

Writing Checklist

- Stay focused on your topic – no unnecessary information/plot summary in paragraph
- Indent to start paragraphs; no extra spaces in or between paragraphs.

-Check diction

- Use interesting vocabulary - descriptive adjectives and power verbs
- AVOID slang and text language (*kinda, cause, u*)
- AVOID vague words (*stuff, things, etc., a lot, good, bad*)
- AVOID 2nd person “*you*” – better to stick to 3rd person (he, people, character name)
- AVOID 1st person, unless you are relaying a personal experience
- AVOID *maybe, perhaps, seems to be* – be definitive!
- AVOID contractions; it is more formal to write out words, and you will also have less grammatical issues (...and it is *could have*, NOT *could of*)
- AVOID being too informal or conversational with your words; takes seriousness away from paper

-Use strong **transitions** to link ideas (use the list; don't make them up)

-Check the spelling of **homonyms** – see the Homonym list - *there, their, they're; too, to, two; effect, affect; then, than; are, our; lose, loose*

-Stay in **one verb tense** throughout the entire paragraph (present is best)

-Check syntax (sentence structure)

- Do you have complete sentences (no run-ons or incompletes)?
- Are your sentences clear?
- Move beyond short, choppy sentences as you fully explain proof
- Use a variety of sentence structures
- Don't overuse questions; better to make strong statements

-Check punctuation – check rules in style handbook

- Make sure your quotations are punctuated and cited correctly.
- Underline or italicize titles of books, newspapers, magazines, plays, films, long poems, television shows, and long musical works; put quotation marks around titles of essays, short poems, articles, and short stories.

-Think about your **tone/voice** – it should match your topic and be sincere.

-PROOFREAD!