

Elements Of Our Nonfiction Publications

Short Reports of Information Written in Engaging and Interesting Ways

Controlling Idea* Sifting through everything the writer could say about her topic, the writer finds a focus that fascinates her and that she wants to teach her readers about.

Engaging The writer's passion and personality are behind the words. The writing incorporates the writer's feelings and opinions about the topic. Often, a unique style comes through.

Research Facts found through researching are woven throughout the writing in order to give accurate, relevant, and interesting information to support the controlling idea. Research can be done through interviewing experts, observations and field research, studying topical videos or television shows, finding information in texts or on the internet, conducting surveys, attending workshops, etc. In grades 4 and 5, students will be taught to research by gathering facts from printed texts.

Organizational Structure The writing should have a lead that introduces the controlling idea and grabs the reader's attention, a middle that includes facts and opinions that are grouped together and support the controlling idea, and an ending that captures the essence and wraps up the controlling idea. While there is no one way to organize information, ideas will most effectively be communicated to the reader if arranged in a clear, concise, and simple manner.

* In grades 2 and 3, we have students think about Controlling Idea by teaching them to group their related ideas around a focused topic.