

# 13 TIPS for Writing Essays

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## Definitions

**comma** *n.* a mark to separate *individual items* found in a series within a sentence (e.g. a row of nouns); (2) a mark used to separate a *string of words* from other words in a sentence whenever such a string of words could be omitted without destroying the grammatical sense of the sentence.

**dictionary** *n.* (1) a big book without a plot; (2) a non-electronic spell-checker.

**essay** *n.* (1) an analytic or interpretative literary composition (2) something resembling such a composition (3) speed-writing.

**paragraph** *n.* (1) a collection of sentences on the same page; (2) a collection of sentences with a common theme.

**plagiarism** *n.* (1) a “quicky” essay; (2) an “others-said-it-much-better-than-I-could” report; (3) literary theft

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## The Good, the Bad & the Ugly

(1) ❑ Terminate the utilization of recherché morphemic emissions. Use **simple words**.

(2) ❑ Do not engage in the practice of producing long sentences that go on and on for a long time without punctuation or anything like that for then you may not be able to continue to keep the attention of the reader for very long and he will forget what it was that one was reading when they started. resulting only in confusion or perhaps they won't be able to remember what you started to say before. Use **short sentences. Long sentences, with numerous points, are difficult to follow.**

(3) ❑ Some students use the same tense throughout. They will be right to do that. Good students varied the tenses. **Good writers use the same tense. Variety adds spice to an essay, but not here.**

(4) ❑ Usually sentence fragments with a subject but no verb or with a verb but no subject. They are hard to follow. **Sentences need subjects and verbs. Good authors avoid sentence fragments.**

(5) ❑ Simple words, ideas that are related, and if you write clearly, aids communication. Use **parallel structure. Simple words, related ideas, and clear writing aid communication.**

(6) ❑ If you use them in a sentence, make sure it is clear what it refers to. **Pronouns replace nouns; if you use a pronoun, make sure it is clearly linked to a noun.**

(7) The employment of nouns is not a good way to add spark to a sentence. **Use verbs; they sparkle.**

(8) The passive voice is not to be used to add zip to a sentence. **Use the active voice. It zips.**

(9) Always leave out and avoid all needless and unnecessary words and things that clutter up the sentence you are writing in an essay. **Cut the clutter.**

(10) Many student's use the apostrophe for the plural form. **Good writers don't. They use the apostrophe for the possessive case.**

(11) Never betray your sources. **Always state your source. You are not a journalist writing an explosive exposé. You must give credit for each idea you borrow from someone else. If you do that, then you can much more effectively present your own good ideas clearly as your own.**

(12) It's a major writing problem. An essay is often harmed by its improper use of the possessive form of the pronoun "it." **It's incorrect to use an apostrophe with "its" to indicate possession. "It's" means "it is."**

(13) Few correction's four you're report essay before handling. It inn too one's professor. **Revise often. The first draft is called a rough draft for good reason. And...use a spell checker!**

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## Common word confusion not caught by spell checkers:

there = place  
their = possessive form of "they"  
they're = they are

where = a adverb for location  
were = past tense of verb "to be"  
we're = we are

it's = it is  
its = possessive form of "it"

led = past tense of verb "lead"  
lead = to go before  
lead = a heavy metal used in pipes

to = direction  
too = also  
two = 1+1

effect = accomplish  
affect = influence

alter = change  
altar = place of sacrifice

than = indicates contrast  
then = indicates logical connection or time element

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## Weigh the worth of a statement:

Good writers evaluate the sources they use. Books are not simply collections of "facts" from which material for an essay can be gleaned. Books are ideas of individuals, and these individuals have made judgments and conducted investigations that range from the credible to the careless. The student's task is to evaluate these sources in terms of the source's usefulness in contributing reliable material for the subject at hand. Part of a professor's grading of an essay is an *evaluation* of the student's *evaluation* of the sources.