

Writing Quality Criteria

Spelling
Punctuation
Grammar
Organization
Content
Clarity
Originality
Depth
Style - not an instructional manual
Spark reader's interest in beginning
Smooth transitions
Tie ideas into text; elaborate on and describe ideas
Strong conclusion

It is formally okay to begin a sentence with a contraction. The New York Times style guide allows it; but I hate it. Do not start sentences with a conjunction. There is always another way, including artful use of semi-colons.

Contractions – use in dialog, but not in formal writing

Avoid dangling participles

Be careful with split infinitives “To boldly go...”

Avoid “run-on” sentences

“If” demands the subjunctive “were.” Never “If it was.”

“Compare to” versus “compare with”

“Which” versus “that”

“Whether or not” not just “whether”

“Their” or “there”

“Effect” or “affect”

Noun/verb number agreement

Verb versus adverb