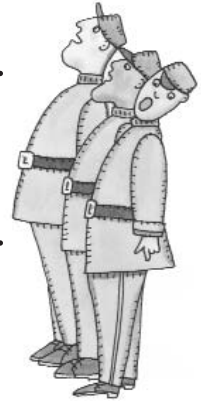


Voice

Good writers usually have a strong **voice** that comes through in the tone and style of their writing. A strong voice will help to make your writing interesting by showing your personality.



- Today began nicely. I felt happy. (weak voice)
- Today I leaped out of bed with a big smile on my face. (strong voice)

When you write—just as when you speak—you can choose an appropriate tone of voice to communicate successfully with a certain audience for a particular purpose. Your style and your choice of words can make the writing interesting to each reader, whether the tone is serious or humorous, formal or informal. If you care about what you write, your writing will reflect your voice.

Strategies for Developing Your Voice

- Choose a writing tone that matches your topic. For instance, a light, carefree tone probably would not work for writing an essay about your state's government. Instead, you would need to use a more formal, serious tone.
- Use words and phrases that match the type of writing you are doing. For example, in a letter to the editor of your local newspaper, you should avoid using slang or casual language. In a letter to a friend, however, you would use informal and friendly words. In this type of writing, you could even use slang.
- Find your voice by reading aloud things you have written. In other words, learn to listen to yourself.

VOICE

Use the pronoun *I*, along with vivid adjectives (*nervous, excited, cautious*), to express how you feel about something.

A Match each numbered item with the type of writing it is.

A Personal Narrative

C Persuasive Argument

B Humorous Description

D Comparison/Contrast Essay

1. Elephants may be big, but whales are even bigger.
2. I believe that all schools should be free.
3. The scruffy toy bear had been hugged flatter than a raggedy pancake!
4. I was overjoyed when Cassandra slid into her chair beside me.

B Each underlined part of the following paragraph has a “voice problem.” Match the letter of the problem with each numbered item.

A Slang

B Too informal

C Too formal

5. My school is way huge compared to any other school in the city. 6. In such a large school, I can make the acquaintance of many different people. 7. However, classes are large, and students might receive less attention (as if they really cared).

C Add descriptive words or phrases to the sentences to express a strong, lively voice.

8. I went to the airport and saw ____ airplanes. 9. When the airplanes took off, they made such a loud sound that _____. 10. I met a ____ pilot who told me what it was like to _____. 11. Seeing a plane in flight makes me feel _____.

