization.

- **Session 4** introduces teachers to the Voice Trait and provides suggestions for launching the trait in class. The session explores teaching students to strengthen voice in their writing, as well as how teachers can effectively assess student work for voice. The session concludes with methods for inspiring the use of the Voice Trait through reading aloud picture books.

- **Session 5** guides teachers to effectively teach students about the Word Choice Trait. Teachers learn to use the descriptors from the Word Choice Scoring Guide to assess student writing. The session provides strategies to help students think carefully about word choice and explains using picture books to expose students to new and exciting words.

- **Session 6** encourages teachers to introduce sentence fluency by teaching students to listen to sentences aloud. The session explains how to assess student writing for the Sentence Fluency Trait and provides suggestions for teaching the trait. The session also encourages teachers to use picture books as model of texts with successful sentence fluency.

- **Session 7** provides suggestions for introducing and teaching the Conventions and Presentation Traits to primary students. The session explains how to use the Conventions Scoring Guide to assess students at various levels. Teachers will learn to use picture books to model correct and creative ways to use conventions. The course concludes by explaining how to decide if students are ready to use the upper grade scoring guides based on teacher assessments of student work.

Lesson plans and classroom resources support all online sessions. The plans and resources ensure that the course content can be seamlessly integrated into the writing curriculum.

Course Faculty

Dr. Ruth Culham
Dr. Mary Lou McCloskey
Francie Alexander

Course Objectives

Upon completing this course, participants will be able to:

- Develop and apply a common vocabulary for writing.
- Use scoring guides to accurately assess student writing and determine instructional needs.
- Give trait-specific feedback during the revision and editing stages of the writing process.
- Teach trait-based lessons within the writing process.
- Use picture books to develop students' understandings of key qualities of the traits.

Course Outline

1. Getting Started With The Traits
1.1 Speaking a Common Language
1.2 Using Traits With the Writing Process
1.3 Using Criteria to Set Standards
CheckPoint
Your Turn

2. Inspiring Ideas
2.1 Getting Started With Ideas
2.2 Assessing Student Work for Ideas
2.3 Teaching With the Ideas Trait
2.4 Modeling Ideas With Picture Books
CheckPoint
Your Turn

3. Shaping Organization

3.1 Getting Started With Organization
3.2 Assessing Student Work for Organization
3.3 Teaching With the Organization Trait
3.4 Modeling Organization With Picture Books
CheckPoint
Your Turn

4. Developing Voice

4.1 Getting Started With Voice
4.2 Assessing Student Work for Voice
4.3 Teaching With the Voice Trait
4.4 Modeling Voice With Picture Books
CheckPoint
Your Turn

5. Expanding Word Choice

5.1 Getting Started With Word Choice
5.2 Assessing Student Work for Word Choice
5.3 Teaching With the Word Choice Trait
5.4 Modeling Word Choice With Picture Books
CheckPoint
Your Turn

6. Building Sentence Fluency

6.1 Getting Started With Sentence Fluency
6.2 Assessing Student Work for Sentence Fluency
6.3 Teaching With the Sentence Fluency Trait
6.4 Modeling Sentence Fluency With Picture Books
CheckPoint
Your Turn

7. Strengthening Conventions

7.1 Getting Started With Conventions
7.2 Assessing Student Work for Conventions
7.3 Teaching With the Conventions Trait
7.4 Modeling Conventions With Picture Books
7.5 Ideas for Presentation
7.6 Time to Transition
CheckPoint
Your Turn

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Scholastic RED Professional Development Course Participation Hours

Description	Estimated Time	Participation Hours
Self-paced instruction includes the relevant reading research base. Participation in interactive simulations for practice of research-based strategies. Video modeling by teachers.	1 hour per session plus additional time to revisit concepts and key activities for ongoing practice	7
Reflection on learned and applied skills; sharing of ideas and student work; lesson planning; facilitator modeling, in-person instruction and in-class coaching.	2 hours x 4 study groups; 3 hours in-class coaching	11
Personal journal writing in response to session-specific topics and prompts.	5–10 minutes per session	1
Collaborative discussions with colleagues and advice/feedback from reading specialist.	5–10 minutes per session	1
Relevant articles to read study and connect to learning and classroom application.	1 hour per session	7
Print and review online resources (lesson plans, management tools, graphic organizers, etc.) – for planning and application in classroom.	1 hour per session	7
Preparation for application of learned skills and strategies utilizing tested lesson plans and student resources	45 minutes per strategy	7
Preparation and presentation of course learning.	1 hour	1
Setting goals and incorporating into Professional Improvement Plan.	1 hour	1
Review online correlations to standards and reading programs. Use online correlations in preparing lesson plans for classroom application.	2 hours	2
Total Hours		**45**