Sentence Fluency

Conventions

Organization

Idea Development

Word Choice

Building with the 6 traits
Like the foundation of a house, IDEA DEVELOPMENT serves as the solid base on which a good piece of writing rests. If you start with a solid idea, your writing can grow as big as you want.
ORGANIZATION is the structure of writing. Just as a house has an entrance, an exit, hallways that connect, and a sensible layout, so too does a piece of good writing. Blueprints are drawn before a house is built; writing should be “blue-printed” too!

**Blueprints:**
- appropriate graphic organizer used to plan writing
- the order of the writing makes sense
- the most important ideas receive the most attention
- transitions sound natural

**Beginning:**
- hooks or grabs the reader
- an inviting lead
- effective topic sentence
- shows where writing is going

**Middle:**
- parts fit together smoothly
- subtopics or parts are clearly separated
- ideas connect
- contains the “heart” of the writing

**End:**
- might leave you thinking or wondering
- makes the writing feel complete
- leaves the reader feeling satisfied
- ties things together

**Title:**
- hints at the writing’s big idea
- is catchy
- makes sense
- is memorable
The author's VOICE—a.k.a. you!—should be present in every piece of writing you make. Sometimes your presence needs to be strong, but sometimes it should be kept subtle. How will you ensure that your reader recognizes this as your writing?

- sounds honest
- sounds sincere
- shows passion
- shows confidence

- energetic
- heart-felt
- author shows feelings toward topic (tone)
- author invites feelings from reader (mood)

- be either a storyteller or reporter
- showcase your techniques
- sound like you
- show personal risk

- shows an opinion
- considers perspectives
- audience awareness
- audience sensitivity

- writer knows own voice
- shows insight
- sounds believable
- writer owns topic

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The roof of a house—though planned from the beginning—is not built first. Think about CONVENTIONS near the end of your process.

- Know your “sight words”!
- Use the dictionary!
- Abbreviate correctly!
- Double-check your vocabulary words!

- Check end punctuation! (periods, question marks, exclamation points)
- Check middle punctuation! (commas, apostrophes, semi-colons)
- Check dialogue punctuation!
- Check your hyphens!

- Capitalize proper names!
- Capitalize sentence beginnings!
- Capitalize titles!
- Don’t mis-use/overuse capitals.

- Check your noun and verb agreement!
- Check your noun and pronoun agreement!
- Check appropriateness: “gonna” versus “going to”!
- Double check verb tense!

- Indent those paragraphs!
- Use the right amount of space between words!
- Don’t put blank space between paragraphs!
- Use appropriate margins!
Just as white clouds float peacefully in the sky, or thunder clouds arrive with alarm, sentences and phrases float through a piece of writing. Do you want your SENTENCE FLUENCY to be subtle or alarming?

**Sentence Fluency**

### Variety of Sounds
- repetition
- natural sounding
- rhythm and cadence
- experiments with language

### Variety of Beginnings
- prepositions
- conjunctions
- participial phrases
- question words

### Variety of Sentences
- complex and simple
- declarative and interrogative
- exclamatory and imperative
- short and long

### Variety of Connectors
- transitions
- connecting words and phrases
- sentence flow together
- experiments with colons and semi-colons

### Has Readability
- carefully crafted
- smooth and flowing
- sounds natural when read aloud
- parallelism

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WORD CHOICE—like the sun in the sky—can accomplish many things: comfort or sunburn, thirst or relaxation. The words you choose to include in your writing have profound impact on your reader.

**VERBS**
- precise verbs
- unique verbs
- writer considers synonyms
- balance of action and linking verbs

**NOUNS**
- precise nouns
- unique nouns
- purposeful use of pronouns
- correct noun and pronoun agreement

**ADJECTIVES**
- precise adjectives
- unique adjectives
- writer considers synonyms
- using fewer quality adjectives is better than using a string of weak adjectives

**WORD PICTURES**
- sensory images
- memorable phrases
- uses word pictures when appropriate
- verbs, adjectives, and nouns work together

**WORD PLAY**
- personification
- tries new vocabulary
- onomatopoeia
- effective similes and metaphors
- alliteration

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