

## Good Writing shows these qualities . . .

**Critical thinking:** When your writing shows evidence of critical thinking, it is thoughtful, supports opinion with fact, expert analysis, and/or experience and draws valid conclusions based on information presented.

You must have a clearly stated claim and paragraphs with clearly reasoned topic sentences. For your writing to be believable you must offer proof – in the form of specific details – to illustrate your topic sentence. In other words, draw a detailed picture with your words.

Have you related the support of your claim to readings or class discussion, responded to counter-arguments, and made effective use of quotes? Ask yourself these questions:

Are my specific details directly related to my topic sentence?

Do my details give information that will persuade my reader?

Have I told the reader the sources for my specific details?

Are my sources reliable?

Have I given enough specific details to be convincing?

Have I used vivid, specific language that appeals to the senses?

**Structure:** What strategy did you use to organize your writing? Does your argument develop in a logical way? When your writing is clear, it signals to your reader what points are important and how those points fit together under the umbrella of your topic sentence. Transitional words are essential to indicate sequence or importance.

The clarity of your argument is reinforced when you include only the information absolutely necessary to communicate your points. Get to the point quickly and do not introduce unnecessary information. Have careful attention to eliminating vague or meaningless words.

**Grammar:** When your writing is correct, it is free of errors in sentence structure (run-ons, fragments), spelling, grammar and punctuation. Such lack of errors gives the reader a positive perception of your communication skills and authority and reinforces the credibility of your argument.