

Order! Order!
(a lesson in using the trait of Organization)

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Discipline / Subject: language arts - writing

Topic: the trait of organization

Grade Level: 1-4

Resources / References / Materials Teacher Needs: A sled dog pup's first year synopsis

Lesson Summary: Students will practice the trait of organization using descriptions of activities and development in a sled dog pup's first year of life.

Standards Addressed:

national standards:

NL-ENG.K-12.5 Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.

Alaska state standards:

English/language arts A

A student should be able to speak and write well for a variety of purposes and audiences. A student who meets the content standard should:
apply elements of effective writing and speaking; these elements include ideas, organization, vocabulary, sentence structure, and personal style

Arizona state standards:

W2-S2-C2

PO2 Use beginning and concluding statements (other than simply "The End") in text.

PO3 Use signal words (e.g., first, second, third; 1,2,3) to indicate the order of events or ideas

PO4 Use transitional words and phrases (e.g., next, then, so, but, while, after that, because) to connect ideas.

Learning objectives: The students will:

- use transition words to connect ideas in writing (application)
- select the correct transition words to match the placement of information (evaluation)
- signal the beginning and end of writing with words (application)
- put writing into correct sequence (synthesis)

Assessment: Use attached or similar rubric to assess organization.

Procedural Activities:

1. Introduce the trait of Organization to students.
2. Lead students through Organization practice activities. One idea is to cut apart a familiar story, give the pieces to different students, have them get in order so their pieces tell the story correctly, then let them discuss how the transition words helped them decide where to go. Or, have students suggest transition words that would help them decide the correct order. Another activity is to have the students tell about a typical day, using transition words and correct order.
3. Let students look into their textbooks or pleasure reading for examples of connecting words.
4. Read and discuss the sled dog pup's first year information.
5. Have the students write, dictate, or sequence a paragraph using the information given. Their paragraphs should reflect a beginning and end as well as use connecting words.

Materials Students Need: sled dog pup's first year information and publishing tools such as paper and pencil or computer for word processing

Technology Utilized to Enhance Learning: Students may make an accompanying Timeliner timeline or use publishing software.

Other Information: 6 traits defines organization as the internal structure, thread of central meaning, and pattern of logic of a piece of writing. Help students avoid overusing connecting words.

There are many good 6 Traits handbooks for teachers. Here are some suggestions:
6 + 1 Traits of Writing The Complete Guide Grades 3 and Up by Ruth Culham
Creating Writers Through 6-Trait Writing Assessment and Instruction by Vicki Spandel
40 Reproducible Forms for the Writing Traits Classroom by Ruth Culham and Amanda Wheeler

Modifications for special learners/ Enrichment Opportunities:

For emerging writers, write out sentences on sentence strips and have students put them in the correct order using the cue words.