

What are the Features of Effective Writing?

The five Features of Effective Writing are **focus, organization, support and elaboration, grammatical conventions, and style.**

Thesis Focus

Focus is the topic/subject/thesis established by the writer in response to the writing task. The writer must clearly establish a focus as he/she fulfills the assignment of the prompt. If the writer retreats from the subject matter presented in the prompt or addresses it too broadly, the focus is weakened. Writers may effectively use an inductive organizational plan which does not actually identify the subject matter at the beginning and may not literally identify the subject matter at all. The presence, therefore, of a focus must be determined in light of the method of development chosen by the writer. If the reader is confused about the subject matter, the writer has not effectively established a focus. If the reader is engaged and not confused, the writer probably has been effective in establishing a focus.

Organization

Organization is the progression, relatedness, and completeness of ideas. The writer establishes for the reader a well-organized composition, which exhibits a constancy of purpose through the development of elements forming an effective beginning, middle, and end. The response demonstrates a clear progression of related ideas and/or events and is unified and complete.

Support and Elaboration

Support and Elaboration form the extension and development of the topic/subject/thesis. The writer provides sufficient elaboration to present the ideas and/or events clearly. Two important concepts in determining whether details are supportive are the concepts of relatedness and sufficiency. To be supportive of the subject matter, details must be related to the focus of the response. Relatedness has to do with the directness of the relationship that the writer establishes between the information and the subject matter. Supporting details should be relevant and clear. The writer must present his/her ideas with enough power and clarity to cause the support to be sufficient. Effective use of concrete, specific details strengthens the power of the response. Insufficiency is often characterized by undeveloped details, redundancy, and the repetitious paraphrasing of the same point. Sufficiency has less to do with amount than with the weight or power of the information that is provided.

Grammatical Conventions

Grammatical conventions involve correctness in sentence formation, usage, and mechanics. The writer has control of grammatical conventions that are appropriate to the writing task. Errors, if present, do not impede the reader's understanding of the ideas conveyed.

Style

Style is the control of language that is appropriate to the purpose, audience, and context of the writing task. The writer's style is evident through word choice and sentence fluency. Skillful use of precise, purposeful vocabulary enhances the effectiveness of the composition through the use of appropriate words, phrases and descriptions that engage the audience. Sentence fluency involves using a variety of sentence styles to establish effective relationships between and among ideas, causes, and/or statements appropriate to the task.