

1. **Format** your writing.
Use: Proper heading, Proper spacing (single/double), indents, and MLA format.
2. **Create a title.**
The title should be interesting but also be a clue as to what the writing is about.
No one wants to see a movie called Movie, or read an essay called Essay.
3. **Address the prompt.**
Read the prompt/question, then... just write what it asks you to write about.
4. Write in **paragraphs**. Make the paragraphs noticeable. Don't just skip one space.
The paragraphs should also start a **new idea**.
5. Snap, Crackle, and Pop! Have a **hook** in your introduction. Catch the reader's attention.
6. Use the **author's whole name or last name**, not their first.
You wouldn't write about Edgar Allan Poe as "In Edgar's poem..." He's not your buddy! You should say "In Poe's poem" or "In Edgar Allan Poe's poem..."
7. Always **capitalize names** (first, middle, and last).
It's Harry Potter, not Harry potter, or harry potter, or harry Potter.
8. **Stop using I**, unless talking about a personal experience.
Bad: "I think the author is trying to say..." or "I believe that..." or... "In my opinion ..."
Good: "The author is saying that..." or personal: "From those experiences, I have learned..."
It's your essay, everything in it is what you think.
9. **Spell everything out!** Don't be lazy.
'With' is not 'w/.' 'b/c' or 'cause' are not 'because.' '&' is not 'and.'
10. **Use real words.**
Kinda, *Sorta*, *Should of*, *Could of*, *wanna*, *gonna*, and *alot* are not real words.
The real words are *kind of*, *sort of*, *should have*, *could have*, *want to*, *going to*, and *a lot*.
11. **Underline OR Italicize** books and novels. Use **Quotes** for short stories and poems.
If it is a whole, it is underlined or italicized. If it is part of a whole, it is in quotes.
National Geographic features an article titled "The Rain Forests."
12. Unless for emphasis or a special situation, **do not start sentences with because, then, but, or, and.**
13. There is a difference between **there, their, and they're**.
There = Position/Location "His cellphone is over there."
Their = Ownership "Are these their cellphones?"
They're = They Are "They're getting new cellphones."
14. There is also a difference between **your and you're**.
Your. Who is your favorite teacher?
You're = You are. "You're a great teacher."
15. **Be concise**, and do not go off on a tangent.
Readers are easily bored. Only tell the reader what they need to know.
16. Drop the mic! Write a conclusion that wraps everything up, and **ends your essay on a high note.**