6+1 Traits: Organization

Standard(s):

- Begin using characteristics of good writing: organization (2, 3)

- Continue using characteristics of good writing: organization (4-8)

Pathways Cross-References:

- *1 & 2 Teacher Resource Manual*, pp. 239-269

- *3+ Teacher Resource Manual*, pp. 147-180

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Recommended Materials:

- K-2—*Galimoto*

- 3-5—*The Cabin Faced West*

- 6-8—*Heartbeat*

- White Board/Markers

- Writers' Notebooks

Suggestions for Additional Mini-lessons:

- Creating Good Leads or Beginnings

- Developing the Middle

- Writing Effective Endings

- Using Sequence Words

- Using Transition Words

Please note: *This Mini-Lesson is intended to serve as a guide to assist teachers in creating their own instruction for the Writing Workshop. While a script is provided, it should not be read without personal adaptation.*

Organization

	Connect	Explore	Practice
K-2	Once authors have an idea to write about, they have to organize what they want to say about it. We call these details. The details in stories are organized in the order or sequence in which they happened. For example, think about something that happened to you today. What happened first? What happened next? What happened last?	The author, Karen Lynn Williams, wrote the book, *Galimoto.* Let's look at the pictures and read the words that tell what happened as Kondi made a galimoto. Can you tell what Kondi did first, next, and last? There are seven characteristics or traits of good writing that all learners should know about. One of the traits is ORGANIZATION. There are many different ways to organize what we write. Let's talk about stories today, though. Stories are organized in terms of a beginning, middle, and end. A good question to ask ourselves as we write is: What happened first, next, and last in my story? Think about the art activity that we did yesterday. When we made the _____, what did we do first, next, and last? Let's make a list on the board of what happened at the beginning, middle, and end of our activity. Ex. Rolled out the clay. Molded the clay into shapes. Put the shapes together to tell a story.	We completed a science activity this morning that I would like you to draw or write about. Draw a picture or write a sentence about what happened first, next, and last as you completed the activity. Use "First, Next, Last" to help you organize your story before writing in your writer's notebook. Share your writing with a friend. Did you include the same or different things in your story?

Organization

| 3-5 | How can an author make the ideas they write about easier to understand? That's right! They can organize the details well.

You can think of this as similar to creating a map for the reader. Let's look at a map of our town. What has the map maker included that helps you find your way around?

There are certain words that help to organize the parts of the map and guide us to where we need to go, such as north, south, etc. What might be some words that a writer could use to guide the reader? | In the book, *The Cabin Faced West*, by Jean Fritz, Ann and her family moved to the wilderness. As we read the first three pages, let's look for words that the author uses to organize the details and guide us through the text.

There are seven characteristics or traits of good writing that all learners should know and use. They describe the qualities of good writing as well as provide a common language for us to talk about writing. One of the traits is ORGANIZATION. Organization helps the writer and the reader connect the different parts of the text. One way to do this is to use sequence words and phrases to organize the ideas or details. Some examples are: before, after, then, next, etc.

Let's make a chart that lists the sequence words from the three pages that we just read.

| Ex. during |
| later on |
| while |

How do these words help connect the details in the story? | Find the book that you are reading during Reading Workshop.

Read the next five pages in the book. In your writing notebook, make a chart with a list of the sequence words that you find. Or you can use "Sequence Words and Phrases" to make your list and insert it in your writer's notebook.

You can add additional words to the chart as you discover more sequence words.

Refer to your chart as you write to help you organize the details. |

Organization

	Connect	Explore	Practice

6-8	What makes you want to read on when you begin to read a book? It is usually the way the book begins. When authors organize their ideas for writing, they carefully consider the way in which they begin their piece.
	
	Writers call this a lead. There are many ways to create good leads.
	
	Think about a book that you have read recently. How did the book begin? Did the lead make you want to read on?
		The author, Sharon Creech, knew that it was important to "grab" the reader when she began the book, *Heartbeat,* so you would want to read more. Let's read her lead at the beginning of the first chapter.
		
		Remember that there are seven characteristics or traits of good writing that all learners should address in their writing. Not only do they provide a common language for us to talk about writing but they allow you to become a self-evaluator. You can critique your own writing by referring to the traits. One of the traits is ORGANIZATION. Organization refers to the internal structure of a piece of writing. A writer has to think about how they are going to begin a piece, how to sequence the details in the middle, and how to end the piece. Let's focus on just the beginning today.
		
		How would you describe the way in which Sharon Creech began her book? This is one technique that authors use, but there are many other ways to create good leads. I have selected three books that we have recently read for guided reading. Let's see what techniques the authors used to create a good lead. We'll record the different ways on our chart.
		
		<table><tr><td>Ex. The writer asks a question.
		    The writer shares an interesting piece of information.
		    The writer describes a sound.</td></tr></table>
		What other ways can you think of to begin your writing?
			Add a chart to your writing notebook that lists different types of leads. Begin with the three leads recorded on our class chart. Or you can use "Techniques to Create a Lead" to make your list and add it to your writer's notebook.
			
			Add to your chart as you read different texts and note a technique you have not already listed.
			
			When you need an idea for a good lead for a piece of writing, refer to this chart.

"Apply" Ideas:

- Have learners compare the organization of a variety of texts, including texts from different content areas such as art, music, math, social studies, and science.
- During read-alouds, occasionally pause and discuss the organization of the text with the learners.
- Make a class anchor chart of sequence words and phrases.
- Add transition words to the Word Wall. Highlight them in a particular color to distinguish them from other vocabulary words.
- Have learners choose a Psalm to analyze the text organization.

"Share" Ideas:

- Have learners work in small groups to create a podcast highlighting the significance of the organization trait. The podcasts could be archived on the class web page.

- Create a writing display to showcase what students are learning for a Parent's Night. Include anchor charts, samples of student writing, anchor texts, etc.

- Have learners interview an author about how they create good leads and endings. Publish the interview in the school or class newsletter.

All About Organization

- •Create a Good Beginning

- •Develop the Middle

- •Write an Effective Ending

- •Use Sequence Words

- •Use Transition Words

Name_____   Date_____

First, Next, Last

Draw or write what happened first in your story.

Draw or write what happened next in your story.

Draw or write what happened last in your story.

Name_____   Date_____

Sequence Words and Phrases

Name_____   Date_____

Techniques to Create a Lead

Example	Source
The writer shares an interesting piece of information.	*Heartbeat,* by Sharon Creech, Chp. 1

Name_____   Date_____

Assessment Rubric: Organization

	K-2	**3-5**	**6-8**
Creating a Good Lead or Beginning	Beginning is clear. 1 2 3	Beginning is clear and leads the reader into the piece. 1 2 3	Lead uses an effective technique to grab the interest of the reader. 1 2 3
Developing the Middle	Details are well organized. 1 2 3	Details are organized logically. 1 2 3	Details are organized to align with the purpose for writing. 1 2 3
Writing an Effective Ending	Ending is clear. 1 2 3	Ending is clear and creates a sense of closure. 1 2 3	Ending uses an effective technique to create a sense of closure. 1 2 3
Using Sequence Words	NA	Sequence words help organize and connect the details. 1 2 3	A variety of sequence words and phrases help organize and connect the details. 1 2 3
Using Transition Words	NA	NA	Transition words help organize and connect the details. 1 2 3
Total Score	/9	/12	/15

Note: Score each criterion on the left of the chart on a scale of 1 to 3, with 1 being low and 3 being high, for the particular grade band of the student.