

## INFORMATIONAL SIX-TRAITS RUBRIC

### IDEAS and CONTENT

<p>6</p> <p>The writing is exceptionally clear, focused, and interesting. It holds the reader's attention throughout. Main ideas stand out and are developed by strong support and rich details suitable to audience and purpose. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A clear, focused, explicit thesis.</li> <li>• Expansive answers to well defined question.</li> <li>• Taking the reader on a journey of understanding.</li> <li>• Writer pulling information from multiple sources.</li> <li>• Accurate, relevant, helpful support giving weight to main idea.</li> </ul>	<p>5</p> <p>The writing is clear, focused, and interesting. It holds the reader's attention. Main ideas stand out and are developed by supporting details suitable to audience and purpose. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A clear, focused, explicit thesis.</li> <li>• Giving reader important, useful information.</li> <li>• Writer pulling information from more than one source.</li> <li>• Strong support lending credibility to main idea.</li> </ul>	<p>4</p> <p>The writing is clear and focused. The reader can easily understand the main ideas. Support is present, although it may be limited or rather general. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An identifiable thesis.</li> <li>• Mixing new information with general knowledge.</li> <li>• Research combined with personal beliefs.</li> <li>• Gaps in support leaving reader with questions.</li> </ul>
<p>3</p> <p>The reader can understand the main ideas, although they may be overly broad or simplistic, and the results may not be effective. Supporting detail is often limited, insubstantial, overly general, or occasionally slightly off-topic. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Thesis that can be inferred with careful reading.</li> <li>• Writer knowing enough to write in broad terms.</li> <li>• Limited research.</li> <li>• Writer relying heavily on personal knowledge.</li> <li>• Sketchy evidence/support hurting credibility.</li> </ul>	<p>2</p> <p>Main ideas or purpose are somewhat unclear or development is attempted but minimal. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reader mentally constructing an emerging thesis.</li> <li>• Writer not at home with topic, scrambling for things to say.</li> <li>• Random thoughts combined with popular beliefs.</li> <li>• Evidence/support not helpful to someone who does not know the topic.</li> </ul>	<p>1</p> <p>The writing lacks a central idea or purpose. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No thesis yet.</li> <li>• Topic/question undefined.</li> <li>• Writer having no information from which to write.</li> <li>• No research to provide a knowledge base.</li> <li>• Minimal or unrelated details.</li> <li>• Reader can't tell what message is.</li> </ul>

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### ORGANIZATION

<p>6 The organization enhances the central idea(s) and its development. The order and structure are compelling and move the reader through the text easily. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A design that guides reader through the text and shadows the writer's thinking.</li> <li>• A lead that gives reader a mindset for discussion; a conclusion that feels just right.</li> <li>• A structure that directs and supports the reader's growing understanding.</li> <li>• Transitions that clarify significant connections, giving the piece cohesiveness.</li> </ul>	<p>5 The organization enhances the central idea(s) and its development. The order and structure are strong and move the reader through the text. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A design that supports development of thesis/argument.</li> <li>• A lead that introduces topic; a conclusion that provides closure.</li> <li>• A structure that makes text easy to follow.</li> <li>• Transitions that provide important connections.</li> </ul>	<p>4 Organization is clear and coherent. Order and structure are present but may seem formulaic. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A design that fits harmoniously with purpose and content.</li> <li>• A lead that alludes to main topic; a conclusion that signals end of discussion.</li> <li>• A structure that helps reader keep track of main points.</li> <li>• Transitions that hint at connections – reader must help build bridges.</li> </ul>
<p>3 An attempt has been made to organize the writing; however, the overall structure is inconsistent or skeletal. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A design that is not always a smooth fit with discussion/argument.</li> <li>• A recognizable lead/conclusion.</li> <li>• Structure is present, but reader must pause or re-read.</li> <li>• Transitions are more formulaic than reflective of underlying connections.</li> </ul>	<p>2 The writing lacks a clear organizational structure. An occasional organizational device is discernible; however, the writing is either difficult to follow and the reader has to reread substantial portions, or the piece is simply too short to demonstrate organizational skills. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A design that seems at odds with writer's presentation.</li> <li>• Lead/conclusion is missing, formulaic, or not closely aligned with text.</li> <li>• Structure is too formulaic or hard to follow – reader works around it.</li> <li>• Transitions are missing, puzzling, or not helpful.</li> </ul>	<p>1 The writing lacks coherence; organization seems haphazard and disjointed. Even after rereading, the reader remains confused. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No recognizable design or pattern.</li> <li>• Writing that is random</li> <li>• No real lead or conclusion – writing just starts, then stops abruptly.</li> <li>• Structure that is loose, disjointed, unrelated to the ideas.</li> <li>• Nothing seems to be connected to anything else.</li> </ul>

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### VOICE

<p>6 The writer has chosen a voice appropriate for the topic, purpose, and audience. The writer seems deeply committed to the topic, and there is an exceptional sense of “writing to be read.” The writing is expressive, engaging, and sincere. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A professional, enthusiastic voice well-suited to audience/purpose.</li> <li>• A voice that welcomes reader into discussion.</li> <li>• A confident tone that reflects knowledge inspires reader’s trust.</li> <li>• The writer’s clear enthusiasm for the topic grabs the readers by the lapels.</li> </ul>	<p>5 The writer has chosen a voice appropriate for the topic, purpose, and audience. The writer seems committed to the topic, and there is a sense of “writing to be read.” The writing is expressive, engaging, and sincere. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A professional, sincere voice well-suited to audience/purpose.</li> <li>• A voice that reaches out to readers; you can hear the writer in the piece.</li> <li>• A confident tone makes readers open to the message.</li> <li>• Writer seems to be engaged by the topic.</li> </ul>	<p>4 The voice is present. The writer demonstrates commitment to the topic, and there may be a sense of “writing to be read.” In places, the writing is expressive, engaging, or sincere. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A sincere and appropriate but inconsistent voice.</li> <li>• The writer speaking to readers, then retreating behind lists of facts.</li> <li>• Confidence that appears in spurts, reflecting variable knowledge of subject.</li> <li>• Enthusiastic moments that encourage reader to hang in.</li> </ul>
<p>3 The writer’s commitment to the topic seems inconsistent. A sense of the writer may emerge at times; however, the voice is either inappropriately personal or inappropriately impersonal. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A voice out of balance – too little of the right voice or too much of the wrong voice.</li> <li>• The writer rarely speaking to the readers.</li> <li>• The writer projects limited confidence in his/her knowledge of the topic.</li> <li>• A lack of engagement that encourages readers to mentally “drift.”</li> </ul>	<p>2 The writer provides little sense of involvement or commitment. There is no evidence that the writer has chosen a suitable voice. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A voice that sounds distance, encyclopedic or too chatty for purpose/audience.</li> <li>• The writer makes little effort to engage readers and more often loses them.</li> <li>• A serious lack of confidence suppresses the voice.</li> <li>• Readers working to pay attention.</li> </ul>	<p>1 The writer seems to lack a sense of involvement or commitment. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A voice decidedly inappropriate or just a faint whisper.</li> <li>• No one at home in this writing.</li> <li>• The writer does not know or like topic – writing to get it done.</li> <li>• A lack of voice that leaves readers feeling shut out.</li> </ul>

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### WORD CHOICE

<p>6 Words convey the intended message in an exceptionally interesting, precise, and natural way appropriate to audience and purpose. The writer employs a rich, broad range of words which have been carefully chosen and thoughtfully placed for impact. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit, memorable words that make message clear, sometimes quotable.</li> <li>• Writer knowing the language and content area and using it with ease and skill.</li> <li>• Powerful verbs that give writing energy, well-chosen phrases that add precision.</li> <li>• Text free of wordiness, jargon, tired phrases, vague language.</li> </ul>	<p>5 Words convey the intended message in an interesting, precise, and natural way appropriate to audience and purpose. The writer employs a broad range of words which have been carefully chosen and thoughtfully placed for impact. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carefully chosen words that make message clear, interesting.</li> <li>• The writer knowing the language of the content area and using it correctly.</li> <li>• Strong verbs that give writing energy, well-chosen phrases that lend clarity.</li> <li>• Minimal wordiness, jargon, tired phrases, vague language.</li> </ul>	<p>4 Words effectively convey the intended message. The writer employs a variety of words that are functional and appropriate to audience and purpose. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A functional language that makes message reasonably clear.</li> <li>• A writer familiar with language of content area, using most terms correctly.</li> <li>• Occasional strong verbs or “just right” phrases.</li> <li>• Wordiness, jargon, and vague language not problematic.</li> </ul>
<p>3 Language is quite ordinary, lacking interest, precision and variety, or may be inappropriate to audience and purpose in places. The writer does not employ a variety of words, producing a sort of “generic” paper filled with familiar words and phrases. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Imprecise, vague language that begins to cloud message.</li> <li>• Some important terminology used incorrectly or omitted when needed.</li> <li>• Strong verbs, “just right” words or phrases are infrequent.</li> <li>• Problems with wordiness, jargon, or vague language, but message gets through.</li> </ul>	<p>2 Language is monotonous and/or misused, detracting from meaning and impact. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generalities, vague words, or misused words that create confusion.</li> <li>• Writer lacking language to make message clear/effective.</li> <li>• Word choice ambiguous, puzzling or so general it lacks meaning.</li> <li>• Wordiness, jargon, or vague language that impairs meaning.</li> </ul>	<p>1 The writing shows an extremely limited vocabulary or is so filled with misuses of words that the meaning is obscured. Only the most general kind of message is communicated because of vague or imprecise language. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Words that create no clear message.</li> <li>• Words that are misused or not meaningful – what is the writer trying to say?</li> <li>• Writer consistently choosing words or phrases that do not speak to the readers.</li> <li>• Reader struggling but not able to break the code.</li> </ul>

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### SENTENCE FLUENCY

<p>6</p> <p>The writing has an effective flow and rhythm. Sentences show a high degree of craftsmanship, with consistently strong and varied structure that makes expressive oral reading easy and enjoyable. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sentences that are consistently clear, direct, and to the point.</li> <li>• Text that is graceful, yet designed for rapid, easy reading.</li> <li>• Purposeful beginnings that provide natural, effective connections.</li> <li>• Varied length and structure that enhance readability.</li> </ul>	<p>5</p> <p>The writing has an easy flow and rhythm. Sentences are carefully crafted, with strong and varied structure that makes expressive oral reading easy and enjoyable. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sentences that are clear and direct.</li> <li>• Smooth phrasing that enhances readability.</li> <li>• Purposeful beginnings that often connect sentences.</li> <li>• Varied length and structure that add interest.</li> </ul>	<p>4</p> <p>The writing flows; however, the connections between phrases or sentences may be less than fluid. Sentences patterns are somewhat varied, contributing to ease in oral reading. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sentences that are generally clear and readable.</li> <li>• Smooth phrasing that outweighs awkward moments.</li> <li>• Occasional transitional phrases, but some repeated beginnings.</li> <li>• Writer avoiding extremes of long and short.</li> </ul>
<p>3</p> <p>The writing tends to be mechanical rather than fluid. Occasional awkward constructions may force the reader to slow down or reread. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sentences that come clear only with careful reading.</li> <li>• Awkward moments that outweigh smooth phrasing.</li> <li>• Few helpful transitions and many repetitious beginnings.</li> <li>• Some never-ending or choppy sentences.</li> </ul>	<p>2</p> <p>The writing tends to be either choppy or rambling. Awkward constructions often force the reader to slow down or reread. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confusing structure that demands rereading.</li> <li>• Awkward moments that slow reader significantly.</li> <li>• Beginnings that are repetitious or hard to spot.</li> <li>• Long, tangly sentences, awkward moments, or choppy sentences.</li> </ul>	<p>1</p> <p>The writing is difficult to follow or to read aloud. Sentences tend to be incomplete rambling, or very awkward. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confusing structure that obscures meaning.</li> <li>• Writing that can be read aloud only by mentally editing, filling in.</li> <li>• Text that has sentences with no recognizable beginnings or ends.</li> <li>• Irregular word patterns, extreme choppiness, or endlessly connected clauses and phrases.</li> </ul>

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### CONVENTIONS & PRESENTATIONS

<p>6</p> <p>The writing demonstrates exceptionally strong control of standard writing conventions (e.g., punctuation, spelling, capitalization, paragraph breaks, grammar and usage) and uses them effectively to enhance communication. Errors are so few and so minor that the reader can easily skim right over them unless specifically searching for them. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Errors that only the pickiest editors will spot.</li> <li>• Thoroughly edited; conventions enhance meaning, voice.</li> <li>• Sources that are correctly cited.</li> <li>• <i>Optional</i>; enticing layout that highlights key points.</li> <li>• A presentation that is virtually ready to publish.</li> </ul>	<p>5</p> <p>The writing demonstrates strong control of standard writing conventions (e.g., punctuation, spelling, capitalization, paragraph breaks, grammar and usage) and uses them effectively to enhance communication. Errors are so few and so minor that they do not impede readability. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minor errors that are easily overlooked.</li> <li>• Edited; conventions support meaning, voice.</li> <li>• Sources that are correctly cited.</li> <li>• <i>Optional</i>; pleasing layout that guides reader's eye to main points.</li> <li>• A presentation that is ready to publish with light touch-ups.</li> </ul>	<p>4</p> <p>The writing demonstrates control over standard writing conventions (e.g., punctuation, spelling, capitalization, paragraph breaks, grammar and usage). Minor errors, while perhaps noticeable, do not impede readability. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noticeable errors that do not affect message.</li> <li>• Text that is edited for general readability.</li> <li>• Sources that are cited; only light corrections needed.</li> <li>• <i>Optional</i>; layout that is adequate for purpose.</li> <li>• A presentation that needs only a good once-over prior to publication.</li> </ul>
<p>3</p> <p>The writer demonstrates limited control of standard writing conventions (e.g., punctuation, spelling, capitalization, paragraph breaks, grammar and usage). Errors begin to impede readability. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noticeable, distracting errors that may slow reading, affect message.</li> <li>• Erratic editing – many things missed.</li> <li>• Citations that need re-checking.</li> <li>• <i>Optional</i>: problems with layout (e.g., print too small).</li> <li>• A need for a thorough, careful editing prior to publication.</li> </ul>	<p>2</p> <p>The writer demonstrates little control of standard writing conventions. Frequent, significant errors impede readability. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequent, distracting errors that impair clarity and slow the reader.</li> <li>• Minimal editing – reader must do most of the work.</li> <li>• Missing or faulty citations.</li> <li>• <i>Optional</i>: serious problems with layout (e.g., hard-to-read fonts).</li> <li>• A need for line-by-line editing prior to publication.</li> </ul>	<p>1</p> <p>Numerous errors in usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation repeatedly distract the reader and make the text difficult to read. In fact, the severity of and frequency of errors are so overwhelming that the reader finds it difficult to focus on the message and must reread for meaning. The content is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A message hidden under serious, frequent errors.</li> <li>• Even patient readers must struggle to “get it.”</li> <li>• Sources that are not cited.</li> <li>• <i>Optional</i>: no apparent attention to layout.</li> <li>• A need for word-by-word editing prior to publication.</li> </ul>