

## ***Teaching the Qualities of Writing***

**A good piece of writing should be strong in ideas, design, language, presentation—and infused with voice**



**IDEAS:** The writer must have something to say. Strong writing conveys rich, plentiful ideas that are developed in engaging, even surprising ways.

**DESIGN:** Helter-skelter ideas, no matter how interesting, won't cut it. In the hands of a skillful writer, ideas are presented in an orderly fashion. Strong writing has shape, architecture, and overall design.

**LANGUAGE:** The Language a writer chooses directly affects how we experience the ideas found on the page. In a strong piece of writing, the language allows ideas to take flight.

**PRESENTATION:** After all the hard work, a writer hopes to be read. Every possible barrier that stands between the writer and the reader—messy handwriting, incorrect spelling, and disorderly papers—has to be removed. Successful writing respects the reader's need for clean, correct presentation.

Voice is not a separate quality but a common thread that infuses all four qualities. Voice manifests itself in the kinds of ideas the writer chooses to put forward, how he decides to organize them, and in the particular way this writer's work appears on the page.