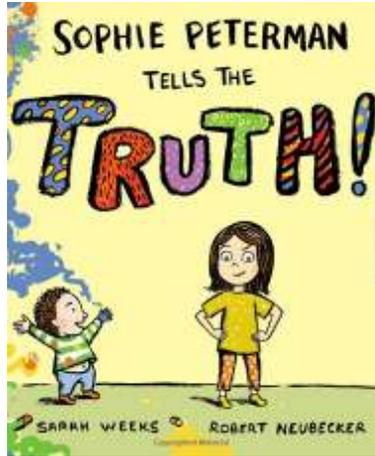


# Writing Trait: Voice

Learning Intention: understanding voice as one of the characteristics of quality writing.

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by Sarah Weeks

## Before Reading:

PLOs: A4, A5, A6, B5

Have students turn to a partner and predict what the book will be about by looking at the illustration on the front cover and by reading the title. Have students share a few predictions with the whole class.

You may also want to have students ask all sorts of questions based on the title and illustration of this book.

## During Reading:

PLOs: A6, B6

Ask students to watch and listen for the ways in which the author, Sarah Weeks, shares information about Sophie Peterman's personality.

## After Reading:

PLO: B7

Ask what is voice?

- it's a reader/writer connection
- it's the personality behind the pen
- it's showing passion for your writing topic

Because voice can be hard to understand through a definition, ask students to play an assessment game by reading and scoring two pieces of writing; one with voice, the other without.

Create a chart like this on a black board or smart board:

VOICE	not yet	getting there	that's it	wow

Give students two small post-it-notes each. Tell them they are going to play an assessment game.

For this game they will read a sample piece of text and have a conversation with just one other student. After discussing the level of voice in the sample text, each student will write 1, 2, 3, or 4 on their post it note and place in the appropriate column on the chart below.

Explain to students that it's OK to be off by one score (i.e. differences in scoring between a 1 or 2 is fine; or between a 2 or 3 is also fine; as is 3 or 4. But scores should not be off by two levels.

The objective of the game is to get class scores to be consistent enough that they are the same or off by only one. This requires students to understand the trait well enough to score it accurately. Points may be given. One point is given for scores that match those found on the following website. But two points are taken away for each post-it more than one level from the assessed score.

VOICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>no personality</li> <li>no evidence of care for topic</li> <li>no thought for the reader</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a glimmer of personality</li> <li>some evidence of care for topic</li> <li>thought for the reader in parts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clear personality</li> <li>evidence that show care for topic</li> <li>carefully chosen words and events to engage the reader</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>personality that shines</li> <li>evidence that shows passion for topic</li> <li>a clear understanding of what readers crave</li> </ul>

Sample text for your grade may be found at [http://thetraits.org/scoring\\_examples.php](http://thetraits.org/scoring_examples.php)

Or use additional Sophie Peterman Voice Samples.