**Becoming an Effective Writer**

**6 + 1 Traits of Writing**

**1. Ideas**

* there is an appropriate balance of “showing” and “telling”
* being specific with high quality details is more interesting than a large quantity of vague details
* a unique idea or approach is being written about
* bigger topics are supported by sub-topics
* the writing centres around thesis statement or main statement

**2. Organization**

* there is a strong introduction to the piece of writing
* transitions are used to move the idea along logically
* paragraphs are written with purpose
* the writing comes to a satisfying conclusion
* the conclusion somehow links back to the introduction
* title the piece effectively

**3. Voice**

* the writing shows an awareness of an audience
* the writing shows a passion towards the topic
* the writer has used devices of style (such as figurative language) when appropriate
* the writer has captured a tone or mood (including humour) as appropriate
* the writing shows awareness of perspective and point of view

**4. Word Choice**

* The writer understands the importance of strong verbs
* The writer understands the importance of precise nouns
* The writer understands the importance of interesting adjectives
* The writer has taken risks with words
* If appropriate, the writer has used alliteration or other types of sound devices

**5. Sentence Fluency**

* A variety of transitions are used
* A variety of sentence beginnings are used
* A variety of sentence lengths are used
* When reading the writing aloud, the words sound natural
* Complex and simple sentences are used to promote rhythm in the language

**6. Conventions**

* Spelling is correct enough to not distract from the writer’s message
* Grammar is correct enough to not distract from the writer’s message
* External punctuation (periods, questions marks, and exclamation points) is used correctly
* Internal punctuation (commas, apostrophes, semi-colons, quotation marks) is competent – the writer uses capitalization rules flawlessly

**+ 1. Presentation**

* Margins and columns frame the writing and graphics
* Type size and style is appropriate for the content
* Graphics reinforce the voice, ideas and organization traits
* Text layout contributes to the readability of the document