

SIX TRAIT WRITING WARM-UPS

TRAIT #1: IDEAS

	PREPARATION	EXERCISE	FOLLOW-UP
1.	Write on the board: "Why I Don't Have My Homework"	List a few possible reasons students could come up with for not having homework in on time. Have students add to the list. Encourage "imaginative" reasons.	Talk about the way imaginative ideas make a topic more "fun".
2.	Write on the board: "Why I'm Late for School"	List a few possible excuses. Have students add to the list – the more imaginative, the better.	Talk about using the imagination to add interest to a simple topic.
3.	Write on the board: "My Favorites"	Share with students some of your favorites: places, activities, foods, people, songs, books, etc. Have them create their own lists.	Save the lists in their writing folders.
4.	Write on the board: "That Makes Me Mad!"	Tell students some of the things that make you mad and then have them create their own lists. Share ideas.	Save the lists in their writing folders.
5.	Read aloud Joan Walsh Anglund's "A Friend is Someone Who Likes You"	Have students list all the different kinds of friends they have or can think of (older, younger, pets, toys, etc.) Talk about the qualities that make a friend.	Save the lists in their writing folders.
6.	Read aloud Joan Walsh Anglund's "Love Is"	Talk about the many forms love can have. Have students list all the feelings and acts of kindness they can think of that are expressions of love.	Save the lists in their writing folders.
7.	Write a nonsense word on the board – i.e., "gerplotz"	Ask students to write a brief advertisement that would convince someone to buy a gerplotz. Read ads aloud to one another.	Talk about what makes ads convincing.
8.	Tell students: "You have a broken blatnik. What are you going to do about it?"	List on the board all the things students suggest doing for a broken blatnik. Draw attention to range of suggestions. Ask them what part their imaginations played in their suggestions.	Talk about the use of imagination to fill in the blanks.
9.	Read Shel Silverstien's poem "I Cannot Go To School Today" aloud.	Have the children list all the imaginary ailments they would use to convince their mothers that they couldn't go to school.	Talk about how the imagination adds fun to writing.
10.	Write on the board: 1. What 2 nd Graders Know 2. What 6 th Graders Know 3. What 9 th Graders Know	Ask students which topic they are the most capable of writing about. Ask why; Ask why writing about one of the others would probably be too difficult for them.	Talk about the importance of knowing about what you write about.
11.	Write on the board: "What I'd Like to Change about School"	Tell students some of the things you'd like to change and then have them create their own lists. Share ideas.	Save the lists in their writing folders.
12.	Write on the board: "Five Good Uses for a Pocket"	Have children each make a list of the five best uses they can think of (limit it to five). Share ideas. Ask students to think about which ideas appealed to them most – and why.	Contrast ideas with imagination and those with little thought.
13.	Write on the board: 1. The Scariest Halloween 2. Radishes 3. How to Sharpen a Pencil	Ask Students which story they'd want to read. Ask why. Have them suggest titles of stories they wouldn't want to read. Then list titles of stories they would want to read.	Talk about the importance of having an interesting topic to write about.