

# The CEC Middle College of Denver



**A Writing Guide and Stylebook**

## How Students Should Use This Book

Students should turn to this book to settle questions of style, to remember writing fundamentals, and to read models for specific assignments. This book is designed to aid writers of every skill level. After a student is assigned a paper, he or she should consult this book for strategies.

## How Teachers Should Use This Book

Teachers should be able to direct students with specific writing weaknesses to particular sections of this book. Teachers may base classroom assignments on individual chapters, and, when appropriate, consult the writing models with students before assigning new papers.

## CEC Middle College of Denver

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# Contents

## INTRODUCTION

How to Use This Book .....	2
Resources at School. ....	2
Acknowledgements. ....	2
Contents Page .....	3

## GRAMMAR & MECHANICS

Parts of Speech.....	4
The Sentence .....	6
Punctuation .....	7
Punctuating Dialogue .....	9
Writing Paragraphs.....	9
Transitions .....	10
Parallelism.....	11
Form .....	11
Usage.....	12
Agreement .....	14
Verb Tense .....	14
Wordiness.....	15
Active vs. Passive Voice .....	16
Misplaced and Dangling Modifiers .....	16

## WRITING

Format.....	17
Formal vs. Informal.....	17
About Style.....	18
Thesis Statements .....	19
Plagiarism.....	20
Paraphrasing.....	20
Citations .....	21
Sources .....	21
MLA Bibliography Format .....	22
APA Bibliography Format.....	23
Outlining.....	24
Proofreader's Marks .....	25
Writing Checklist: Do's and Don't's .....	25
Model 1: Business Letter .....	26
Model 2: Lab Report Format .....	27
Model 3: Personal Essay .....	28
Model 4: Format for Argumentative Paper .....	28
Model 5: Five-Paragraph Essay.....	29
Model 6: Literary Analysis .....	30
Model 7: Informal Argument .....	30
Model 8: Research Paper Sample.....	31

## APPENDICES

CSAP Standards & Rubrics .....	33
Peer Editing Rubric .....	37
Internet Writing Resources .....	38
How to Use a Thesaurus.....	39
Spelling Rules and Advice .....	39
Commonly Misspelled Words .....	40
Literary Terms .....	41
Clichés .....	42
Fumblerules .....	42
Advice for Timed Essays.....	43

# GRAMMAR & MECHANICS

## Parts of Speech

1. A NOUN is a word that is the name of something—a person, place, thing, or idea: Mayor Maynard Jackson, Oregon, cliff, excitement.

The five classes of nouns are proper, common, concrete, abstract, and collective.

A proper noun names a particular person, place, thing, or idea. Proper nouns are always capitalized: Marion Jones, New York, World Series, Judaism.

A common noun is any noun that does not name a particular person, place, thing, or idea. Common nouns are not capitalized: person, woman, president, baseball, government, park.

A concrete noun names a thing that is tangible (can be seen, touched, heard, smelled or tasted). Concrete nouns are either proper or common: Flannery O'Connor, Grand Canyon, speedboat, aroma, pizza.

An abstract noun names an idea, a condition, or a feeling—in other words, something that cannot be touched, smelled, tasted, seen or heard: New Deal, greed, poverty, progress, freedom, hope.

A collective noun names a group or unit: United States, Portland Trailblazers, team, crowd, community.

2. A PRONOUN is a word used in place of a noun.

Some pronouns are personal: I, you, he, she, it, me, they, my, mine, ours, , your, yours, its, him, his, her, hers, we, their, theirs, us, himself, themselves.

All pronouns have antecedents. An antecedent is the noun that the pronoun refers to or replaces.

The **judge** coughed and reached for the glass of water. The water touched his lips before he noticed the fly that lay bathing in the cool liquid.  
(Judge is the antecedent of his and he.)

**Bill** brought his gerbil to school.

**One** of the rowboats is missing its oars.

A **person** must learn to wait his or her turn.

Demonstrative pronouns: this, that, these, those.

Interrogative pronouns: who, whose, whom, which, what.

Relative pronouns: who, whose, whom, which, what, that.

Indefinite pronouns: all, another, any, anybody, anything, both, each, each one, either, everybody, everyone, everything, few, many, most, , much, neither, nobody, none, no one, nothing, one, other, several, some, somebody, someone, something, such.

3. A VERB is a word that expresses action or state of being.

Joe ran while Emilio hid. Sally grew bored.

4. An ADJECTIVE describes or modifies a noun or pronoun. Articles a, an and the are adjectives.

The green tree grows in crowded Brooklyn.

5. An ADVERB modifies a verb, an adjective, or another adverb. An adverb tells how, when, where, why, how often, and how much.

Time: These adverbs tell when, how often and how long: today, yesterday, daily, weekly, briefly, eternally.

Place: These adverbs tell where, to where and from where: here, there, nearby, yonder, backward, forward.

Manner: These adverbs often end in ly and tell how something is done: precisely, regularly, regally, smoothly, well.

Degree: These adverbs tell how much and how little: substantially, greatly, entirely, partly, too.

6. A PREPOSITION is a word (or group of words) that shows the relationship between its object (a noun or a pronoun that follows the preposition) and another word in the sentence.

A prepositional phrase includes the preposition, the object of the preposition, and the modifiers of the object

Some people run away from caterpillars.  
However, little children with inquisitive minds enjoy their company.

List of Prepositions					
aboard	at	despite	in regard to	opposite	till
about	away from	down	inside	out	to
above	back of	down from	inside of	out of	toward
according to	because of	during	in spite of	outside	under
across	before	except	instead of	outside of	underneath
across from	behind	except for	into	over	until
after	below	excepting	like	over to	unto
against	beneath	for	near	owing to	up
along	beside	from	near to	past	up to
alongside	besides	from among	of	prior to	upon
alongside of	between	in	off	regarding	within
along with	beyond	in addition to	on	through	without
amid	by	in front of	onto	throughout	
around	concerning				

7. A CONJUNCTION connects individual words or groups of words.

Elmo loved chocolate, but he hated fudge.  
When we came back to Paris, it was clear and cold and lovely.

#### Kinds of Conjunctions

Coordinating: and, but, or, nor, for, yet, so

Correlative: either, or; neither, nor; not only, but also; both, and; whether, or; just, as; just, so; as, so

Subordinating: after, although, as if, as long as, as though, because, before, if, in order that, provided that, since, so, so that, that, though, till, unless, until, when, where, whereas, while

8. An INTERJECTION is included in a sentence in order to communicate strong emotion or surprise. Punctuation (often a comma or an exclamation point) is used to set off an interjection from the rest of the sentence.

Oh, no! The TV broke. Good grief! I have nothing to do! Yipes, I'll go mad!

## The Sentence

A sentence is made up of one or more words expressing a complete thought. (Note: A sentence begins with a capital letter; it ends with a period, a question mark, or an exclamation point.)

The boys passively flopped onto the couch.  
(Boys is the plural subject, flopped is the verb.)

There are four kinds of sentences easily remembered by the sentence "I D.E.I."  
I = Interrogative; D=Declarative, I=Imperative, E=Exclamatory

Interrogative sentences ask questions.

Did you know that the Statue of Liberty is made of copper and stands over 150 feet tall?

Declarative sentences make statements.

The Statue of Liberty stands in New York Harbor.

Imperative sentences make commands. They often contain an understood subject (you).

Go see the Statue of Liberty.

Exclamatory sentences communicate strong emotion or surprise.

Climbing 168 stairs to reach the top of the Statue of Liberty is a dumb idea!

A simple sentence may have a single subject or a compound subject. It may have a single predicate (verb phrase) or a compound predicate. But a simple sentence has only one independent clause, and it has no dependent clause.

My back aches. (single subject; single predicate)  
My teeth and my eyes hurt. (compound subject; single predicate)  
My hair and my muscles are deteriorating and disappearing.  
(compound subject; compound predicate)

A compound sentence consists of two independent clauses. The clauses must be joined by a coordinating conjunction, by punctuation, or by both.

Energy is part of youth, but both are quickly spent.  
My middle-aged body is sore; my middle-aged face is wrinkled.

A complex sentence contains one independent clause (in italics) and one or more dependent clauses (in boldface).

*People often say wise things, such as age is a state of mind.*  
(independent clause; dependent clause)

A compound-complex sentence contains two or more independent clauses (in italics) and one or more dependent clauses (in boldface).

*My body is rather old, and age is not a state of mind, unless my bald head is an illusion.*  
(two independent clauses; dependent clause)

A fragment is not a sentence at all. Sentence fragments are groups of words that are missing either a subject or a verb, or they do not express a complete thought.

Thinks he's really funny. My brother and his bright ideas. Not my definition of success.

Sentence fragments can be useful, however, for emphasis and rhythm. Just be sure you know when you're writing one, and be sure to use them sparingly.

I stepped out on the balcony hoping to talk to her. She, of course, was gone. Story of my life.

A run-on sentence occurs when two or more simple sentences are joined without punctuation or connecting words.

I thought the ride would never end my eyes were crossed and my fingers were going numb.

By adding punctuation, you can correct such sentences.

I thought the ride would never end. My eyes were crossed, and my fingers were going numb.

## Punctuation

Every punctuation mark should help the reader. Just like Stop and Go signals at an intersection, marks of punctuation will keep the reader, like the traffic, from getting entangled.

- Put a period at the end of a declarative sentence, an imperative sentence, an indirect question, or a polite request.

The class completed the test with time to spare.  
Answer the door.  
She asked whether anyone had completed the assignment.

- Put a period after most abbreviations and initials.

Wed. Dr. Jan. etc. B.F. Goodrich

- Put a question mark after a direct question, but not after an indirect one.

“Who’s there?” she asked. (the exact words of the speaker)  
She asked us who was there. (not the exact words of the speaker)

- Put an exclamation point after an expression that shows strong emotion.

Wow! You made varsity!

- Put a semicolon between two closely related independent clauses not connected by a coordinating conjunction (and, but, for, or, nor, so).

You may help him; I will not be able to at this time.

- Put a semicolon between pairs of independent clauses not connected by a coordinating conjunction, especially when a conjunctive adverb (therefore, nevertheless, however, for example) is present.

You may help him; nevertheless, I expect the work to be his.

- Put a semicolon to separate word groups when the elements of each word group are already separated by commas or other marks of punctuation.

She is taking Algebra 2, a required class; Ceramics I, an elective; and English, her favorite class of the day.

- Put a colon after a complete statement, when a list or long quotation follows.

They bought the groceries on your list: milk, sugar, bacon, bananas, and cereal.

- Put a colon at the end of a salutation or between numbers used to indicate time.

Dear Sir: 7:30 a.m.

- Put a dash to indicate an abrupt shift or break in the thought of a sentence or to set off an informal statement.

The driver made a fatal mistake—he did not turn on his headlights.  
She told me—if you can believe it—all the summer gossip.

- Put a dash to set off an appositive or a parenthetical element that is internally punctuated.

The team captains—Joe, Chris, and Alfonso—are choosing uniforms.

- Put a dash to indicate hesitant or interrupted speech.

“I told him at least once, I—we—aren’t happy with the decision.”

- Put quotation marks before and after direct quotations.

I said, “I will be a little late, but I will be there.”

- Put quotation marks around the name of a short story, poem, song, essay, TV program, radio program, or other short work. For a longer work such as a book, newspaper, magazine, play, album, or movie, italicize or underline the title.

Many students say “The Scarlet Ibis” is their favorite story.

- Use a comma to separate words, phrases, and clauses written as a series of three or more coordinate elements.

The work was tedious, hot, and exhausting.

- Use a comma to separate two or more coordinate adjectives that modify the same noun.

The exhilarating, challenging hike was near its end.

- Use a comma to highlight sharply contrasted coordinate elements.

The hero was brave, not egotistical.

- Use a comma before any one of the conjunctions (and, but, for, or, neither, nor) when it joins a pair of main clauses.

The concert has been sold out for weeks, and I doubt we'll find any tickets.

- Use a comma after an introductory adverbial clause, verbal phrase, or absolute phrase.

When the team finished its first practice, many athletes were exhausted.  
For selling the most boxes, he received a bonus.

- Use a comma to set off nonessential appositives.

My father, a former Boy Scout, is very strict.

- Use a comma to set off nonrestrictive phrases and clauses.

My parents, who were born there, visited Italy last summer.

- Use commas to set off items in dates, geographical names and addresses, and to set off titles after names.

I grew up at 2055 S. Adams, Denver, Colorado.  
Phil Smith, Ph.D., will be the keynote speaker.  
August 29, 2000, was an orientation day for new students.

- Use commas to set off words in direct address.

Sam, please collect the papers from your row.  
The answer, Keisha, is correct.

- Use a comma after a mild interjection and after yes or no.

Oh, I suppose I can drive.  
Yes, the dress cost only \$15.

- Use commas to separate direct quotations from the phrase identifying the speaker.

"I was able," Dan explained, "to do the problem in one hour."

- Use a comma before and after such elements as for example, to be sure, in fact, however, nevertheless, and therefore, when they are used parenthetically.

We do not, however, agree with the statement.

- Use a comma to prevent the misreading of a sentence.

To Allison, Aaron was a hero.  
In 1989, 29 planes crashed.

Avoid the use of superfluous commas: Do not use a comma to separate a subject from its verb. Do not use a comma to separate a verb from its complement or direct object. Do not use a comma instead of a period between sentences.

When deciding how to punctuate a passage, consider rhythm and emphasis. Punctuate for the sound you want the reader to hear in his or her head.

## Punctuating Dialogue

"What's up?" asked Maria.

"I'm just learning how to write dialogue," answered Fritz.

"Well, what have you learned so far?"

"When writing dialogue," said Fritz, "one must punctuate properly."

"Why?"

"So the reader knows who's talking, silly. For instance, whoever wrote this dialogue knows what he's doing, because he indents every time we start to speak."

"Like now. I see. Obviously I'm Maria, because the writer just indented these words."

"Exactly," said Fritz. "Of course, the writer may also mention who is speaking, as in right after I said 'exactly.' And because there is a period after my name, the next word I speak will be capitalized."

"So far it's pretty simple. What else is there to know?" Maria asked.

"You tell me."

"Placing the quotation marks, commas, and periods is certainly important. The whole point of punctuation is so that the reader doesn't notice it," said Maria thoughtfully. "He or she should concentrate on what is being said, not on how it is punctuated. If a writer doesn't know how to use punctuation marks, the reader slows down, stumbles, and loses track."

"So we begin and end the quote with quotation marks," said Fritz. "But sometimes," he pondered, "we break the quote up. Like just now."

"That's so the writer can create a variety of rhythms," agreed Maria. "Or maybe the writer wants to tell how a person is saying something," she giggled.

"Easy enough," said Fritz, "just as long as the punctuation — the commas and periods — stay inside the quotations." Never do it like this".

"Thanks for a fascinating discussion, Fritz."

"Whatever."

## Writing Paragraphs

The paragraph is a unit of thought. It can be compared to a building block that is made up of separate smaller units (called sentences). Paragraphs help the reader to follow your thinking as you describe, support, or explain your specific topic or idea.

Paragraphs should include a topic sentence that tells the reader what the paragraph is about. Often, the topic sentence should come first. The body of your paragraph is where the writer provides specific details that support the topic sentence. The details must all relate to the rest of the paragraph, and they should be organized in the best possible order (see below for strategies). A closing or clinching sentence comes after all the details have been included in the body. This sentence should reinforce the paragraph's main idea without repeating anything that has already been expressed.

Types of Paragraphs: descriptive, narrative, expository, and persuasive.

Methods of Arranging Details: chronological order, order of location, order of importance, cause and effect, comparison, contrast, illustration.

### EXAMPLE:

What is so consistently striking about the way Eskimos used parts of an animal is the breadth of their understanding about what would work. Knowing that muskox horn is more flexible than caribou antler, they preferred it for making the side prongs of a fish spear. For a waterproof bag in which to carry sinews for clothing repair, they chose salmon skin. They selected the strong, translucent intestine of a bearded seal to make a window of a snowhouse—it would fold up for easy traveling and it would not frost over in cold weather. To make small snares for sea ducks, they needed a springy material that would not rot in salt water—baleen fibers. The down feather of a common bird, tethered at the end of a stick in the snow, would reveal the exhalation of a quietly surfacing seal. Polar bear bone was used anywhere a stout, sharp point was required, because it was the hardest bone.

—Barry Lopez

See the Models (pp. 26-31) for more examples of effective paragraphs.

## Transitions

Transitional expressions help the reader move smoothly from one idea to another. Choose tran-

sitions carefully.

Immediately following the game, we will call home.

Mozart composed many pieces before age ten. Obviously, the kid was gifted.

Until I learned to type, I never turned my papers in on time.

The Olympics are overrun by advertising. Likewise, the Super Bowl seems to have more commercials than plays.

Transitions that can be used to show location:

above	away from	beyond	into	over
across	behind	by	near	throughout
against	below	down	off	to the right
along	beneath	in back of	onto	under
among	beside	in front of	on top of	
around	between	inside	outside	

Transitions that can be used to show time:

about	first	meanwhile	soon	then
after	second	today	later	next
at	third	tomorrow	afterward	as soon as
before	till	next week	immediately	when
during	until	yesterday	finally	

Transitions that can be used to compare things (show similarities):

in the same way	likewise	as
similarly	like	also

Transitions that can be used to contrast things (show differences):

but	otherwise	although	on the other hand
however	yet	still	even though

Transitions that can be used to emphasize a point:

again	for this reason	truly
to repeat	to emphasize	in fact
clearly	obviously	

Transitions that can be used to conclude or summarize:

as a result	finally	in conclusion	to sum up
therefore	last	in summary	all in all

Transitions that can be used to add information:

again	another	for instance	finally
also	and	moreover	as well
additionally	besides	next	along with
in addition	for example	likewise	equally important

Transitions that can be used to clarify:

in other words	for instance	that is	put another way
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## Parallelism

Parallelism has to do with expressing similar ideas in the same grammatical structure. If an idea is expressed by an infinitive, a gerund, or a clause, other equal ideas should be expressed by parallel constructions.

Incorrect: I like hiking, biking, and to swim.  
I like to sleep, read, and riding with you.  
I ate an apple and pear.

- Use the same grammatical structure on both sides of a coordinating conjunction.

I like to hunt and to fish.

- Keep members of a series in the same construction.

Michelle is conscientious, fair, and intelligent.  
I like reading, swimming, and hiking.

- Keep members of a list in the same construction.

The committee recommended the following: to keep the original name,  
to continue community service, to maintain weekly meetings.

- Use the same structure on both sides of a correlative.

Josh was neither afraid of nor intimidated by his opponent's size.

- To emphasize parallel elements repeat a preposition, an article, the sign of the infinitive, or the introductory word of a long phrase or clause.

She collected coins from Italy, from France, from Spain, and from Zaire.

## Form

**HYPHENS:** Use hyphens to join the parts of a compound adjective (after-school activities, fast-growing business, seven-year-old girl). Do not use hyphens for words with most prefixes (antismoking, post-war, multicultural, unskilled, nonviolent). Do use hyphens for prefixes in front of a proper noun (un-American, pro-American).

**CAPITALIZATION:** Capitalize proper nouns but not common nouns (Monday, Passover, summer, jet). Capitalize a title that precedes a person's name (Professor John Martin, Sir Alec Guinness), but not a title that follows a name (Wellington Webb, the mayor of Denver).

**NUMBERS:** Spell out numbers through ninety-nine, numbers that begin sentences, and very large round numbers (Seventy-five percent of all procedures are performed at the hospital. More than eleven thousand patients have benefited in the past fifteen years.).

**ABBREVIATIONS:** Use the full words for your first reference, followed by the abbreviation in parentheses [prisoners of war (POWs)]. For common abbreviations, you often do not need to spell out words (CBS, DNA, FBI, NASA). Never abbreviate common words in your writing (esp., thru, st.).

**TITLES:** Italicize or underline the following: books, plays, movies, operas, court decisions, television shows, magazines, newspapers (*Moby Dick*, *Braveheart*, *Plessy v. Ferguson*, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*). Do not underline sacred texts (the Bible, the Koran). Put quotation marks around poems, short stories, essays, and songs ("Valediction," "The Metamorphosis," "The Humpty Dance"). Capitalize all words in titles except articles and short prepositions—unless they begin the title, of course (A Room of One's Own, Waiting to Exhale, The Power and the Glory, "Over the Rainbow").

## Usage

accept, except: The verb accept means "to receive or believe"; the preposition except means "other

than.”

I accept your apology. All papers were turned in except for Stan’s.

affect, effect: Affect means “to influence”; the verb effect means “to produce.” The noun effect means “the result.”

The story affected the class. Mark’s outburst effected a stern look from his father. The effect of the budget cut was larger classes.

allusion, illusion: Allusion is an indirect reference to something; illusion is a false picture or idea.

The allusions to mythology made the story more meaningful. He had illusions about the prestige of the out of state school.

alright, all right: Alright is the incorrect form of all right.

All right—let’s get ready to go.

among, between: Among is used when speaking of more than two persons or things. Between is used when speaking of only two.

The winner is between Carlos and Deon. Among all the students in the class, they are the two who received the most support.

anyway, anyways: Anyways is the incorrect form of anyway.

Anyway, I’ll see you later.

beside, besides: Beside means “by the side of.” Besides means “in addition to.”

I put my backpack beside my bed. No one besides Chiffon understood the poem.

by, bye, buy: By is the preposition. Bye means “farewell.” Buy means “to purchase.”

I would like to sit by the windows. He said, “Bye,” with the nod of his head. Buy your athletic tickets early.

can, may: Can suggests ability while may suggests permission.

Can you do 100 push-ups? You may leave only with my permission.

capital, capitol: The noun capital refers to a city or to money. The adjective capital means “major or important.” Capitol refers to a building.

They had enough capital to start the business. Denver is the capital of Colorado. There was a huge protest staged on the capitol steps.

chose, choose: Chose is the past tense of the verb choose.

He chose to take the hardest schedule possible. Choosing those classes was difficult.

coarse, course: Coarse means “rough or crude”; course means “a direction or path taken.” Course also means “a class or series of studies.”

Coarse material is not used for baby clothes. The course of the river changed after the flood. Chemistry is a difficult course.

compare with, compare to: Things of the same class are compared with each other; things of a different class are compared to each other.

Venus Williams, compared with Pete Sampras, are similar in strength. The value of a man compared to a flea is not usually debated.

complement, compliment: Complement refers to that which completes or fulfills. Compliment is an expression of admiration or praise.

That color complements the color of your eyes. Many people have difficulty accepting a compliment.

counsel, council: When used as a noun, counsel means “advice”; when used as a verb, counsel means “to advise.” Council refers to a group that advises.

She counseled him to take as many electives as possible. The council did not pass the measure on the first ballot.

different from, different than: Use different from in formal writing.

High school is different from middle school in many ways.

e.g., i.e.: e.g. means “for example”;

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i.e. means “that is.”

My country has many virtues, e.g., its beautiful coastline, but I am quite happy traveling, i.e., I am never homesick.

fewer, less: Fewer refers to the number of separate units; less refers to bulk quantity.  
A salad has fewer calories than a hamburger. I have less coffee in my cup than you do.

good, well: Good is an adjective; well is nearly always an adverb. When used to indicate state of health, well is an adjective.  
That color looks good on you. He dances well. I am well, thank you.

immigrate, emigrate: Immigrate means "to come into a new country or environment." Emigrate means "to go out of one country to live in another."  
My grandparents immigrated to the United States early in the last century. They emigrated from Sweden and Italy.

it's, its: It's is the contraction of "it is." Its is the possessive form of "it."  
It's the first day of the semester. The book has never lost its appeal for me.

lay, lie: Lay means "to place." Lie means "to rest or recline."  
I lay the book on the table. I had to lie down I was so tired.

like, as: Like is a preposition meaning "similar to"; as is a conjunction. The conjunction as has several meanings. Like usually introduces a phrase; as usually introduces a clause.  
If you want to make a quilt like mine, you'll need to construct 24 blocks. As I said before, you'll need 24 individual blocks.

principal, principle: As an adjective, principal means "primary." As a noun, it can mean "a school administrator" or "a sum of money." Principle means "idea or doctrine."  
His principal concern is equality for all.  
Our amount of interest was higher than the principal.  
The principle by which he lives is honesty.

their, there, they're: Their is the possessive personal pronoun. There is an adverb used to point out location. They're is a contraction for "they are."  
They're running over there to see if their train is leaving on time.

threw, through: Threw is the past tense of "throw." Through means "passing from one side of something to the other." Thru should be reserved for note-taking.  
He threw the ball into the infield. He went through the door to get to the meeting room.

to, too, two: To is a preposition that can mean "in the direction of." To also is used to form an infinitive. Too means "also" or "very." Two is the number.  
The two cooks were careful not to use too much butter in the recipe.

weather, whether: Weather refers to the condition of the atmosphere. Whether refers to a possibility.  
The weather this summer was unusually hot. I don't know whether to go to the party or not.

who, which, that: Who refers to people. Which refers to nonliving objects or to animals. Which should never refer to people. That may refer to animals, people, or to nonliving things.  
She is the girl who knows everyone. I read the book which is on the best seller list. New York is the font that I used for the paper.

who, whom: Who is used as the subject of a verb; whom is used as the object of the preposition or as a direct object.  
Who ordered the pizza that was delivered to the office? To whom do we owe our gratitude?

who's, whose: Who's is the contraction for who is. Whose is the possessive pronoun.  
Who's riding with me? Whose coat is this?

your, you're: Your is a possessive pronoun. You're is the contraction for you are.  
Your paper seems complete. You're probably going to get credit for it.

## Agreement

### Subject-Verb Agreement

Subject-verb agreement refers to the grammatical relationship between a subject and its verb.

The principle of subject-verb agreement—that a verb agrees in number with its subject—is one of the most important concepts in English usage.

- Use a singular verb with a singular subject.

The dog walks slowly.  
Each of the boys has his own car.

- The following words are singular and take a singular verb:

one	anybody	each
anyone	everybody	either
everyone	nobody	neither
no one	somebody	someone

- The following “group” words take a singular verb if you’re thinking of the group as a whole, but they take a plural verb if you’re thinking of the individuals in the group:

audience	family	kind
band	flock	lot
class	group	number
committee	heap	none
crowd	herd	public
dozen	jury	team

- Not only should subject and verb agree, but a pronoun also should agree with the word it refers to. All pronouns must have an antecedent (the word the pronoun refers to). If the word referred to is singular, the pronoun should be singular; if that word is plural, the pronoun should be plural.

Each of the students has his own book.  
Both of the boys have their own lockers.

## Verb Tense

Tense indicates time. Each verb has three principal parts: the present, past, and future.

Present tense expresses action that is happening at the present time, or action that happens continually, regularly.

Freshmen fear being late to class, so they hurry through the halls.

Past tense expresses action that is completed at a particular time in the past.

They lost the confidence they had only last year.

Future tense expression action that will take place in the future.

They will remember in three years what being a freshman was like.

If you begin writing a paper in the past tense, stay in the past tense; and if you begin in the present, stay in the present. Be consistent.

In *The Grapes of Wrath*, the migrants from Oklahoma must fight not only the elements but also the established citizens of California. They are not certain that they have the strength to battle the great odds against them.

## Wordiness

A writer should strive for pithiness (pithy means “terse and full of meaning”). Write no unnecessary words or phrases. If one masters a few principles, one’s writing will grow ever more graceful and forceful. Note how the phrases on the left, below, can be easily whittled with no loss in meaning. (Some

examples come from Strunk & White's Elements of Style.)

the question as to whether	whether (the question whether)
there is no doubt that	no doubt (doubtless)
used for fuel purposes	used for fuel
he is a man who	he
in a hasty manner	hastily
His story is a strange one.	His story is strange.
this is a subject that	this subject
the reason why is that	because
owing to the fact that	since (because)
in spite of the fact that	though (although)
call your attention to the fact that	remind you (notify you)
I was unaware of the fact that	I was unaware that
the fact that he had not succeeded	his failure
the fact that I had arrived	my arrival
in order to	to

the car, which was known for its racing prowess  
the car, known for its racing prowess

Quayle, who was Bush's vice president  
Quayle, Bush's vice president

One of the reasons for this is that Americans often rate each other on physical appearance.  
One reason is that Americans often rate each other on physical appearance.

The phone of my sister kept ringing.  
My sister's phone kept ringing.

The speech by Vidal was filled with a great deal of humor.  
Vidal's speech was filled with humor.

CONTRAST THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS TO SEE HOW ONE CAN PRUNE UNNECESSARY WORDS FROM ONE'S WRITING.

There was much strife and trouble going on at this time in the former Soviet Union. People in Moscow were revolting against what they thought is corrupt and unfair government. Boris Yeltsin, the country's leader, was in deep trouble and on the hot seat. He responded by fighting back against the protesters. He sent in tanks, soldiers, and helicopter gunships against rebels who had taken control of the White House, which is Russia's parliament building. All over the world people watched the violent drama unfold. CNN carried the fighting on their cable channel so people in different countries could see everything happen. Some Russians find the whole thing very sad or scary. On the TV one Russian man said, "I'm embarrassed for my country. Great nations should not have civil war in the streets, soldiers firing on rebels, and a capital city on fire."  
(143 words)

Because Boris Yeltsin's government was seen as corrupt and unfair, many Russians rebelled. After protesters seized Russia's parliament building, or the "White House," Yeltsin ordered tanks, soldiers, and helicopter gunships to attack, while CNN broadcast the violent drama around the world. To reporters Russians expressed both fear and sorrow. One man said, "I'm embarrassed for my country. Great nations should not have civil war in the streets, soldiers firing on rebels, and a capital city on fire."  
(77 words)

## Active and Passive Voice

The primary reasons writers and teachers prefer the active voice over the passive voice are:

1. The active voice requires fewer words.

PASSIVE  
A new wallet was given to me by my father.

ACTIVE  
My father gave me a new wallet.

You are loved by me.

I love you.

2. The active voice assigns an actor to action.

PASSIVE  
The football was passed and was caught.

ACTIVE  
Elway passed the football to McCaffrey.

The legislation was passed on Thursday.

Congress passed the legislation on Thursday.

3. The passive voice is often the language of the bureaucrat, the tyrant, and the smoke-blower.

PASSIVE:

You are hereby informed that all non-licensed repairs are required to be registered.  
All protesters are subject to arrest.  
Mistakes were made.

Note: Occasionally, the passive voice can be employed effectively. As always, consider rhythm, emphasis, and tone. If the passive voice serves, use it.

## Misplaced and Dangling Modifiers

Misplaced modifiers are modifiers that have been placed incorrectly; therefore, the meaning of the sentence is not clear.

Misplaced: We have an assortment of combs for physically active people with unbreakable teeth. (People with unbreakable teeth?)  
Corrected: For physically active people, we have an assortment of combs with unbreakable teeth.

Misplaced: I went to the park to watch the ducks eat my lunch.  
Corrected: I went to the park to eat my lunch and watch the ducks.

Dangling modifiers are modifiers that appear to modify the wrong word or a word that isn't in the sentence.

Dangling: Trying desperately to get under the fence, Paul's mother called him. (The phrase Trying desperately to get under the fence appears to modify Paul's mother.)  
Corrected: Trying desperately to get under the fence, Paul heard his mother call him. (Here the phrase modifies Paul.)

Dangling: After standing in line for five hours, the manager announced that all the tickets had been sold. (In this sentence, it appears as if the manager had been standing in line for five hours.)  
Corrected: After standing in line for five hours, Ian heard the manager announce that all the tickets had been sold. (Now the phrase clearly modifies the person who has been standing in line: Ian)

## WRITING GUIDE

### Format

East High School requires the following format for your papers:

Typed & double-spaced • One-inch margins • Standard fonts only (Times, New York, Palatino, Helvetica) • Standard font size: 12 point • Complete heading at the top, righthand corner of your first page:

Student's Name: John Henry  
Assignment: Poetry Response  
Class: American Literature  
Date: January 1, 2001  
Period: Period 3

## Formal vs. Informal

Many teachers expect students to write essays in a formal style; other teachers may require the formal style for only certain assignments. All students should be able to shift from formal to informal depending upon assignment and occasion. Ideally, writers have every tool and style at their disposal, employing them whenever they like to make their writing more effective. In formal writing:

- Do not use contractions.
- Do not use the first or second person.
- Do not use colloquialisms.
- Do not use casual expressions.

### EXAMPLES FROM WRITING AND FROM CONVERSATION\*:

#### Informal

Shakespeare's got talent.  
General Washington smoked the British.  
She got mad.  
This is different than that.  
Easier said than done.  
Loan me your keys.  
I can't find them anyplace.  
They're laying on the table.  
Can I help you?  
I didn't eat.  
Soda helps you digest.  
Have you got the time?  
This has less calories.  
I haven't ever done that.  
Who did you want to talk to?  
Let's you and me dance.

#### Formal

Shakespeare is talented.  
General Washington overwhelmed the British.  
She became angry.  
This is different from that.  
More easily said than done.  
Lend me your keys.  
I cannot find them anywhere.  
They are lying on the table.  
May I help you?  
I have not eaten.  
Soda helps one to digest.  
Do you have the time?  
This has fewer calories.  
I have never done that.  
To whom do you wish to speak?  
Shall we dance?

#### Warning:

When writing formally, avoid sounding stiff and cold. Remember that even in formal writing you may still play with words and ideas. Do not succumb to a stuffy manner; write with energy and wit.

\*Some examples taken from Practical Grammar by Robert S. Pinckert.

# About Style

Most writers write in a kind of semi-formal style. In other words, they demonstrate command and precision, but they relax the rules of formal writing. They may use contractions, fragments, and the first person, but they do not write in a breezy, chatty manner. The style that comes from each writer is reliant on a number of factors, including education, audience, tone, and purpose. It is up to each writer to find his or her voice. The best way to find that voice is not only to write a great deal but also to read many authors and many types of literature.

Contrast the following passages to get an idea of how excellent writing can vary in style and approach:

Most tarantulas live in the tropics, but several species occur in the temperate zone and a few are common in the southern United States. Some varieties are large and have powerful fangs with which they can inflict a deep wound. These formidable-looking spiders do not, however, attack man; you can hold one in your hand, if you are gentle, without being bitten. Their bite is dangerous only to insects and small mammals such as mice; for man it is no worse than a hornet's sting.

—Alexander Petrunkevitch

Cans. Beer cans. Glinting on the verges of a million miles of roadways, lying in scrub, grass, dirt, leaves, sand, mud, but never hidden. Pils, Rheingold, Ballantine, Schaefer, Schlitz, shining in the sun or picked by moon or the beams of headlights at night; washed by rain or flattened by wheels, but never dulled, never buried, never destroyed. Here is the mark of savages, the testament of wasters, the stain of prosperity.

—Marya Mannes

The emerging women's game can be imagined—perhaps with literal accuracy—as a transcontinental jumbo, with three classes. In the First Class you find the top ten ladies (or bobbysoxers), with footrests up, harassed by the courtesies of cabin stewards: Steffi is playing backgammon with her dad; Gaby is hunched under a Sony Walkman. In Club World, together with the shrinks and physios of the top ten ladies, are the second-string ladies, all of them quite well attended, and wearing those special pairs of Club World slippers. In the chaos of Coach, wedged together in blocks of three and four, are the “gym rats,” the eternal aspirants of the modern tour, on yet another leg of their frazzled quest for ranking points, sponsors, backers. Nearly every girl on board has entrusted her schooling to the correspondence course. They are all enduring, or developing, a variety of injuries: “always *something* hurts.” And they all have jet lag.

—Martin Amis

When the children get to know E.T., his sounds are almost the best part of the picture. His voice is ancient and otherworldly but friendly, humorous. And this scaly, wrinkled little man with huge, wide-apart, soulful eyes and a jack-in-the-box neck has been so fully created that he's a friend to us, too; when he speaks of his longing to go home the audience becomes as mournful as Elliott.

—Pauline Kael

## Writing a Thesis Statement

Your thesis statement is the most important part of your paper. If you write a bad one, you will write a bad paper. If you write a stimulating one, you will likely write a stimulating paper. If you write a bor-

ing one . . .

A thesis statement should accomplish two things: it should let the reader know what to expect, and focus the writer's skills and tools. The rest of the paper should simply support whatever the thesis statement has to say.

Make sure your thesis statement is specific and interesting. Do not make it too broad; it will be impossible to support a vague thesis in a school-length paper.

#### FIRST EXAMPLE

BAD: Malcolm X was one of the great figures of the twentieth century.

BETTER: Malcolm X was one of the most complex leaders of the twentieth century.

BEST: Malcolm X's conversion to Islam changed both his life and the lives of millions.

Comment: The first version is too broad and too vague. The writer is in danger of lumping all he or she knows about the subject into an unfocused paper. The second version is much better, focusing on the subject's leadership, not his entire life. The third statement is best because it is the most specific; it makes a strong claim about a specific event in the subject's life. The body of the paper must then support the claim with specific evidence, examples, and insight.

#### SECOND EXAMPLE

BAD: Astrology is not very accurate.

STILL BAD: Astrology provides phony explanations for people.

BETTER: As a tool to explain personality and destiny, astrology is completely unreliable.

#### MORE EXAMPLES

GOOD: Throughout history, physicists have built on their predecessors' work.

GOOD: Without Copernicus, there would be no Galileo; without Newton, no Einstein. The story of physics is one of scientists standing on each other's shoulders.

GOOD: Like masons laying brick upon brick, physicists continually add to the foundation of knowledge.

GOOD: Thanks to a special mix of inspiration and competition, the great physicists always build on their predecessors' work.

## Plagiarism

Plagiarism is stealing. A writer must never take another writer's work or ideas and claim them as the writer's own.

Whenever you employ some other writer's information or insight, you must give that writer credit.

Certain information need not be cited. For example, if you learn that the Earth is 5 billion years old

or that Babe Ruth hit 714 home runs, you do not have to mention where you learned such facts. Such information is generally available in hundreds of publications. It is considered common knowledge. However, if you find information that says sportswriters protected Babe Ruth by concealing his bad habits, that fact is not generally known and a citation is required.

The following situations constitute plagiarism and should always be avoided:

- Turning in another student's paper as your own.
- Copying a part of another student's paper and incorporating it into your paper.
- Quoting a source word for word without using quotation marks and a citation.
- Paraphrasing, adopting, or summarizing a source's ideas without giving a citation.

## Paraphrasing

The trick to gaining facts from a book, magazine, or other source is to use only the best information that supports your thesis statement. Don't copy something down just to take up space. And, of course, don't plagiarize. If it is facts you are using, put the information into your own words. If you are referring to another writer's ideas, give the writer credit (as Mark Twain noted, and so forth).

Read the following as if you were researching a paper about Martin Luther King, Jr.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation mailed what some agents considered an "unsavory" tape recording made from an electronic room bug to Coretta King to frighten her husband, the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., into halting his criticism of the bureau, according to a former high official of the agency.

The mailing of the tape recording to Mrs. King was part of nearly a decade of "harassment" of the late civil rights leader by the bureau, several former agents and officials say. One retired agent, Arthur Murtagh, who was attached to the FBI's Atlanta field office, said the moves against Dr. King were second in size "only to the way they went after Jimmy Hoffa." The FBI compiled thousands of hours of electronic surveillance.

— Nicholas M. Horrock,  
New York Times,  
March 8, 1975

There are many ways to adapt the information to your paper, depending on what your emphasis may be. If you were writing primarily about King's assassination, you might use just a little:

The power of King's words and deeds were felt in Washington and obviously frightened those in power. The FBI, for instance, compiled thousands of hours of recordings by spying on the minister. According to the *New York Times*, the FBI even sent a copy of an "unsavory" tape recording to King's wife, Coretta Scott King.

Or you might be writing a paper about how the FBI harassed Dr. King. In that case, you would use more information:

Even FBI agents themselves acknowledge how the bureau spied on and harassed Martin Luther King for nearly ten years. The *New York Times* reported that one agent said that only labor leader Jimmy Hoffa received more FBI attention. The bureau went so far as to send King's wife, Coretta, a tape of an "unsavory" (according to FBI agents) hotel room bugging. The FBI wanted to frighten King into stopping his attacks on the bureau.

Whatever information you do use for your paper, you must give credit to your source.

## Citations

When you use outside sources for your research paper you need to make sure you give credit to those who deserve it. Parenthetical citations and a bibliography will do the job. Some general rules:

Whenever you repeat, word for word, what someone else has said or written, enclose the statement

in quotation marks and use a parenthetical citation to give credit to the speaker or writer. You should also use a citation when you state someone else's ideas in your own words; this will make it clear to the reader that the ideas are not your own but those of some authority.

To write a parenthetical citation, you do just as it appears below: you type the last name of your source and the appropriate page number that provided the quotation, idea, or fact you are employing. The reader can then follow the citation to your alphabetized bibliography to see the specific source. The bibliography will give complete details, but the citation must be specific.

For example:

Newspeak is described proudly as the "only language in the world whose vocabulary gets smaller every year" (Orwell 46).

Your bibliography at the end of the paper would then have the complete and legal information:

Orwell, George. *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1949.

If you insist on using footnotes or endnotes instead of parenthetical citations, you may, but it is more of a bother. Example:

Newspeak is described proudly as the "only language in the world whose vocabulary gets smaller every year."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Orwell 46.

The examples above are written according to MLA style. If your teacher prefers APA style, always include the date with the author citation. Examples:

Smith (1970) compared reaction times . . .

In a study of reaction times (Smith, 1970) . . .

In 1970, Smith compared reaction times . . .

He wrote, "Reaction times were unchanged" (Smith, 1970, p. 276), but he did not clarify . . .

Smith (1970) noted that "Reaction times were unchanged" (p. 276), but . . .

## Sources

Some teachers require a certain number of primary sources and secondary sources in your research.

Primary sources include a writer's original words, eyewitness accounts, videotape of an event, interviews, speeches, diaries, and original documents.

Secondary sources are works about someone, critical evaluations, historical summaries, reviews, newspaper accounts, encyclopedias, textbooks, and interpretations.

Primary: Anne Frank's journal entries  
Secondary: A biographer's interpretation of those entries

Primary: A Supreme Court justice's written opinion in *Brown v. Board of Education*  
Secondary: A history of desegregation

## MLA Bibliography Format

(for more examples, go to [www.nhmccd.edu/contracts/lrc/kc/mlastyle.htm](http://www.nhmccd.edu/contracts/lrc/kc/mlastyle.htm))

### BOOKS

**One author** Allen, Thomas B. *Vanishing Wildlife of North America*. Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 1994.

- Two or three authors** Searles, Baird and Martin Last. A Reader's Guide to Science Fiction. New York: Facts on File, Inc., 1979.
- More than three authors or editors** Brandes, Kathleen, et al., eds. Vanishing Species. New York: Time-Life Books, 1986.
- A single work from an anthology** Poe, Edgar Allen. "The Raven." Selected Stories & Poems. Ed. Joseph Wood Kruth. Danbury: Grolier Enterprises, 1978.

### MAGAZINES

- Signed article in a weekly** Kanfer, Stefan. "Heard Any Good Books Lately?" Time 21 July 1986: 71.
- Unsigned article in a weekly** "America on Drugs." Newsweek 28 July 1986: 48-50.
- Signed article in a monthly** Heinrich, Bernd. "Why Is a Robin's Egg Blue?" Audobon July 1986: 64-71.

### NEWSPAPERS

- Signed newspaper article** Kalette, Denise. "California Town Counts Down to Big Quake." USA Today 21 July 1993: A1.
- Unsigned editorial or story** "A School Year Without a Strike." Editorial. Chicago Tribune 22 July 1986: sec. 1:10.

### OTHER

- Website without a signed author** "Oscariana." 17 March 1999. >www.wilde.com.<
- Website with a signed author** Hitchens, Christopher. "The Importance of Being Oscar." Salon Magazine. 4 April 1998. >www.salon.com.<
- Film or video** Jurassic Park. Dir. Steven Spielberg. With Jeff Goldblum and Sam Neill. Paramount, 1994.
- Television** "How Life Began." Nova. PBS. 12 February 1997.
- Software** MacGlobe. Version 2.0. Computer software. Broderbund, 1996.
- Interview** Hawking, Ralph. Personal Interview. 3 May 2000.
- Government document** U.S. General Accounting Office. Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division. Americans with Disabilities Act. Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, Sept. 1994.
- Pamphlet** Hewlett, Sylvia Ann. Child Neglect in Rich Nations. New York: United Nations Children's Fund, 1993.
- Lecture or speech** Miller, Evan. Lecture on black holes. East High School, Denver, Colorado. 23 Nov. 2000.

## APA Bibliography Format

(for more examples, go to [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r\\_apa.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_apa.html))

### BOOKS

- One author** Ellis, T. (1994) Marriage and divorce. New York: Random House.

- Two to six authors** Festinger, L., Riecken, H., & Schachter, S. (1956). When prophecy fails. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- More than six authors or editors** Roeder, K. et al. (1967). Nerve cells and insect behavior. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- A single work from an anthology** Rubenstein, J.P. (1967). The effect of television violence on small children. In B.F. Kane (ed.), Television and juvenile psychological development (pp. 112-134). New York: American Psychological Society.

### PERIODICALS

- Journal article with one author** Brown, W.J. (1995). Speech and communication apprehension. Northern Journal of Speech Communication, 45, 555-576.
- Signed article in a monthly** McCurdy, H.G. (1983, June). Brain mechanisms and intelligence. Psychology Today, pp. 61-63.

### NEWSPAPERS

- Signed newspaper article** James, W. R. (1984, January 3). The unemployed and the flat tax. The Wall Street Journal, pp. 1, 12.
- Unsigned editorial or story** Study finds many street people mentally ill. (1984, June). New York Times, p. 7.

### OTHER

- Website without a signed author** GVU's 8th WWW user survey. (n.d.). Retrieved August 8, 2000, from <http://www.cc.gatech.edu/gvu/usersurveys/survey1997-10/>
- Website with a signed author** Fredrickson, B. L. (2000, March 7). Cultivating positive emotions to optimize health and well-being. Prevention & Treatment, 3, Article 0001a. Retrieved November 20, 2000, from <http://journals.apa.org/prevention/volume3/pre0030001a.html>
- Film or video** Weir, P.B. (Producer), & Harrison, B.F. (Director). (1992). Levels of consciousness [Videotape]. Boston, MA: Filmways.
- Television** How Life Began. (1997, February 12). Nova. PBS.
- Software** Arend, Dominic N. (1993). Choices [Computer program]. Champaign, IL: U.S.
- Interview** (N. Archer, personal interview, October 11, 1993)  
(NOTE: cite in text only, not in bibliography)
- Government document** National Institute of Mental Health. (1987). Motion pictures and violence: A summary report of research (DHHS Publications No. ADM 91-22187). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.c
- Lecture or speech** Taylor, Edward (Author). (1 Oct. 2001). The Dawn of Man. [Speech]. Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Assembly Hall.

## Outlining

An outline is an organized or systematized arrangement of important elements of a topic. The outline is a patterned summary. The topic is divided into three or four parts. Each of these divisions is then divided into parts. These subdivisions may be divided also.

Purpose of an Outline  
An outline is used to:

- a. prevent wandering off the subject
- b. give a quick overall view of an essay
- c. insure proportionate space to each part
- d. aid in organizing and giving order to the essay
- e. enable one to spot missing or irrelevant matter

#### Formal Outline

The following are guidelines to the form of an outline:

- a. The title of the paper is placed at the top center of the outline. The word outline is not necessary.
- b. Major divisions are indicated by Roman Numerals (I, II, etc.), subdivisions are indicated by English capital letters (A, B, etc.), subdivisions are indicated by Arabic numerals (1, 2, etc.), and further divisions are indicated by small letters, Arabic numerals in parentheses, and then small letters in parentheses.

Title of Paper

I.

A.

1.

a.

(1).

(a).

(b).

(2).

b.

2.

B.

II.

c. The first section of the outline should parallel the first part of the essay, the second part of the outline should parallel the second part of the essay, etc.

d. The parts of a particular division should be indented equally.

e. A division implies two or more parts. Therefore, logically, an outline should not have a Roman numeral I without a Roman numeral II or a capital A without a capital B.

f. Parallel wording should be used for various divisions of equal rank.

#### Wrong (Not Parallel)

How to Ride a Horse

I. Mounting a Horse

II. To Start a Horse

III. Control of the Horse

IV. How to Stop a Horse

#### Right (parallel)

How to Ride a Horse

I. Mounting a Horse

II. Starting a Horse

III. Controlling a Horse

IV. Stopping a Horse

g. An outline should have its divisions arranged in order of importance, direction, sequence, or interest. Some order that lends itself to a specific subject is to be used.

## Common Proofreading Marks

ab	do not abbreviate	ll	not parallel
agr	agreement problem	pro. ref	pronoun reference
ambig	ambiguous wording	p	punctuation
avoid	this should be avoided	?	questionable idea
awk	awkward expression	ramb	rambling sentence
cap	capitalization	red	redundant
cf	comma fault	RO	run-on sentence
✓	check this out	SS	sentence structure

choppy	choppy style	shift	shift in tense or person
details	add details	show	show, don't tell
dm	dangling modifier	sp	spelling
d.neg	double negative	stet	let it stand
frag	sentence fragment	support	add evidence
gen	be more specific	t	wrong verb tense
gram	grammatical	error	delete
inc	incomplete	trans	weak transition
inf	too informal	TS	topic sentence
lc	use lower case	u	usage/mixed pair
logic	not logical	vary	add variety
mis. mod.	misplaced modifier	wc	word choice
nc	not clear	wo	word order
^	insert (word/s left out)	wordy	be concise
	begin paragraph	X	find and correct error

## Writing Do's and Don't's

### Guidelines for writing papers at East High School

DO	DON'T
Start early on your assignments.	Blame your printer or computer for late work. (You can bring your work in on a disk and print at school.)
Type.	
Double-space.	Put your work in plastic folders.
Proofread.	Be redundant.
Take pride in your work.	Use vague, and empty words (very, really, a lot, some, etc.).
Give every paper a proper heading.	Use clichés.
Keep verb tense consistent.	Use trendy lingo (24-7, back in the day, cool).
Use a standard font (Times, Helvetica, New York, Palatino) and font size (12 point).	Use contractions in formal writing.
Spell check.	Use first or second person in formal writing.
Use Enrichment (Access) period to get help.	Use fancy words unless you know what they mean.
Consider your audience.	Announce your intentions, e.g., "In this paper I wish to demonstrate..."
Make your conclusions fresh; do not simply repeat material.	Write "The End" at the end.

## Model 1: A Business Letter

Aurora Chamber of Commerce  
562 Sable Blvd.  
Aurora, CO 80011  
December 15, 1995

(Four to Seven Spaces)

Ms. Debra Webber, Owner  
Webber's Books  
Aurora Mall  
14200 E. Alameda Ave.  
Aurora, Colorado 80012-2511

(Double Space)

Dear Ms. Webber:

(Double Space)

Welcome to the Aurora business community. As the Chamber's Executive Director, I would like to thank you for opening your store in Aurora Mall.

Webber's Books is a welcome addition to the town's economy, especially with the store's emphasis on educational resources. For this reason I encourage you to join the Chamber of Commerce. As a member of the Chamber of Commerce, you will have a voice in your community's development and access to promotional materials. I have enclosed a brochure about our work in the community.

If you decide to join, I would be delighted to set up a ribbon-cutting ceremony within two weeks. You would meet other members of the Chamber and receive some useful news coverage. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

(Double Space)

Yours truly,

**Thomas Smith**

(Four Spaces)

Thomas Smith

(Double Space)

TS:tn  
Encl. Membership brochure  
cc: Mary Jones

## Model 2: Lab Report Format

Name:  
Period:  
Date:

**Title of Lab** (This should be detailed.)

### Abstract

This is a summary paragraph that goes BEFORE the lab report. It summarizes the entire experiment,

including the following information:

- The objective and hypothesis;
- A summary of results;
- A conclusion sentence (What do the results mean?).

#### Objective:

The objective should simply state what the purpose of the experiment was.

(Example: "The objective of this experiment was to determine what type of car high school students prefer.")

#### Hypothesis:

A hypothesis is an educated guess. What did you think would happen in the experiment?

(Example: "I predicted that high school students prefer Ford Festivas.")

#### Introduction:

This introduces the experiment by answering the following questions:

- What is some background information on the subject(s) of the experiment?
- How does this relate to you? How does this relate to what you're learning?
- What type of methods do you use in the experiment? Why?

#### Methods and Materials:

- List the equipment and materials that you used in the experiment.
- Describe, in detail, how you did the experiment. Write this as if you're telling someone exactly what to do.

#### Results:

- ALL data should be presented in nice, neat tables here, so that data is organized and easy to read.
- Use graphs to illustrate trends and relationships. This makes the data easier to understand and interpret.
- Include ALL calculations.

#### Discussion:

- Summarize your results (What did you see?)
- Interpret your results (What do your results mean?)
- How do your results compare to your hypothesis?
- Write a conclusion sentence restating the relevance of the experiment and the relevance of the results.

Note: This is the most important part of the lab report. This is how people determine whether or not your research is valuable. Always write concisely, so that ANYONE can understand what you did and what the results mean.

## Model 3: Personal Essay

My boyfriend Kevin and I went out for a year and during that time, we fought until we got sick of it. We fought about the stupid things all couples fight about, but the main thing that came between us was something that other couples probably don't have to deal with. We constantly argued about whether I was too Americanized.

Kevin and I both came to the United States from Korea five years ago. Although we had this in common, we had different points of view on everything. He would ask me why I couldn't be like other Korean girls. If I were a "real" Korean girl, I would listen to him when he told me to do something, depend on him for most things, and think his way instead of my way. When I didn't agree with him, we would have another fight. To me, he was too Korean and too narrow-minded. He refused to accept any

culture except his own, and he always thought his way was the only way.

I eat Korean food, speak Korean, have respect for my parents as Koreans have, and I celebrate Korean holidays and traditional days. I even joined the Korean Club in school, so that I can observe my customs with Korean friends.

During the past five years, however, I have come to love certain customs from other cultures. For example, I see the way my Hispanic friends greet people with affection. They kiss and hug when they say “hello,” and I love this. (In Korea, people are much more formal; they just shake hands and bow to each other out of respect.) So I started kissing my friends on the cheek, too.

Kevin didn’t like this, and he told me so. He even asked me to stop it. I didn’t want to, so I did it anyway but not as much. Later on, he told me not to kiss and hug other people. I asked him why, and he told me that he didn’t like it and that other Koreans didn’t act the way I did. He couldn’t accept it.

Traditional Korean men like to tell their wives and girlfriends what to do. He would always tell me how to dress and how to act in front of others. He wanted me to stay next to him all the time. I would complain that I was not his little toy and that he couldn’t just order me around.

When I would go against his wishes, Kevin would say, “Why are you so Americanized?” I didn’t know how to respond to his question. He said I must be ashamed of my country and my culture to act the way I did. I was shocked, and it hurt me deeply. I was not ashamed of my country or culture. I am proud of being a Korean. I just want to accept other cultures, too.

I can’t deny that I sometimes act like an American, trying to be more independent and outgoing than other Korean girls. But I still act like a Korean, too. I want to go with the flow, and that doesn’t mean that I don’t like my own culture. I am trying to balance two cultures. Through my boyfriend, I got a chance to think about who I really am. I realized that I am a Korean and an American, too.

—Sue Chong

## Model 4: Format for Argumentative Paper

At a minimum, your argumentative paper will include

- a title,
- a topic paragraph with a topic sentence that proclaims the argument,
  - an explanation of the argument,
- some evidence from the text or texts for the explanation of the argument,
  - a counterargument that you swiftly demolish,
  - perhaps some sense of the larger significance of your theme,
- and then a conclusion reasserting the truth of the argument you proclaimed in your opening paragraph.

—Dr. Dave’s Guide to Writing the College Paper

Note that you can reassert truth in your conclusion while avoiding repetition of information and ideas. In other words, don’t repeat—reinforce.

## Model 5: A Five-Paragraph Essay

### Paragraph One

1. Thesis Statement (sentence #1)
2. Topic Sentence (sentence #2)
3. Topic Sentence (sentence #3)
4. Topic Sentence (sentence #4)
5. Concluding Sentence (sentence #5)

### Paragraphs Two through Four

1. Topic Sentence (sentence #1)

2. Supporting Detail (sentence #2)
3. Supporting Detail (sentence #3)
4. Supporting Detail (sentence #4)
5. Concluding Sentence (sentence #5)

#### Paragraph Five

At least four sentences.

### Five-Paragraph Essay

The authors of *Inherit the Wind*, Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee, write about the Hillsboro Monkey Trial in which three forceful characters reveal conflicting viewpoints. First, E. K. Hornbeck, a reporter sent by the *Baltimore Herald* to cover the trial, sees all the events in a cynical light. The prosecuting attorney, Matthew Harrison Brady, a fundamental religious supporter, demonstrates to the reader how a literal interpretation of the Bible leads to narrow viewpoints. Lastly, the defense attorney, Henry Drummond, is an open-minded, brilliant lawyer who essentially catapults this court case into the trial of the century. These three characters are all phenomenal in their own right and present unique viewpoints on the issue of evolution and Darwinism.

E. K. Hornbeck, although opinionated, does not express his views on Darwinism, but rather criticizes everyone around him. Hornbeck alienates both the townspeople, and prosecutor Brady, with disparaging remarks; he insists that the defendant, Bertram Cates, could not have a fair trial because of the biased townspeople and their uneducated views. Furthermore, Hornbeck accuses Henry Drummond, with whom he agrees, of being a hypocrite and a fraud because of Drummond's belief in God. Hornbeck's pessimism is key to his slant on the case; he shouts, "Step right up and get your tickets for the Middle Ages! You only thought that you missed the Coronation of Charlemagne!" Hornbeck's view of the events in the case, although somewhat mocking, adds an element of blunt truth to an otherwise bogus trial.

Matthew Harrison Brady, meanwhile, is a religious leader of the fundamental Bible belt Southern Christians and the prosecuting attorney in this case. While on the stand, Brady takes every opportunity to mention that the Bible is the final authority and that all else is evil; he professes, "The Bible satisfies me, it is enough." Furthermore, everyone in Hillsboro is biased before the trial even begins because Brady is their spiritual leader and preacher. While selecting jury members, Brady asks each person whether or not he or she believes in the Bible. The prosecutor is both a powerful speaker, and has an uncanny ability to twist impressionable minds; he is able to convince the townspeople that his views on the world are the truth.

On the other hand, the attorney defending Bert Cates, Henry Drummond, demonstrates that there are valid scientific ideas that go beyond the literal interpretation of the Bible. Throughout the trial, Drummond is thwarted because of the judge's preconceived viewpoint. Drummond is not allowed to call a zoologist, geologist, or anthropologist to the stand because their testimonies are deemed irrelevant to the case, which, of course, is not true. With no more options, Drummond calls Matthew Harrison Brady to the stand; this brilliant legal move on the part of Drummond not only shows that Brady has no idea what evolution is, but also that his convictions are not accepted by indiscriminating minds; his beliefs are completely unfounded and based on blind faith. Drummond is able to win based on intellect, logic and scientific method over illogical, emotional views of people such as Brady.

In conclusion, the most important constitutional right, that of free speech, is on trial in Hillsboro. Three strong personalities, Hornbeck, Brady and Drummond play important parts in this saga. Hornbeck's skepticism balances the play and connects the reader to the absurdity of the case. Brady's zealotry is his downfall; he dies shortly after the conclusion of the trial. Even though Drummond's loses the case, he sets a precedent which is important today. The right to teach evolution in schools is not the only issue; the right to think is the ultimate outcome.

## Model 6: Literary Analysis

In William Golding's novel *Lord of the Flies*, the boys allow themselves to be terrorized by the beast because deep down they want it to exist. By creating a physical object to represent everything they are afraid of, the boys can base their fears on something tangible and distant, rather than something close and personal.

When they first arrive on the island, the boys have many implied fears: fear of being left on the island, fear of being on their own without adult assistance, fear of what may be occurring in the war from which they have fled, and perhaps even fear of not making a good show at being British. Consequently they all rapidly embrace the concept of the beast, for it is a way to externalize their fears. What the boys want is something they can fear in good conscience, some evil which does not stem from a past, present, or future in their own personal experience; so they place their fear outside themselves

and believe in the beast.

Jack sums up the reason why externalized fear is so much easier to deal with than internal fear when he says, "If there was a snake we'd hunt it and kill it." It's a simple question of power. The boys never would have consciously thought that they were responsible for the incarnation of the beast, but they did believe they could be responsible for its demise or destruction. If the beast is something that can be destroyed, there is the potential for everything turning out suddenly all right, the possibility that all the evil which the boys perceive on their island could be purged with the removal of this one creature. In one sense Jack's cause is a noble one: purifying the world in which he resides of an evil. However, he goes about looking for the beast in all the wrong places, and as a result, the boys commit several horrible crimes. In fact, part of Golding's message is that to "fancy thinking the Beast was something you could hunt and kill" is really catering to the true inner beast itself.

The development of the beast in *Lord of the Flies* is not unusual. We are always looking for a beast, a scapegoat, to destroy, to solve our problems. And, as the Nazis set out to exterminate the Jews and Stalin the freedom of the individual, the boys create the beast for their own safety, as an outside evil that protects them from the knowledge of their true nature as fallen creatures, "beasts" themselves.

—Elizabeth Delaney

## Model 7: Informal Argument

One swallow does not make a summer, nor can two or three cases often support a dependable generalization. Yet all of us, including the most polished eggheads, are constantly falling into this mental peopletrap. It is the most common, probably the most seductive, and potentially the most dangerous, of all the fallacies.

You drive through a town and see a drunken man on the sidewalk. A few blocks further on you see another. You turn to your companion: "Nothing but drunks in this town!" Soon you are out in the country, bowling along at fifty. A car passes you as if you were parked. On a curve a second whizzes by. Your companion turns to you: "All the drivers in this state are crazy!" Two thumping generalizations, each built on two cases. If we stop to think, we usually recognize the exaggeration and the unfairness of such generalizations. Trouble comes when we do not stop to think—or when we build them on a prejudice.

This kind of reasoning has been around for a long time. Aristotle was aware of its dangers and called it "reasoning by example," meaning too few examples. What it boils down to is failing to count your swallows before announcing that summer is here. Driving from my home to New Haven the other day, a distance of about forty miles, I caught myself saying: "Every time I look around I see a new ranch-type house going up." So on the return trip I counted them; there were exactly five under construction. And how many times had I "looked around"? I suppose I had glanced to right and left—as one must at side roads and so forth in driving—several hundred times.

In this fallacy we do not make the error of neglecting facts altogether and rushing immediately to the level of opinion. We start at the fact level properly enough, but we do not stay there. A case or two and up we go to a rousing oversimplification about drunks, speeders, ranch-style houses—or, more seriously, about foreigners, racial minorities, labor leaders, and teenagers.

Why do we overgeneralize so often and sometimes so disastrously? One reason is that the human mind is a generalizing machine. We would not be people without this power. The old academic crack, "All generalizations are false, including this one," is only a play on words. We must generalize to communicate and to live. But we should beware of beating the gun, of not waiting until enough facts are in to say something useful. Meanwhile it is a plain waste of time to listen to arguments based on a few handpicked examples.

—Stuart Chase

## Model 7: Research Paper Sample

PAGE ONE OF "The Murder of Marlowe" by Ashley Beyer, Class of 2001

On May 30, 1593, at six o'clock in the evening, the poet and playwright Christopher Marlowe quarreled with Ingram Frizer over a bill at Eleanor Bull's boarding house. Marlowe siezed Frizer's dagger and gave him two cuts on the head. Frizer struggled to reclaim the weapon and ended up inflicting a "mortal wound two inches deep and one inch wide over Marlowe's right eye" (Danby 32). At the next

day's inquest the coroner reported that Frizer did this "in defense of his life" (Danby 33). Two witnesses who dined at the house that night, Robert Poley and Nicholas Skeres, backed up Frizer's story. A month later Frizer was pardoned by Queen Elizabeth.

At first, this account—which is the official, most widely accepted version—seems plausible. There is nothing unusual about Marlowe starting a quarrel and turning violent. He had been charged with street fighting twice before. The inquest notes that after the killing Frizer "neither fled nor withdrew himself," which would suggest that he was telling the truth and confident in his story (Miller 231). If it is true that all things being equal the simplest answer is most likely correct, then the official story is persuasive; it is certainly less complicated than the conspiracy theories holding that Marlowe was assassinated by the British government, or that he faked his own death and wrote plays under the name of William Shakespeare.

But the official account is incomplete. It ignores certain facts that cannot be ignored, such as the information that Frizer was a known con-artist, that Poley was a spy, and Skeres was a dreadful combination of both occupations. Further, the official account neglects to address questions that any prosecutor should have pursued: What was the celebrated Marlowe doing with such disreputable men? According to the inquest the four met that day at ten o'clock in the morning at Eleanor Bull's house (Danby 32). If Marlowe died at six in the evening, that means he spent eight hours with these three men. In the wide spaces between the lines of a vague coroner's report is a world of speculation and theories—none of them simple. But if one digs through the records, one finds that the best answer to the Marlowe mystery lies between the muddled inquest and the absurdly improbable Marlovian authorship theory: Marlowe faked his own death and faded into obscurity.

Marlowe's motive for such a drastic step was classic. He was in trouble with the law. Ten days before his death Marlowe had been arrested and brought before the Privy Council on charges of atheism and heresy. Marlowe's former roommate and fellow playwright Thomas Kyd brought charges against him when after his own arrest and torture Kyd confessed that a certain treatise found among his papers containing "vile heretical conceits denying the deity of Jesus Christ our Saviour" belonged to Marlowe. (Rowse 116). Kyd claimed, "[It must have been] shuffled with my papers (unknown to me) by some occasion of our writing in the same chamber two years since" (Hilton 137). Marlowe's denial of being a heretic and an atheist before the Privy Council postponed imprisonment and torture, but he was . . .

END OF PAGE ONE EXCERPT  
Research Paper Model, continued:

PAGE SEVEN OF "The Murder of Marlowe"

. . . Enter Ingram Frizer and Nicholas Skeres, two men of many trades. Frizer first was a servant to Marlowe's dear friend Thomas Walsingham; Skeres was a servant to the Earl of Essex, Robert Devereaux (Nicholl 29). Frizer and Skeres also worked together in the Elizabethan racket known as "commodity brokering." Charles Nicholl, in his book *The Reckoning*, describes exactly what commodity brokering was. A young man named Drew Woodleff and his mother Anne accused Frizer and Skeres in the sum-

mer of 1598:

Robert Woodleff, Drew's father, died in January 1593, and within a few months Drew was in dire financial straits. He made request unto Nicholas Skeres. Skeres said he was unable help. Instead he introduced Drew to Ingram Frizer. Frizer promised Drew sixty pounds "against his time of need." He persuaded Woodleff to sign a bond—an IOU—to him for that sum. He then told Woodleff that he had no ready money, and offered him instead a commodity . . . a "commodity" good represented as being worth the sum in question, but invariably worth far less. The commodity which Frizer offered to Woodleff was "a certain number of guns or great iron pieces" which he had stored on Tower Hill. Woodleff agreed, and asked Frizer to help him sell them. This Frizer did or pretended to do . . . The net result was that Frizer—who had never offered the guns for sale anyway—had lent him thirty pounds, and had signed a bond to receive sixty pounds: a loan at 100 percent interest. (22-23)

Frizer and Skeres were not to be trusted. Numerous complaints were lodged against Frizer and Skeres, yet each time they were untouched by fines or prison time. As Nicholl writes, "[Frizer] was a man who knew how to use the law" (25). In addition to being Frizer's accomplice, Skeres was infamous in other ways. First, his name was mentioned in a report about a "number of masterless men and cut purses, whose practice is to rob gentlemen's chambers and artificers' shops in London" (Nicholl 27). He was also a member of the Walsingham spy ring, and played a small part in bringing down the Babington Plot—a scheme to assassinate Queen Elizabeth and put Mary, Queen of Scots, on the throne. Frizer and Skiles had a talent in falsehood, their many jobs depended on it, and they knew how to use it for their advantage. If any two could convince a jury of sixteen men that Christopher Marlowe had died in a violent quarrel that he started, it would be Frizer and Skeres.

END OF PAGE SEVEN EXCERPT

The entire paper is ten pages long, plus bibliography, illustrations, and appendices. The writer's goal is to vigorously support the thesis statement located in the second paragraph of the paper's first page.

## CSAP Rubrics

Rubric comes from the Latin word for "rule." A rubric is a set of scores that describes how well a student, or group of students, is performing. The rubric not only reflects the scores but each score includes a description of its meaning. The rubric will guide the writer in pre-writing and proofreading.

Below are the rubrics being used by the State of Colorado to assess student writing. The assessments measure the Colorado Standards for Reading and Writing:

1. Students read and understand a variety of materials.
2. Students write and speak for a variety of purposes and audiences.
3. Students write and speak using conventional grammar, usage, sentence structure,

- punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.
- 4. Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing.
- 5. Students read to locate, select, and make use of relevant information from a variety of media, reference, and technological sources.
- 6. Students read and recognize literature as a record of human experience.

\* \* \*

The Writing Effectiveness Rubric is used to score the long essay(s) and is divided into two components:

- \* Content and Organization
- \* Style

Up to three points are awarded for content and organization and up to three points for style, for a maximum of six points. This rubric is used together with the Language Usage Rubric for a total of eight points.

## WRITING EFFECTIVENESS RUBRIC

The score for Content and Organization and the score for Style are combined to produce a total Writing Effectiveness score.

### SCORE POINT 3

The response is clear, focused, fluent, and developed for the purpose specified in the prompt. Relevant details and/or anecdotes and word choice support and enrich the central idea, topic, or story line. The response is fluent and easy to read. The following characteristics will be evident.

#### Content and Organization

- \* The writing stays fully focused on the topic.
- \* The writer shows high interest in the topic.
- \* The writing meets all the requirements of the prompt.
- \* The writing maintains clear order and logical sequence.
- \* The writer provides main ideas and specific, elaborated details.
- \* The writing includes relevant details or information.
- \* The organizational pattern is appropriate to the purpose and/or the audience.

#### Style

- \* The response is fluent and easy to read.
- \* The word choice is accurate, precise, and varied.
- \* The writer may experiment with words, and/or figurative language, and/or imagery.
- \* The writer uses challenging vocabulary.
- \* The writing is readable, neat, and nearly error-free.
- \* The style is appropriate to the purpose and/or the audience.
- \* The writer uses a variety of sentence structures.

### SCORE POINT 2

The response tends to be focused and organized; there may be some problems with fluency or consistency. Ideas are related to the purpose specified in the prompt but may be sketchy or overly general. Relevant details and/or anecdotes and word choice support the topic, theme, or story line but may be limited. There may be lapses in fluency. One or more of the following characteristics may be evident.

#### Content and Organization

- \* The writing stays mostly focused on the topic but may stray, especially toward the end.
- \* The writer shows interest in the topic.
- \* The writing meets most of the requirements of the prompt.
- \* There is an attempt to establish order and logical sequencing, but the writing may wander, ramble, and/or repeat.
- \* The writing includes some irrelevant details or information.
- \* The organizational pattern is not always appropriate to the purpose and/or the audience.

#### Style

- \* The writing is readable but may be somewhat choppy or repetitive.
- \* The word choice is mostly accurate but may not be precise.
- \* The vocabulary is age-appropriate.
- \* The writing is mostly readable and neat.
- \* The style is not always appropriate to the purpose and/or the audience.

- \* The writer uses simple, repetitive sentence structures.

#### SCORE POINT 1

The response tends to be unfocused and disorganized; there may be severe problems with fluency and/or consistency. Ideas may not be related to the purpose specified in the prompt. Details and/or anecdotes may be irrelevant or too insufficient for the reader to construct meaning. Word choice may not support the topic, theme, or story line or may be repetitive or inaccurate. The response lacks fluency. One or more of the following characteristics may be evident.

##### Content and Organization

- \* The writing does not define the topic or severely digresses from it.
- \* The writer shows little interest in the topic.
- \* The writing meets few of the requirements of the prompt.
- \* There is little or no attempt to establish order and logical sequencing; may be a brief list.
- \* The writing includes many irrelevant details or information.
- \* The organizational pattern is not appropriate to the purpose and/or the audience.

##### Style

- \* The writing is difficult to read; some portions may be unreadable.
- \* The word choice is mostly inaccurate or there are many repetitions.
- \* The vocabulary is not age-appropriate.
- \* The style is seldom appropriate to the purpose and/or the audience.
- \* The writer uses simple, repetitive sentence structures or many sentence fragments.

#### SCORE POINT 0

The response is off-topic or unreadable.

\* \* \*

The Language Usage Rubric is used when scoring the long essay(s) and assigns up to two points for grammar, mechanics, and spelling. This rubric is used together with the Writing Effectiveness Rubric for a total of eight points.

## LANGUAGE USAGE RUBRIC

#### SCORE POINT 2

The language skills successfully support meaning. There are few, if any, errors and the errors do not impede understanding.

- \* Correct subject/verb agreement.
- \* Correct use of modifiers.
- \* Correct punctuation at the end of sentences.
- \* Correct use of commas, apostrophes, and quotation marks.
- \* Abbreviations, if used, are correct.
- \* Correct use of capital letters (beginning of sentences, names of states, titles, months, and days)
- \* Spelling errors do not significantly detract from meaning or are the result of risk-taking (using unusual words)

#### SCORE POINT 1

Language skills minimally support meaning. There are several errors in some or all of the following:

- \* Subject/verb agreement
- \* Modifier usage
- \* End punctuation
- \* Commas, apostrophes, and quotation marks
- \* Abbreviations
- \* Capital letters (beginning of sentences, names of states, titles, months, and days)
- \* Spelling

#### SCORE POINT 0

Language skills do not support meaning and severely impede understanding. The response is error-ridden in some or all of the following:

- \* Subject/verb agreement

- \* Modifier usage
- \* End punctuation
- \* Commas, apostrophes, and quotation marks
- \* Abbreviations
- \* Capital letters (beginning of sentences, names of states, titles, months, and days)
- \* Spelling

\* \* \*

The Four-Point Rubric is used for scoring short paragraphs, the short constructed-response task.

## FOUR-POINT RUBRIC

### SCORE POINT 4

The response is clear, focused, and developed for the purpose specified in the prompt. Relevant details and/or anecdotes and word choice support and enrich the central idea, topic, or story line. Any errors in language usage, spelling, and mechanics, if present, do not impede meaning.

#### Content and Organization

- \* Supporting details are relevant and provide important information about the topic.
- \* The writing has balance; the main idea stands out from the details.
- \* The writer seems in control and develops the topic in a logical, organized way.
- \* The writer connects ideas to the specified purpose

#### Style

- \* The writer selects words that are accurate, specific, and appropriate for the specified purpose.
- \* The writer may experiment with words and/or use figurative language and/or imagery.
- \* The writer uses a variety of sentence structures.
- \* The writing is readable, neat, and nearly error-free.

### SCORE POINT 3

The response is clear and focused. Ideas are related to the purpose specified in the prompt but may be sketchy or overly general. Relevant details and/or anecdotes and word choice support the topic, theme, or story line but may be limited. Any errors in language usage, spelling, and mechanics, if present, do not impede meaning. One or more of the following problems may be present.

#### Content and Organization

- \* The writer has defined but not thoroughly developed the topic, idea, or story line.
  - \* Some supporting details are relevant but limited, or overly general, or less important.
  - \* The writer makes general observations without using specific details or does not delineate the main idea from the details.
  - \* The writer attempts to develop the topic in an organized way but may falter in either logic or organization.
  - \* The writer connects ideas with the specified topic implicitly rather than explicitly.

#### Style

- \* The writer mostly selects words that are accurate, specific, and appropriate for the purpose of the writing.
- \* The writer uses age-appropriate words that are accurate but may lack precision.
- \* The writer uses simple but accurate sentence structures.
- \* The writing is mostly readable and neat.
- \* Errors in language usage, spelling, and mechanics do not impede communication.

### SCORE POINT 2

The response does not maintain focus or organization throughout. Ideas are minimally related to the purpose specified in the prompt; the reader must make inferences based on sketchy details and inaccurate or nonspecific word choice. There may be some serious errors in language usage, spelling, or mechanics. One or more of the following problems is present.

### Content and Organization

- \* The writer has defined but not thoroughly developed the topic; the idea or story line is unclear or sketchy; response may read like a collection of thoughts from which no central idea emerges.
- \* Supporting details are minimal or irrelevant or no distinction is made between main ideas and details.
- \* The writer does not develop the topic in an organized way; response may be a list rather than a developed paragraph.
- \* Ideas are not connected to the specified purpose.

### Style

- \* The writer sometimes selects words that are not accurate, specific, or appropriate for the purpose of the writing.
- \* Writing may be choppy or repetitive.
- \* Portions of the writing are unreadable or messy; errors may impede communication in some portions of the response.

### SCORE POINT 1

The response tends to be unfocused and disorganized; there may be severe problems with fluency and/or consistency. Ideas may not be related to the purpose specified in the prompt. Details and/or anecdotes may be irrelevant or too insufficient for the reader to construct meaning. Word choices may not support the topic, theme, or story line or may be repetitive or inaccurate. Errors in language usage, spelling, or mechanics may be severe. One or more of the following problems is present.

### Content and Organization

- \* The writer has not defined the topic, idea, or story line.
- \* Supporting details are absent.
- \* Organization is not evident; may be a brief list.
- \* Ideas are fragmented and unconnected with the specified purpose.

### Style

- \* Much of the writing is unreadable or messy.
- \* Word choice is inaccurate or there are many repetitions.
- \* Vocabulary is age-inappropriate.
- \* The writer uses simple, repetitive sentence structures or many sentence fragments.
- \* Errors severely impede communication.

## Peer Editing Rubric

1. USE YOUR PROOFREADER'S MARKS TO CORRECT PAPERS.
2. CHECK THE LIST OF DO'S AND DON'T'S.
3. PEER EDITORS SIGN THE TYPED ROUGH DRAFT.

THESIS: \_\_\_\_\_The POINT the writer is arguing—is it CLEAR?

ESSAY: \_\_\_\_\_Takes a position and provides convincing evidence

### GRAMMAR & SPELLING

\_\_\_\_\_ \*Check spelling.

\_\_\_\_\_ \*Check grammar.

- \_\_\_\_\_ \*READ essay again.
- \_\_\_\_\_ \*Read EACH word in EACH sentence—does the sentence read easily?
- \_\_\_\_\_ \*Will the audience understand what is being explained?
- \_\_\_\_\_ \*Make sure EACH sentence has a subject.
- \_\_\_\_\_ \*See if subjects and verbs agree with each other.
- \_\_\_\_\_ \*Check VERB TENSES of each sentence.
- \_\_\_\_\_ \*Does the TENSE remain the same throughout the paper?
- \_\_\_\_\_ \*Make sure that each sentence MAKES SENSE!

STYLE & ORGANIZATION - Look at EACH middle paragraph

- \_\_\_\_\_ \*Make sure paragraph has a topic sentence.
- \_\_\_\_\_ \*Make sure supporting details focus on the main idea.
- \_\_\_\_\_ \*Make sure paragraphs have concluding sentences.
- \_\_\_\_\_ \*Check that all sentences focus on the main idea.
- \_\_\_\_\_ \*Make sure vocabulary is strong throughout essay.
- \_\_\_\_\_ \*See if essay is interesting.

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## FINAL CHECKLIST

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### Content and organization

- \_\_\_\_\_ Is the thesis statement clear and inclusive?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Does each paragraph develop one central idea?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Does each paragraph topic sentence relate to the thesis statement?

### Style

- \_\_\_\_\_ Is the topic sentence in each paragraph supported by solid evidence or proof?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Are all paraphrased ideas and direct quotations credited in the endnotes or parenthetical documentation? In the case of direct quotes in an essay is the speaker given (e.g., Dr. Johnson exclaimed, "I'm happy to be an Angel.")?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do transitions help to make the paper coherent?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Does the conclusion restate the thesis statement?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Does the concluding paragraph provide coherent concluding ideas based on the evidence in the paper?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Is the paper arranged in the prescribed order?

### Mechanics, usage, and punctuation

- \_\_\_\_\_ Are the sentences complete, not fragments or run-ons?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do the sentences vary in length and structure?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Are the spelling and punctuation correct?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Is the grammar (for instance, subject/verb agreement, pronoun/antecedent agreement) correct?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do the forms for quotations, endnotes, parenthetical documentation, and bibliography or works cited conform to the models?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Is the format (margins, heading, header, and titles) correct?

## Internet Writing Resources

A Celebration of Women Writers

<http://www.cs.cmu.edu/afs/cs.cmu.edu/user/mmbt/www/women/writers.html>

Authors at yahoo.com

<http://www.yahoo.com/Arts/Humanities/Literature/Authors/>

Banned Books On-Line

<http://www.cs.cmu.edu/People/spok/banned-books.html>

Bohemian Ink  
<http://www.levity.com/corduroy/index.htm>

Byron's Poetry Corner  
<http://rama.poly.edu:1800/poem/index.html>

Common Errors in English  
<http://www.wsu.edu:8080/~brians/errors/index.html>

Cool Literature Resources  
<http://www.teleport.com/~burrell/literature.html>

Dictionary.Com  
<http://www.dictionary.com/>

Editorial Eye  
<http://www.eei-alex.com/eye/>

Elements of Style  
<http://www.cc.columbia.edu/acis/bartleby/strunk/>

Indispensible Writing Resources Page  
<http://www.stetson.edu/~rhansen/writing.html>

Journalism Education Association  
<http://www.spub.ksu.edu/~jea/>

Shakespeare Links  
<http://www.ludweb.com/msff/sonnets/links.html>

Stephen's Guide to the Logical Fallacies  
<http://www.common.net/~downes/fallacy/fall.htm>

The English Server  
<http://english-www.hss.cmu.edu/>

The Write Place  
<http://leo.stcloud.msus.edu/>

Writing Papers of Literary Analysis  
<http://www.wmich.edu/english/tchg/lit/adv/lit.papers.html>

## How to Use a Thesaurus

A thesaurus is, in a sense, the opposite of a dictionary. You use a dictionary when you know the word but need the definition. You use a thesaurus when you know the definition, but need the word. For example you might want a word that means fear, the kind of fear the causes more worry than pain. You need the word to complete the following sentence.

Joan experienced a certain amount of \_\_\_\_\_ over the upcoming exam.

If you have a thesaurus in dictionary form, simply look up the word fear as you would in a dictionary. If, however, you have a traditional thesaurus, you must first look up your word in the alphabetical INDEX at the back of the thesaurus. You might find this entry for fear in the index:

FEAR 869  
Fearful painful 830

The numbers after fear are GUIDE NUMBERS, not page numbers. For instance, if you look up number 860 in the body of the thesaurus, you will find a long list of synonyms for the word fear. These include fearfulness, timidity, diffidence, apprehensiveness, solicitude, anxiety, misgiving, mistrust, suspicion, and qualm. You select the word anxiety, and your sentence becomes

Joan experienced a certain amount of anxiety over the upcoming exam.

## Spelling Rules and Advice

Rule 1: Write *i* before *e* except after *c*, or when sounded like *a* as in neighbor and weigh.

\*Examples: receive perceive relief

\*Exceptions: Eight of the exceptions are included in this sentence:  
Neither sheik dared leisurely seize either weird species of financiers.

\*When the *ie/ei* combination is not pronounced *ee*, it is usually spelled *ei*.

Examples: reign foreign weigh neighbor  
Exceptions: fiery friend mischief view

Rule 2: When a one-syllable word (bat) ends in a consonant (t) preceded by one vowel (a), double the final consonant before adding a suffix that begins with a vowel (batting).

sum-summary god-goddess

When a multi-syllable word (control) ends in a consonant (l) preceded by one vowel (o), the accent is on the last syllable (control'), and the suffix begins with a vowel (ing)—the same rule holds true: double the final consonant (controlling).

prefer—preferred begin—beginning  
forget—forgettable admit—admittance

Rule 3: If a word ends with a silent *e*, drop the *e* before adding a suffix that begins with a vowel.

state—stating—statement like—liking—likeness  
use—using—useful nine—ninety—nineteen

Note: You do not drop the *e* when the suffix begins with a consonant.  
Exceptions include judgment, truly, argument, and ninth.

Rule 4: When *y* is the last letter in a word and the *y* is preceded by a consonant, change the *y* to *i* before adding any suffix except those beginning with *i*.

fry—fries hurry—hurried lady—ladies  
ply—pliable happy—happiness beauty—beautiful

When forming the plural of a word that ends with a *y* that is preceded by a vowel, add *s*.

toy—toys play—plays monkey—monkeys

## Commonly Misspelled Words

- |               |                 |                |
|---------------|-----------------|----------------|
| 1. absence    | 51. explanation | 101. probably  |
| 2. across     | 52. extremely   | 102. professor |
| 3. actually   | 53. familiar    | 103. prove     |
| 4. a lot      | 54. February    | 104. marriage  |
| 5. amateur    | 55. finally     | 105. pursue    |
| 6. among      | 56. foreign     | 106. receipt   |
| 7. analyze    | 57. government  | 107. receive   |
| 8. appearance | 58. grammar     | 108. recommend |
| 9. appreciate | 59. grateful    | 109. reference |
| 10. argument  | 60. guarantee   | 110. relieve   |
| 11. athlete   | 61. guard       | 111. religious |

12. athletics
13. awkward
14. becoming
15. beginning
16. belief
17. benefit
18. buried
19. business
20. certain
21. college
22. coming
23. committee
24. competition
25. complete
26. consider
27. criticism
28. definitely
29. dependent
30. develop
31. development
32. difference
33. disastrous
34. discipline
35. discussed
36. disease
37. divide
38. dying
39. eighth
40. eligible
41. eliminate
42. embarrassed
43. environment
44. especially
45. etc.
46. exaggerate
47. excellent
48. exercise
49. existence
50. experience
62. guidance
63. height
64. hoping
65. humorous
66. immediately
67. independent
68. intelligence
69. interest
70. interfere
71. involved
72. knowledge
73. laboratory
74. leisure
75. length
76. library
77. likely
78. lying
79. marriage
80. mathematics
81. meant
82. medicine
83. neither
84. ninety
85. ninth
86. nuclear
87. occasionally
88. opinion
89. opportunity
90. parallel
91. particular
92. persuade
93. physically
94. planned
95. pleasant
96. possible
97. practical
98. preferred
99. prejudice
100. privilege
112. repetition
113. rhythm
114. ridiculous
115. sacrifice
116. safety
117. scene
118. schedule
119. secretary
120. senior
121. sense
122. separate
123. severely
124. shining
125. significant
126. similar
127. sincerely
128. sophomore
129. speech
130. straight
131. studying
132. succeed
133. success
134. suggest
135. surprise
136. thoroughly
137. though
138. tragedy
139. tried
140. tries
141. truly
142. unfortunately
143. unnecessary
144. until
145. unusual
146. using
147. usually
148. Wednesday
149. writing
150. written

## Literary Terms

alliteration — the repetition of initial consonant sounds. (Poetry and prose are painless words to ponder.)

allegory — a story in which people, things, and actions represent an idea or generalization about life.

allusion — reference to something in history or the arts. (Algebra was Mike's Waterloo.)

antagonist — the person or thing working against the protagonist, or hero, of the work.

apostrophe — direct address to an inanimate object or idea.

assonance — repetition of similar vowel sounds in a group of words. (free and easy, mad as a hatter)

ballad — a songlike poem that tells a story, often dealing with adventure and romance.

blank verse — poetry written in unrhymed iambic pentameter.

climax — the high point, or turning point, in a story—usually the most intense point.

conflict — the problem or struggle in a story that triggers the action. Five basic types of conflict: person vs. person, person vs. society, person vs. self, person vs. nature, person vs. fate (God).

connotation — emotions and ideas associated with a word.

couplet — a two-line stanza, usually rhymed, or a pair of rhymed lines.

denotation — dictionary definition of a word.

denouement — the final solution or outcome of a play or story.

diction — word choice.

elegy — a mournful poem, especially one that laments and praises the dead.

epic — a long narrative poem that tells of the deeds and adventures of a hero.

epigram — a brief, clever statement that often pairs opposite thoughts. (We have just enough religion to make us hate, but not enough to make us love one another.)

figurative language — writing or speech that is not meant to be taken literally, such as metaphor, simile, and personification.

foil — someone who serves as a

contrast or challenge to another character.

foreshadowing — giving hints or clues of what is to come later in the story.

free verse — poetry with no regular rhythmical pattern or meter.

haiku — a three-line Japanese verse form.

hyperbole — exaggeration.

iambic pentameter — a kind of rhythmic meter consisting of five feet and 10 syllables (two per foot, with the accent on every second beat).

imagery — language that appeals to the reader's senses. (He gives his harness bells a shake)

irony — using a word or phrase to mean the exact opposite of its literal or normal meaning.

lyric — a poem that expresses the observations and feelings of a single speaker; forms include the ode, elegy, and sonnet.

metaphor — a figure of speech in which something is described as though it were something else. (The ship plows the sea.)

meter — the rhythmical pattern of a poem, determined by the number and types of stresses, or beats, in each line.

ode — a lyric poem characterized by lofty feeling, elaborate form, and dignified style.

oxymoron — a figure of speech that fuses two contradictory or opposing ideas. (freezing fire, happy grief)

paradox — an apparent contradiction that conveys truth. (To have peace, one must prepare for war.)

parallelism — the repetition of a grammatical pattern.

parody — a form of literature that mocks its targets by imitating and exaggerating them.

personification — a type of figurative language in which a nonhuman subject is given human characteristics. (The clouds cried raindrops.)

plot — the action or sequence of events in a story.

poetry — a type of literature involving meter, stanzas, and concise, figu-

rative language. But not always. Many poems rhyme. But not always.

point of view — the vantage point from which the story is told. First person: Call me Ishmael, Third person: She never knew such joy.

prose — the ordinary form of written language, i.e., anything but verse.

protagonist — the main character or hero of the story.

quatrain — a four-line stanza.

rhyme scheme — a regular pattern of rhyming words in a poem.

rhythm — the pattern of beats, or stresses, in spoken or written language.

satire — a literary tone used to ridicule or make fun of human vice or folly, often with the intent of correcting or reforming the subject of the attack.

setting — the time and place in which the action of a literary work occurs.

simile — a figure of speech that makes a direct comparison between two unlike subjects using either "like" or "as." (She ran like the wind.)

sonnet — a fourteen-line poem, usually written in iambic pentameter.

stanza — a group of lines in a poem, considered as a unit.

symbol — anything that has a meaning in itself and that also stands for something larger, such as a quality, an attitude, a belief or a value.

theme — the statement about life a particular work is trying to get across to the reader.

tone — the attitude a writer takes toward his or her subject, characters, and readers.

tragedy — a literary work in which the hero is destroyed by some character flaw and by forces beyond his or her control.

understatement — a statement which means less than what is intended.

verse — refers to poetry in general, or to a single line of poetry.

# Clichés

Clichés are hackneyed, overused phrases and ideas. Avoid them in your writing. When a writer uses a cliché, he or she is writing without thinking—using another’s words instead of expressing one’s self with fresh language and images. Below is a list of just some of the thousands of clichés that infest the English language.

acid test	bite off more than one	chip off the old block	fast and loose
age before beauty	can chew	conspicuous by one's	fate worse than death
all in a day's work	bite the bullet	absence	fat's in the fire
all over but the shouting	bitter end	cool as a cucumber	feather in one's cup
all things being equal	bloody but unbowed	crying need	feel one's oats
all things considered	blushing bride	cut a long story short	few and far between
all things to all men	bolt from the blue	dead as a doornail	fill the bill
all work and no play	bone of contention	dead giveaway	first and foremost
apple of one's eye	breathe a sigh of relief	depths of despair	fit as a fiddle
armed to the teeth	bright and early	diamond in the rough	flash in the pan
as luck would have it	bright-eyed and bushy-	discreet silence	flesh and blood
at a loss for words	tailed	distaff side	food for thought
at a tender age	bring home the bacon	do one's thing	foot in one's mouth
at first blush	broad daylight	down in the dumps	foregone conclusion
at one fell swoop	budding genius	down one's alley	free as a bird
axe to grind	bull in a china shop	drastic action	fresh as a daisy
bag and baggage	burning question	draw the line	generation gap
bark up the wrong tree	burn the midnight oil	dull thud	generous to a fault
bated breath	busy as a bee	ear to the ground	gentle as a lamb
beat a dead horse	by leaps and bounds	easier said than done	gift of gab
beat a hasty retreat	by the same token	eat one's hat (or words)	gild the lily
beat around the bush	calm before the storm	eloquent silence	grain of salt
bend over backward	can't see the forest for	epic struggle	grim reaper
benefit of the doubt	the trees	eternal reward	hale and hearty
best foot forward	capacity crowd	face the music	handwriting on the
best laid plans	caught red-handed	fair sex	wall
better late than never	checkered career	fall on deaf ears	hapless victim
beyond the call of duty	coin a phrase	far be it from me	harsh realities
bigger than life	checkered career	far cry	haul over the coals

## Fumblers by William Safire

- Avoid run-on sentences they are hard to read.
- No sentence fragments.
- It behooves us to avoid archaisms.
- Also, avoid awkward or affected alliteration.
- Don't use no double negatives.
- If I've told you once, I've told you a thousand times: resist hyperbole.
- Avoid commas, that are not necessary.
- Verbs has to agree with their subjects.
- Avoid trendy locutions that sound flaky.
- Writing carefully, dangling participles should not be used.
- Kill all exclamation points!!!
- Never use a long word when a diminutive one will do.
- Proofread carefully to see if you any words out.
- Take the bull by the hand, and don't mix metaphors.
- Don't verb nouns.
- Never, ever use repetitive redundancies.
- Remember to never split an infinitive.
- Always pick on the correct idiom.
- A writer must not shift your point of view.
- The passive voice should never be used.
- Do not put statements in the negative form.
- If you reread your work, you can find on rereading a great deal of repetition can be by rereading and editing.
- Place pronouns as close as possible, especially in long sentences, as of 10 or more words, to their antecedents.
- If any word is improper at the end of a sentence, a linking verb is.
- Everyone should be careful to use a singular pronoun with singular nouns in their writing.
- Last but not least, avoid clichés like the plague.

# Advice for Timed Writing

For those in-class writing assignments where you are given a set amount of time, sometimes 30 minutes, or 45 minutes, or 60 minutes, you should keep a few things in mind.

- ◇ Understand how much time you have.
- ◇ Read and understand the rubric being used on this writing assignment. Will you be graded for spelling? Are you being graded for sticking to the subject? Are you being graded specifically on content? Make sure you know the assignment's expectations.
- ◇ Carefully read the question for understanding and determine your thesis.
- ◇ Quickly and informally outline your main ideas with key support. While this may take five minutes of the time you have, it will make all the difference when writing your essay.
- ◇ Determine a time schedule for yourself. "I'll take five minutes for the outline, and then five minutes for the opening paragraph," etc.
- ◇ Write your essay while keeping track of time. Don't spend all of your time on the first paragraph or the first question.
- ◇ Avoid generalizing and using clichés. Use specific information that supports your thesis.
- ◇ Allow time to go back to reread your essay and make necessary corrections.
- ◇ The shorter the amount of time you have, the greater is the need to narrow the subject enough to go into specifics.
- ◇ Be careful with word choices.
- ◇ Be certain to stick to the subject.
- ◇ If you have a couple of questions to answer, you don't have to start with the first question. Some people like to start with the hardest question first; some like to start with the easiest. You determine the order in which to answer the questions.
- ◇ You are in charge of your writing.

LAST WORD:

"Break any of these rules sooner than say anything outright barbarous."

—George Orwell





