

CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE WRITING (FCOSM)

What is **effective writing**? How do you know it when you see it, and how can you make your writing more effective? The following **5 characteristics** will help you to understand **how to improve your writing and how to recognize good writing**.

1. FOCUS means maintaining a clear point.

Your writing should have a **specific topic and clear ideas & details to support it.**

- Did I stick to one topic and make a point about it?
- Can a reader tell that I knew what I was supposed to do?
- Are all my sentences related to the topic?

2. CONTENT means the information and details.

Your writing should have enough **developed & detailed** sentences to **explain** your topic.

- Did I add details to my ideas?
- Did I explain my reasons and opinions?
- Have I provided readers with all they need?

3. ORGANIZATION means the logical order of the content.

Your writing should have an **order** that makes **sense**.

- Did I put my ideas in an order that makes sense?
- Is my writing in paragraphs with a beginning, middle, and end?
- Did I use transition words?

4. STYLE means a variety of words and sentences.

Your writing should use **interesting** and **original** language.

- Did I use a variety of different and interesting words?
- Did I vary the types and lengths of my sentences?
- Is my voice and personality coming out through my writing?

5. MECHANICS means the conventions of our language.

Your writing should be free from errors in **grammar, spelling, and usage**.

- Did I spell all words correctly?
- Do my sentences begin with capital letters and have correct punctuation?
- Is my writing in complete sentences?