

While we have not created a mandatory checklist for longer writing assignments, we hope that these suggested minimums will help departments & individual teachers find common ground.

Writing Minimums

(Adapted from Common Core State Standard Argument Writing Rubric)

Note to Students: In order for your assignment to be graded, you **MUST** meet these standards. If your assignment does not meet these standards, your work will be returned without a grade.

These standards will be required for longer writing assignments in which students are expected to:

- Construct multiple-paragraph assignments, generally longer than one page
- Complete an assessment that demonstrates knowledge of broad concepts

Longer assignments must meet all the minimums of short writing assignments in addition to the following:

1. **FOCUS** (*Does the response consistently address the thesis/claims & avoid tangents?*)

Example of ACCEPTABLE ANSWER:

Thesis: Global warming has negatively impacted the Antarctic penguin population.

Written Content: Rising temperatures have decreased the living space.... Mating habits have been altered.... Availability of food has diminished....

Example of UNACCEPTABLE ANSWER:

Written Content: Penguins like ice and the floating ice caps are melting away.... Some types of penguins are the Emperor, the Adelie, and the Galapagos. Of course, the Galapagos don't live in Antarctica, they live in Galapagos.

***Audience**

- Anticipates the audience's knowledge of the topic.
- Writing style, including word choice, matches the intended audience.

Example of UNACCEPTABLE ANSWER:

Prompt: Create Mousetrap Car sales pitch in Physical Science class.

A: My car rocks! It goes really fast!....

Example of ACCEPTABLE ANSWER:

A: My car accelerates from 0 mps to 2 mps in 1.5 seconds (supported by additional data)....

2. **SUPPORT** (*Does the response use relevant texts to support the claim/thesis?*)

Example of ACCEPTABLE ANSWER:

Thesis/Claim: Sweatshops are necessary for the economic survival of citizens in developing nations.

(SUPPORT continued)

Support: Sweatshops provide higher wages than other alternatives (e.g. nanny, agricultural worker, prostitution) available in those countries - often times paying three to five times more for the same amount of work (Seney 2013).

Example of UNACCEPTABLE ANSWER:

Support: Sweatshops make people work hard in bad conditions. The workers to get out of those conditions should get a second job to make more money (www.kevinsblog.com).

3. **FORMAT, GRAMMAR, and STRUCTURE** (*Is the response written in standard English, without excessive proofreading errors?*)

Format

- Include a heading at the top of the page with name, date, and assignment name.

Grammar

- Use proper punctuation, including periods at the end of sentences.
- Capitalize the first letter of the first word of sentences and proper nouns.

Example of UNACCEPTABLE WORK: it says, like in the reading, i think.

- Spell words correctly.

Example of UNACCEPTABLE WORK: Their are many examples of “unexeptible” work.

- Write in complete sentences.

Example of UNACCEPTABLE WORK: Which is the cause of World War to, too.

***Structure**

Introduction

- Pre-thesis Set-up (e.g. “Hook”/attention-getter, background information/context)
- Thesis

Thesis

- Relevance—Does the thesis directly answer the question?
- Argumentation—Is the thesis an argument?
- Evidence—Can the thesis be supported with evidence?

Supporting Paragraphs

- Topic Sentence—Does each paragraph begin with a topic sentence that supports the thesis?
- Evidence—Does each paragraph’s evidence support its topic sentence?
- Citation—Sources are properly cited using the style of citation required by the discipline.
 - Each paragraph must include at least **one** in-text citation.

Conclusion

- Reiteration—Does the conclusion paraphrase the thesis and supporting evidence?
- Significance—Does the conclusion identify and explain the significance of the thesis?