

Table of Contents

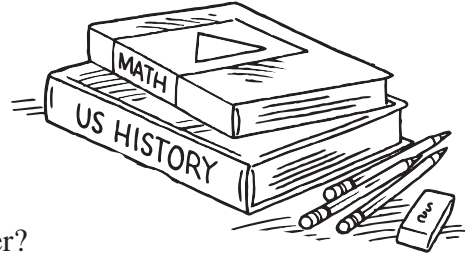
Introduction	3
The 6 + 1 Traits of Writing	4
Standards Correlation Chart	5
Assembling the Writer’s Notebooks	6
Chapter 1: Helping Students Collect Their Ideas	
Introduction	7
Lesson 1 — Personalizing the Writer’s Notebook	8
Lesson 2 — Establishing Classroom Guidelines	10
Lesson 3 — Writing Entries	12
Lesson 4 — What Goes in a Writer’s Notebook?	14
Lesson 5 — Creating Resource Lists of All Kinds	19
Lesson 6 — A Place for Pictures, Clippings, and Sketches	22
Chapter 2: Encouraging Students to Find Their Voice	
Introduction	23
Lesson 7 — Defining Voice	24
Lesson 8 — Forming Opinions	28
Lesson 9 — Getting in Touch with Feelings	32
Lesson 10 — Saving Treasured Memories	36
Lesson 11 — Collecting Unique Expressions	38
Lesson 12 — Focusing on Small Details	40
Lesson 13 — The Computer and the Writer’s Notebook	44
Lesson 14 — Revisiting and Recycling Entries	46
Lesson 15 — Collecting Useful Words and Phrases	49
Chapter 3: Teaching Students to Live Like Writers	
Introduction	54
Lesson 16 — The Writer’s Muse	55
Lesson 17 — A Time for Self-Evaluation	58
Lesson 18 — Learning from Other Writers	60
Lesson 19 — Sharing from the Writer’s Notebook	62
Lesson 20 — Challenging Students to Live Like Writers	63

Lesson 7 – Defining Voice

Materials Needed: a transparency of page 26, student copies of page 27, large sheet of white construction paper, and markers

1. Select a paragraph from a science, social studies, or math textbook and have students follow along as you read. When you are finished, ask them these questions:

- ⇒ Who wrote this paragraph?
- ⇒ Is it a man or a woman?
- ⇒ How old is this person?
- ⇒ What country is this person from?
- ⇒ How does this person feel about the subject matter?



As you might predict, your students will not be able to answer these questions, but rather will just offer unsupported guesses. Explain to them that textbooks are written without “voice” so that readers don’t hear the author but rather focus on the subject matter only.

2. Now explain that as writers we should write with “voice” to let our readers know that a real person is willing to share a part of him- or herself. We are saying, *This writing is “of me” because I’m revealing my . . .*

- ⇒ **(O) opinions**—how I feel about certain issues
- ⇒ **(F) feelings**—how I react
- ⇒ **(M) memories**—stories from my past
- ⇒ **(E) expressions**—the words I use to share my ideas

3. On the overhead, show the “Which One Has Voice?” transparency (page 26). Ask students to guess which paragraph has voice. In paragraph 2 (the correct answer), locate examples of opinions, feelings, memories, and expressions that illustrate “voice.”

Examples:

- ⇒ **opinions:** “noble turkey,” “must have liked the bright colors,” “seems really odd”
- ⇒ **feelings:** “I love bright colors too.”
- ⇒ **memories:** “I’ve seen pictures . . .”
- ⇒ **expressions:** “Hey,” “Go figure!”

(Also emphasize that while both paragraphs give readers the same exact information, the second version makes it more interesting.)

4. Writing should sound like a real person wrote it, not a robot. The reader should sense the “heartbeat” of the writer. Let your students know that this is the type of writing that you expect from them. You expect to “hear” their heartbeat and their voice—not experience encyclopedia-type writing—when you read their writing.

Lesson 7 – Defining Voice (cont.)

5. Divide your class into small groups. Tell them that each group is going to be generating a list of “Voice Similes.” Make sure that your students understand what a simile is by giving a few examples (e.g., “quick like a bunny,” “as happy as a clam”). Now provide this pattern on the board or on an overhead:

⇒ Writing without voice is like _____ without _____.

Now fill in the blanks to provide this example:

⇒ Writing without voice is like a cupcake without frosting.

Explain that even though cupcakes are good, frosting makes them even better. Ask your students for a few more examples. They might offer responses like:

- ⇒ Writing without voice is like *a hot dog* without *mustard*.
- ⇒ Writing without voice is like *Luke Skywalker* without *a light saber*.
- ⇒ Writing without voice is like *a TV* without *a remote*.
- ⇒ Writing without voice is like *a movie* without *popcorn*.



Distribute a “Voice Simile” worksheet (page 27) to each group. Allow time for each group to come up with 10 more similes. Encourage originality. (These can get really humorous.) Then instruct each group to select their favorite simile and write it at the bottom of their paper. Share the group favorites. If time allows, provide each group with a large piece of white construction paper and markers and have them design a VOICE poster using that simile.

Hang the posters around the classroom. Your students will soon realize the importance of voice to a piece of writing. It’s that little bit extra that makes their writing come alive. Share the following thought (and tell your students that the little “extra” is voice):

“The difference between *ordinary* and *extraordinary* is a little *extra*.”

— *author unknown*



6. For an additional activity, copy a short paragraph from your students’ science or social studies textbook. Put this paragraph on the top half of a page and make enough copies so that each student gets one. Then, instruct your students to rewrite the paragraph using their voice. Remind them that using their voice means that they should include their **o**pinions, **f**eelings, **m**emories, and **e**xpressions. (Display and review the example on page 26.)
7. Explain to your students that in the following lessons you’ll be teaching them more about how to include their **o**pinions, **f**eelings, **m**emories, and unique **e**xpressions (“**of me**”) in their writing and how to use their Writer’s Notebook as a special place to collect these ideas.

Lesson 7 – Defining Voice *(cont.)*

Voice Similes

Writing without **VOICE** is like _____ without _____.

Writing without **VOICE** is like _____ without _____.

Writing without **VOICE** is like _____ without _____.

Writing without **VOICE** is like _____ without _____.

Writing without **VOICE** is like _____ without _____.

Writing without **VOICE** is like _____ without _____.

Writing without **VOICE** is like _____ without _____.

Writing without **VOICE** is like _____ without _____.

Writing without **VOICE** is like _____ without _____.

Here is our favorite one:

Writing without **VOICE** is like _____ without _____.
