



Six Traits of Writing

An Introduction

Best-practice strategies for teaching K-12 writing

THE NEXT BEST THING TO ATTENDING A LIVE SMEKENS WORKSHOP!

Online Workshop Overview

This dynamic online workshop utilizes video footage from a full-day Smekens workshop to equip K-12 teachers with the knowledge and tools they need to start teaching the Six Traits of Writing right away. Whether you need to learn a lot about the Six Traits in a hurry or want a “refresher” workshop to get you back on track, this introductory training led by Kristina Smekens provides teachers with the confidence and resources they need to begin implementing the Six Traits model.



Workshop Topics:

- Answers to the questions “What are the Six Traits?” & “Where did they come from?”
- Explanation of how to recognize the Six Traits in pictorial writing (K-1), intermediate writing (grades 2-5), and secondary writing (grades 6-12).
- How the Six Traits unify your instruction of state and national standards and the expectations of state/national writing assessments.
- Ways to introduce the trait language to students of all ages.
- Numerous trait-based mini-lesson ideas to target common writing weaknesses.

When you complete the workshop, you’ll be able to:

- ▶ Initiate an intentional Six-Traits introduction with your students.
- ▶ Establish a common language and understanding of the traits for the rest of the school year.
- ▶ Better articulate to your students what “good” writing looks and sounds like.
- ▶ Recognize the Six Traits within your students’ writing.
- ▶ Connect each lesson in your writing curriculum to a trait.
- ▶ Teach students *how* to improve their writing in each of the trait areas.

“My mind has been blown. I can’t wait to start teaching the 6 Traits. I feel like I have somewhere to start now, and I feel confident about it.”

Jennifer Miller • Teacher, Eastside Elementary School, Brazil, IN

WORKSHOP OUTLINE

Identify the Traits

- Describe “good” writing
- Utilize web resources & Six-Traits icons
- Identify the Traits: Ideas, Organization, Voice, Word Choice, Sentence Fluency, Conventions, & Presentation
- Connect the traits to the standards

Introduce the Traits

- Plan an intentional trait introduction: Six-Trait icons, Mentor texts, Trait characters, & Upper-Grade applications
- Initiate a yearlong visual display
- Provide daily writing experiences
- Juggle reading and writing experiences

Teach the Traits

- Trait-based mini-lessons: Ideas, Organization, Word Choice, Voice, Sentence Fluency, & Conventions

Total time to complete:

5-6 hours; (allotted time to complete the online workshop: 30 days)

Instructor:

Kristina Smekens
*President & Lead Consultant
for Smekens Education Solutions, Inc.*

WHAT ARE THE Six Traits of Writing

AND WHY SHOULD I TEACH THEM?

Who would benefit from this online workshop?

- K-6 Classroom Teachers
- 6-12 Language Arts Teachers
- K-12 Gifted & Talented Teachers
- ELL Teachers
- Literacy Coaches / Coordinators
- Curriculum Directors
- Title I Teachers / Directors
- Principals & Assistant Principals

Continuing Education Credit

With prior approval from the registrant's school district, participants may receive credit for 5 hours of professional development for this webAcademy online workshop. Attendees who choose the "Verified View" viewing option may download a completion certificate after finishing the online workshop.

Graduate Credit

Thanks to a partnership with the Midwest Teachers Institute, registrants may elect to pursue three university-level graduate credits after completing this workshop and the Six Traits of Writing: Implementation Strategies online workshop. These are non-degree credits designed for professional certification renewals and salary step increases. (Check with your district or employers to determine their policies for pay increases.) The cost of graduate credit is \$375 and is separate from the cost of each online workshop.

► Primary-age students learn to use the traits in both pictures and words.



The Six Traits of Writing are rooted in more than 20 years of research which shows that all "good" writing has six key ingredients— ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions. These key components make up the Six Traits writing model, which is simply a framework for teaching and assessing all types of writing at every stage of writing development.

Are the Traits of Writing part of a "program"?

The traits of writing are nothing more than six words. These six terms provide a common language between teachers and students and guide the instruction and assessment of writing. While there are many valuable tools available to support the traits model, this is not a "canned" program and does not require the purchase of additional resources.

Do the traits align with the standards?

The College & Career-Ready Standards have the traits embedded within them. Regardless of the textbook or curriculum used, the traits of writing are inherently present. Teaching writing with the Six Traits as a framework does not mean abandoning the things that are already working in the classroom.

What makes the Six Traits of Effective Writing training series unique?

Teachers who watch this series will leave with the tools and motivation they need to begin implementing the traits in their own classrooms right away. Unlike any other Six Traits workshop in the country, this powerful online workshop is focused on strategies, not theory. Yes, the strategies are rooted in theory, but our mission is to equip teachers with practical, classroom-tested ideas for teaching and assessing the traits at any grade level.

Writers utilize the Six Traits of Writing when they —



IDEAS

Elaborate effectively on a single topic to convey a clear message.



ORGANIZATION

Reveal ideas within a logical order, including a beginning, middle, and end.



VOICE

Increase reader engagement with intentional writer feeling, attitude, and emotion.



WORD CHOICE

Use the right word in the right place to convey just the right meaning.



SENTENCE FLUENCY

Improve the readability of a piece with complete thoughts and sentence variety.



CONVENTIONS

Make writing more correct by following rules of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and grammar.



▲ Students use the traits as a guide during meaningful peer conferences.

◀ Students of all ages can use the traits to assess all genres of writing and drive revision.

ABOUT THE PRESENTER

Kristina Smekens

Kristina Smekens is a full-time literacy consultant who has built a reputation for using enthusiasm, humor, and common sense to equip K-12 educators with practical, demystifying strategies for teaching reading and writing.

As president and lead consultant for Smekens Education, Kristina is constantly developing new strategies for helping teachers to meet the demands of today's College and Career-Ready Standards. She and her two full-time associates share those strategies with teachers across the United States and beyond through on-site school trainings, regional seminars, and an always-growing pool of print, digital, and video resources.

A PRESENTER

Kristina has a gift for making the complex seem simple—for showing teachers how to meet the needs of readers and writers by bridging the gap between education research and practical, classroom-tested strategies that work. When she presents at state and national conferences, teachers flock to her sessions because they know Kristina will share strategies they can use in their own classrooms the very next day.

But beyond providing teachers with practical classroom techniques, Kristina is also a master at giving educators an injection of motivation and encouragement to help them return to their classrooms with the confidence and excitement they need to execute change. In fact, more than 17,000 educators rely on a monthly “shot in the arm” from Kristina as subscribers to her monthly email newsletter, “Big Ideas.”

AN AUTHOR

Well known for offering innovative ideas, Kristina has created more than 50 “Smekens Originals,” a compilation of books, guides, and classroom tools designed to help teachers implement best-practice literacy strategies. Among the most popular of these resources are her best-selling books, *Launching the Writer's Workshop: Grades K-2* and *Grades 3-12*. Other popular publications include *The Trait Mate: 6-Traits Starter Lessons*, *Connecting Comprehension & Composition*, *Sing & Comprehend*, *Close Reading Questions for Literature*, *Close Reading Questions for Informational Text*, *Trait Trackers*, and *Serving Up Synthesis*. Additionally, Kristina is the author of *Trait-Based Writing: Lessons and Activities* (Scholastic, 2009).



A CRAFTER

Beyond books and physical teacher tools, Kristina has also created a library of more than 50 on-demand professional learning videos that are utilized by teachers around the world. With topics ranging from “Building Kid-Friendly Writing Rubrics” to “Achieving a Close Reading,” each of Kristina’s “webPD” videos uses a seminar-style format to capture her energy and enthusiasm while conveying her teacher-friendly ideas.

BACKGROUND

Kristina earned her BA in English and education at Michigan State University. Prior to her full-time consulting career, she was an accomplished high school English and journalism teacher in Michigan and Indiana. A leader in state and national scholastic journalism endeavors, Kristina authored a journalism textbook and teachers’ guide for Walsworth Publishing in 2002.

Over the past 12 years, she has been blessed to work and learn with hundreds of schools and thousands of teachers throughout the Midwest. She was awarded the Excellence in Reading Award by the Indiana State Reading Association in 2013 for her contributions to literacy in Indiana.

Kristina lives in Warren, Indiana with her husband and business partner Brady, their three teenage children, and a rambunctious family dog named Buddy.

“Kristina just takes the guess work out of everything to make it ALL make sense!”

Nicki King • Teacher,
Union Furnace Elementary,
Logan, OH

“I love how you made it abundantly clear the why and how to hone in with intentionality on the issues my kids are having rather than giving skimpy instruction on a plethora of topics just to say ‘we covered that.’ Now, I feel like I can create a road map that will make sense because it will be specifically tailored to their needs.”

Priscilla Peterson •
Teacher, Westfield Middle
School Westfield, IN

“I love the way Kristina presents the information with so much enthusiasm. I love how she builds on what she’s taught before.”

Kristen Smith •
Teacher, Gilmer County
High School, Glenville, WV

“After 33 years of teaching, I still am drawn back into Kristina’s workshops because they are research-based, standards-focused, and very interactive.”

Katie Cadle • Teacher,
Paoli Community Schools,
Paoli, IN

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No completion certificates are awarded, but you have the flexibility to jump ahead in the video.



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TERMS OF USE

We encourage enrolled participants to take advantage of all the features webAcademy has to offer. In doing so, participants agree to the following terms of use:

- 1 Login information and video access may NOT be shared with any individual who is not enrolled in the online workshop.
- 2 Unauthorized sharing of login access will result in a non-refundable cancellation of any and all active online workshops.
- 3 Subscribers are not permitted to reprint, republish, repost or otherwise distribute any content or images from an online workshop.

MUST AGREE & SIGN

By checking & signing, you agree with the **Terms of Use**.

Group Registration Process

To register a group of teachers, complete the form on this page and fax it with a purchase order to webAcademy at 888-376-0489. After a purchase order is received, a professional development specialist will email each registrant with instructions for accessing the online workshop.