



Five Elements
of Good Writing

1. Purpose

Why are you writing? ○

To inform ○

To persuade ○

To entertain ○

Be sure you understand the ○
assignment.

Some writers create a “purpose statement”

A reminder for yourself only ○

Not part of your paragraph or essay ○

DO NOT INCLUDE IN YOUR PARAGRAPH: *In* ○
this paragraph, I will ... bla bla bla.

2. Audience

Who are they? ○

Write the kind of document they expect to see ○

How is an email to your friend different from an email to a college? ○

How is *Mission Impossible* different from a movie about World War II? ○

How is a cookbook different from a textbook? ○

Person (or “Point of View”)

First Person ○

Includes “I” ○

Use first person when you write about your
personal experiences ○

Second Person ○

Includes “you” ○

DO NOT use second person when you write for
college ○

Third Person ○

Includes “he/she/it/they” ○

This is the most common point of view you will
use when you write for college ○

3. Clarity

WORD CHOICE ●

Choose descriptive, specific words ●

Avoid vague words like *good, thing, bad, fun,* ●
big, small, old

Use the **thesaurus** on your computer to help ●
you choose different, new words!

Pronouns

Using the correct pronouns is a way to help your readers follow your writing. ○

Using unclear pronouns will really confuse your readers! ○

Pronoun basics

Pronouns refer to the last noun that is used before the pronoun. They need to be the same in number (singular/plural) and they need to make logical sense. ○

Example:

If you put this handout in your notebook, you can refer to it.

What is the pronoun at the end of the sentence?

What noun does it replace?

How can you be sure?

Another example:

I bought an iPod and a water bottle this weekend. It was blue. ○

What is the pronoun? ○

What noun does it replace? ○

A good rule: Don't begin sentences with "it." (Unless you're talking about weather or time.) ○

4. Unity

Make sure all the sentences in your paragraph are about the topic and the controlling idea in your topic sentence. ○

This sounds easy, but it's normal for students to go "off topic" when they write because our brains go off topic all the time! ○

5. Coherence

- Organize your paragraph logically. ●
- Make sure the ideas connect. ●
 - Ways to connect ideas: ●
 - Logical order (time, space) ●
 - Repeat key (important) words ●
 - Use transitions ●

Transitions

Time: First, next, then, finally ○

Examples: For example, for instance ○

Compare/Contrast: in contrast, by
comparison, on the other hand ○

To add information: and, next, in addition, ○
also

Look in GP p. 49 and 210-213 for more! ○

The 5 Elements of Good Writing are:

- Purpose ●
- Audience ●
- Clarity ●
- Unity ●
- Coherence ●

Keep these 5 elements in mind
and you will be on your way to
being a good college writer!

