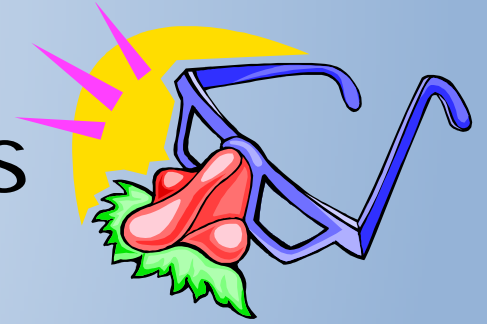
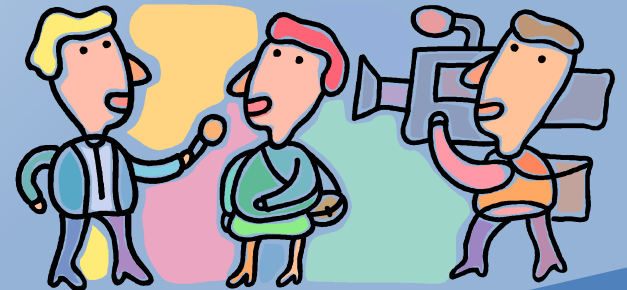


# 6 + 1 Writing Traits



## **Voice:**

The authentic you



# What is voice?

*Be yourself. Above all, let who you are, what you are, what you believe, shine through every sentence you write, every piece you finish.*

— John Jakes

voice is like *tone* — it is the author's attitudes and feelings; it is the author revealing his or her authentic self; voice shines through when the author speaks to the reader on an emotional level



it requires experimenting with style to match the purpose and audience



it requires the writer to take risks by revealing the person behind the words

# Voice: Listen to the difference (1)

## Mother to Son

Well, son, I'll tell you:  
Life for me ain't been no crystal stair.  
It's had tacks in it,  
And splinters,  
And boards torn up,  
And places with no carpet on the floor—  
Bare.  
But all the time  
I've been a-climbin' on,  
And reachin' landin's,  
And turnin' corners,  
And sometimes goin' in the dark  
Where there ain't been no light.  
So, boy, don't you turn back.  
Don't you set down on the steps.  
'Cause you finds it's kinder hard.  
Don't you fall now—  
For I've still goin', honey,  
I've still climbin',  
And life for me ain't been no crystal stair.

## I, Too

I, too, sing America.  
I am the darker brother.  
They send me to eat in the kitchen  
When company comes,  
But I laugh,  
And eat well,  
And grow strong.  
  
Tomorrow,  
I'll be at the table  
When company comes.  
Nobody'll dare  
Say to me,  
"Eat in the kitchen,"  
Then.  
  
Besides,  
They'll see how beautiful I am  
And be ashamed—  
I, too, am America.

# Voice: Listen to the difference (2)

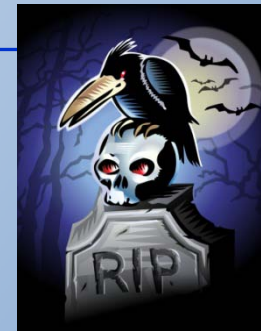
The Lord is my shepherd;  
I shall not want.  
He maketh me to lie down  
in green pastures:  
he leadeth me beside the still waters.  
He restoreth my soul:  
he leadeth me in the paths of  
righteousness for his name's sake.  
Yea, though I walk through the valley  
of the shadow of death, I will fear  
no evil: for thou art with me;  
thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.  
Thou preparest a table before me  
in the presence of mine enemies:  
thou anointest my head with oil;  
my cup runneth over.  
Surely goodness and mercy shall  
follow me all the days of my life:  
and I will dwell in the house  
of the Lord for ever.

*Twenty-Third Psalm*



The wind was a torrent of darkness  
upon the gusty trees,  
The moon was a ghostly galleon  
tossed upon cloudy seas,  
The road was a ribbon of moonlight  
looping the purple moor,  
And the highwayman came riding—  
Riding — riding —  
The highwayman came riding,  
up to the old inn door.

*The Highwayman*  
Alfred Noyes



# Voice: Listen to the difference (3)

## **Tale of Two Cities**

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way ...

## **Declaration of Independence**

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

## **Laughing man prompts rescue**

A helicopter rescue team was scrambled after screams were heard in a German forest — only to find a man laughing his head off at a new book.

A woman dialed 999 after she thought she could hear someone being tortured in the woods near Elmstein, western Germany.

But 'victim' Roland Hofmann was astonished when armed police surrounded his car which he had driven into the forest and ordered him to give himself up and release his hostage.

He told police he had gone to the forest to read "in peace and quiet."



Can you identify the voice in each selection?

# Voice: Some tips on authenticity

*If I'm going to sing like someone else, then I don't need to sing at all.*  
— Billie Holiday



experiment, try different approaches



remember, each purpose and audience requires its own approach



take risks; let your voice be heard



ask yourself if the piece of writing

- says what you want it to say
- says it the way you want it said
- reflects what you believe and feel
- presents your ideas in the most powerful way

# The Rubric: What I am looking for ...

- writer speaks to readers in a compelling way
- writer speaks to readers in an engaging way
- honesty, sincerity, opinions, emotions revealed
- point of view is understood
- paragraph structure supports ideas / content
- tone is appropriate to topic, purpose, audience
- mood is appropriate to topic, purpose, audience
- writing shows reader why he/she should know, care
- narratives make readers think about authors' ideas