



## Lessons in Discovery of Voice!

The lessons below are samples of those found on page 132 of Ruth Culham's *6+1 Traits of Writing: The Complete Guide, Grades 3 and Up*.

### **Compare and Contrast:**

Find two or three books on the same topic, but different authors and different styles. For young children, a good place to begin is with folk or fairy tales – two versions of Cinderella, for instance.

Older students might enjoy looking at an expository text on the same subject...maybe an encyclopedia entry on, say, spiders. Then look in other places such as a museum guide, a science magazine, or even a fictional piece about a spider. Look at the different ways authors write about spiders. Discuss the variance of voice in each sample of writing.

### **Voice In, Voice Out:**

Find a sample of writing devoid of voice. Manuals and textbooks are good sources to choose from. Have students rewrite the piece trying to put in as much voice as possible. Exaggerate the emotional context. Fictionalize the piece. Have fun with it! Read the revisions aloud to appreciate the contrast.

### **New Voices, New Choices:**

Have the students write the first sentence of a letter to five different audiences. As an example, if the students are studying global warming, for instance, ask them to write to the local newspaper, their grandmother, a friend, an environmentalist, and a teacher. Discuss how the voice in writing will change depending on the intended audience. Ask them to describe the voice that would best be appropriate for each of those audiences.

Page 130 features a wonderful starter **List of Voice Descriptors**. Define them. Dramatize them.

Find examples in text for them. In short...have a ball with them!

happy	Warm	caring	superficial
ridiculous	sarcastic	way out there	scholarly
bereaved	thoughtful	funny	profound
bizarre	revealing	self-deprecating	pleasing
concerned	passionate	timid	earnest
tentative	caring	introspective	flat
dismal	frightened	naive	riveting
horrifying	subtle	delightful	thrilled
rude	detached	gracious	unctuous
curt	entertaining	clever	mean
mistrustful	critical	childlike	courageous