

# What Teachers Look for in Writing

## Ideas

- Makes sense.
- Gets and holds my attention.
- Has a main idea, thesis, center, sense of purpose.
- Writer draws on experience.
- Says something new, or says it in a fresh way.
- Full of ideas that add:
  - Interest
  - Important information

## Organization

- The opening makes me want to keep reading.
- Has a logical order or pattern (definition, proposal, problem solution, comparison-contrast, story unfolding over time, etc.)
- I can follow the story or main points.
- Sometimes I can predict-sometimes the writer surprises me!
- Ends well. Ties up loose ends. Doesn't stop abruptly.
- Doesn't end with, "Then I woke up and it was all a dream!"
- Doesn't repeat with, "Now you know the three reasons we should fight pollution."

## Voice

- Sounds like a person wrote it.
- Sounds like a *particular* writer.
- Writing has style, flavor.
- Reaches out to me, the reader. Brings me "inside."
- Makes me respond. Makes me *feel*.

## Word Choice

- Makes me say, "Yes, that's *just* the right word or phrase."
- Long after reading, some words still tug at my memory.
- Words are used correctly.
- The writer chooses wisely, but isn't afraid to stretch.
- This writer knows the language of the topic-but doesn't try to impress me with phony, bloated phrases.
- Simple language is used w-hen it gets the job done.

## Sentence Fluency

- It's smooth going-easy on the ear.
- I could easily read this aloud.
- Almost every sentence begins in a slightly different way, OR
- Repetition is rhythmic and stylistic, not annoying.
- Some sentences are long. Some aren't.
- Sentences aren't choppy. Yet they do not meander aimlessly as if length alone were a virtue and there was no particular need to rush to the end and be done with it when something brief and to the point is what the situation really calls for.

## Conventions

- The writing is clean and polished. It looks proofread.
- Most things are done correctly.
- Careful, controlled use of conventions makes meaning clear and reading easy.
- No BIG airers sHoutt at me frm the pg: Hey!" Pay attenSHUN two me! Fergt IDEAS and VIOCE! think ? abowt, the mistakes!, A lot!!"
- Spelling, punctuation, grammar, capital letters and paragraph indenting: This writer has thoughtfully attended to ALL conventional details.