

CT Writer's Handbook

Expectation

When you write you need to:

Spell words correctly and be sure to choose the correct word.

Use capital letters to start sentences/proper nouns (people, places, ect.).

Punctuate at the end of sentences.

Create logical paragraphs/multiple paragraphs.

Respond to/logically answer essay questions.

Collins Writings

Collins 1: Is an opinion question. There is no right or wrong answer, but it is a chance to share your ideas or experiences.

Collins 2: This question has a right answer. It is usually recalling information from a previous lesson or used as a quiz of what you remember.

Collins 3: This is a formal essay that is self checked. The teacher will provide 3 Focused Correction Areas (FCA) for the assignment. Use the FCAs as a checklist for your completed work. Read it out loud, to yourself, to find any errors.

Collins 4: This is a formal paper/essay that has a peer editor. You need to find someone to sit and side-by-side edit your paper. This will help you find and correct errors. Sometimes it makes sense to you, but it might not to a reader. Have your editor mark the paper and explain what is wrong with your paper.

Collins 5: This is a formal paper that will require self/peer edits, and the final product should be as error free as possible.

What is expected in an essay question?

An essay is a one topic question that may have multiple parts.
Fact and opinion questions should be supported with details.
You should be writing in a formal tone. (You are writing to a teacher NOT a friend.)

A good rule of thumb for essays is the **R.A.C.E.** acronym:

- R**- restate the question as a statement
- A**- answer the question
- C**- cite your support for your answer
- E**- explain why this is the best evidence for support

This gives you clear expectations for what is needed to complete an essay, and this gives teachers clear guides for grading.

Other modes of writing:

Summary

What does the text say?

Put the passage into your own words. Write it so it makes sense to you.

Be sure to cover all main ideas or important points.

Answers: who? what? when? where? why? and how?

Compare/Contrast

It is important to remember to do both in your assignment. How is the subject similar and different? Use a chart or graphic organizer to help you. Consider your points and either lead with or end with your strongest points.

Letter Writing

If asked to write a letter from a perspective or during a historical period be sure to use proper greetings (ex: Hello, Dearest mother, Greetings, etc.) and closings (ex: Sincerely, With love, Your friend, etc.). Remember to match the tone of the writing to the speaker/time/audience. Be sure to add details or events to reflect the need of the assignment.

Analytical Writing

What does the text mean?

Use questions to derive an analysis:

What point is being made?

Is anything surprising?

Do you agree or disagree with the point?

Does the writer consider other viewpoints? (Fair/biased?)

What confuses you?

Formal Papers

Ask yourself... "What is the purpose of the paper?"

Be clear on your audience and your end goal.

Write a direct and clear thesis statement (this tells the reader your intended purpose).

Thesis Statements (research plus comment)

*The two parts of a thesis statement are topic and comment.

Topic- subject matter you are writing about

Comment- the point you are making about the topic

Write with authority: Avoid "I think..." "I believe..." "Maybe" (it makes your argument look weak)

Make factual statements.

Use appropriate evidence and support.

Make direct connections between ideas and use transitions between thoughts.

Gather evidence/research and provide support for persuasive arguments, historical precedents, expert testimony, statistical data, or experimental results.

Strong Paragraphs

Begin and end with information that is important to the reader.

The opening sentence is the topic sentence that tells what the paragraph is about.

The middle develops the idea and supports or explains.

The end sums up the paragraph's content.

Transitional Words and Phrases

To refer to something already mentioned:

He, she, it, they, this, that, these, those, etc.

To show time:

Then, while, meanwhile, after, afterward, soon, later, eventually, finally, at last, by this time, at first, at this point, presently, next, etc.

To show number order:

First, second, in the first place, etc.

To continue the same line of thought:

Also, furthermore, moreover, likewise, besides, similarly, for example, in fact, for instance, and, again, further, then, in addition, etc.

To limit or contradict:

But, nevertheless, still, however, yet, on the other hand, on the contrary, although, instead, in contrast, and yet, otherwise, at the same time, etc.

To state degree of certainty:

Certainly, undoubtedly, presumably, indeed, perhaps, possibly, anyhow, anyway, in all probability, in all likelihood, etc.

To show summary or consequence:

Therefore, consequently, accordingly, hence, thus, as a result, so, in conclusion, finally, for this reason, in short, on the whole, in other words, to sum up, in fact, in any case, etc.

To show place:

Here, there, opposite, adjacent to, nearby, close to, farther, etc.

Other useful connectors:

Admittedly, assuredly, even so, granted, it is true that, nobody denies, obviously, of course, the fact remains, to be sure, true, unquestionably, clearly, etc.

Revising/Editing

Read the paper out loud to catch mistakes.

THEN FIX MISTAKES

Are your sentences too long? (Run out of breath when you read them)

Too short? (Choppy, short, or incomplete)

THEN FIX MISTAKES

Look for words or phrases that repeat and replace them with better words.

THEN FIX MISTAKES

Give the paper to someone you trust to look for errors/understanding.

THEN FIX MISTAKES

Give it to “Mr./Ms. Smarty Pants” for a quick readover.

THEN FIX MISTAKES

Your final product should be a reflection of your **BEST** work.

WEB HELPERS:

<https://www.dictionary.com/> -- word meaning

<https://owl.purdue.edu/> -- writing lab/formal writing