

Before you turn in your assignment, check it for the following:

Grammar | Diction

- It's been a hard day's night. Misery reared its ugly head.
- Back then, I had more dollars than sense..
- Subject agrees with antecedent: team/it; players/they.
- Subjects agree with pronouns: people/who; radio/that.
- Vague adjectives such as "many, most, some and several" avoided.
- Be specific. Avoid "seems to" and "appears to."
- Sappy phrases such as "seems to" or "appears to" avoided.
- Avoid "so and so is a typical/normal/regular American teenager."
- Write like you talk. You would never say, "The idea of taking photos of the homeless sparked his mind when he met a man named Dwayne."
- Be positive. Don't open with what something is not. Open with what it is. Weak: Roy Neary is not an ordinary physics teacher.

Sentences | Paragraphs

- Compound sentences require a comma. I went to Macy's to buy a shirt, but James stayed home.
- A sentence with one noun and two verbs does not need a comma: I went to Macy's and bought a shirt.
- When in doubt, use a period. Avoid run-on sentences: "We need to get out of the car, there's shattered glass everywhere."
- Keep nouns close to verbs: After going to Chicago and divorcing her husband, who was a creep anyway because he liked to wear her clothes, even to church, which was a Baptist church where they don't appreciate that, Mrs. Smith divorced her husband.
- A combination of long, medium and short sentences used.
- Use synonyms for "said" in dialogue.
- Flesh out implied dialogue.
Weak: My mom told me to stop whining.
Better: "Stop whining," my mom said.
Best: "Stop whining," my mom snapped.

Numbers | Editing

- Do not repeat key words: Hoping to give back to the homeless, Deckard has been working with homeless agencies, documenting the people's lives.
- Do not begin a story with "most this" or "many that" or "some" or "several." Be specific.
- The robbers got away with more than \$5 million from the vault.
- With ages, always use figures for people and animals. Use numbers for inanimate objects. The girl is 7 years old. The desk is seven years old. The 7-year-old girl stood on the desk.
- The exact time of day that an event has happened or will happen is not necessary in most stories. Use it only when it is critical to the story.
- Trim fat, not muscle. Get rid of useless adjectives. Don't be redundant. "The plane landed in Poland" rather than "The plane landed in the nation of Poland."
Weak: A snorting, gasping noise came from nose as I ...
Strong: I snorted as I ...