SIX TRAITS

Ideas
Organisation
Voice
Word Choice
Sentence Fluency
Conventions and Layout
What is voice?

• Sounds like a person wrote it, not a committee
• Writer seems engaged, involved with topic
• Sounds like this particular writer
• Brings topic to life
• Speaks to me – show writer to reader connection
• Individual – sounds like this writer and no other
• Makes me respond – I laugh, smile, cry, wince, get the chills
• Shows energy, life, spontaneity, confidence
Mama named me Journey. Journey, as if somehow she wished her restlessness on me. But it was Mama who would be gone the year that I was eleven – before spring crashed onto our hillside with explosions of mountain laurel, before summer came with the soft slap of the screen door, before breathless nights and mildew on the books.

*From Journey by Patricia MacLachlan*
What is word choice?

• Memorable moments – just right words
• Words and phrases I wish I’d thought of myself
• Creates word pictures
• Word is accurate, precise and enlightening
• Every word or phrase crystal clear
• Strong verbs
• Simple language used well
• Repeats words only as necessary – or for effect
• Uses language to inform or entertain – not to impress
Harsh cries of hunger pierce the chill air. 
Twilight is fading. 
The tawny Frogmouth’s hunt must begin.

Narelle Oliver
SENTENCE FLUENCY

- Easy to read aloud
- Inviting, easy-on-the-ear rhythm, cadence
- Carefully crafted sentences
- Variety in sentence length, structure
- Consistency in tense
- Authentic dialogue
- Concise straightforward structure in informational
- Fragments used only for effect
CONVENTIONS and LAYOUT

• Looks clean, edited, polished – free of distracting errors
• Reader does not need to do mental editing
• Conventions help the reader process text
• Conventions support meaning and voice
• Design and presentation draw reader’s eye to key points – uses graphics [or lack of] effectively