

Writing Basics: Style

A writer's style is what sets it apart from other writers. It's the way the writer "talks" to the reader. But how do you determine style? This article written by professionals of [paper writing services](#) explains it.

What is Style?

Style is what sets you apart from other writers. It's the way you write, how you "talk" to your writers. Style is unique, and every writer has their own. Here are some of the things that make up your style:

Diction: your word choice. Do you use simple or complex language? Do you use long or short words? Is your language concrete or abstract? Do you tailor your words to suit your intended readers?

Sentence Structure: the way your sentences are arranged. Do you use simple or complex sentences? Are your sentences usually long or short -- or even fragments? Do you place your clauses at the end of the sentence (periodic) or at the beginning (cumulative)?

CLAUSE <i>(in this case, an independent clause that has been made into a sentence)</i>				
SUBJECT		PREDICATE		
[word form]	SUBJECT	MAIN VERB PHRASE	OBJECT/COMPLEMENT/EXTRA INFORMATION	[word form]
[noun phrase]	The importance of support for students	is	clear.	[adjective phrase]
[verb-ing]	Supporting students	is	clearly important.	[adverb phrase]
[verb-ing]	Supporting students	is	of vital importance.	[preposition phrase]
['empty subject' it]	It	is	vital to support students.	[adjective phrase]
[that-clause]	That students are supported	is	vital.	[adjective phrase]
[noun clause]	What students need	is	support.	[noun phrase]
[noun phrase]	A priority	is	supporting students	[verb-ing]
[noun phrase]	Support	is	what students need.	[noun clause]

Detail: how much do you give? Do you go into great depth or do you use sparse sentence descriptions?

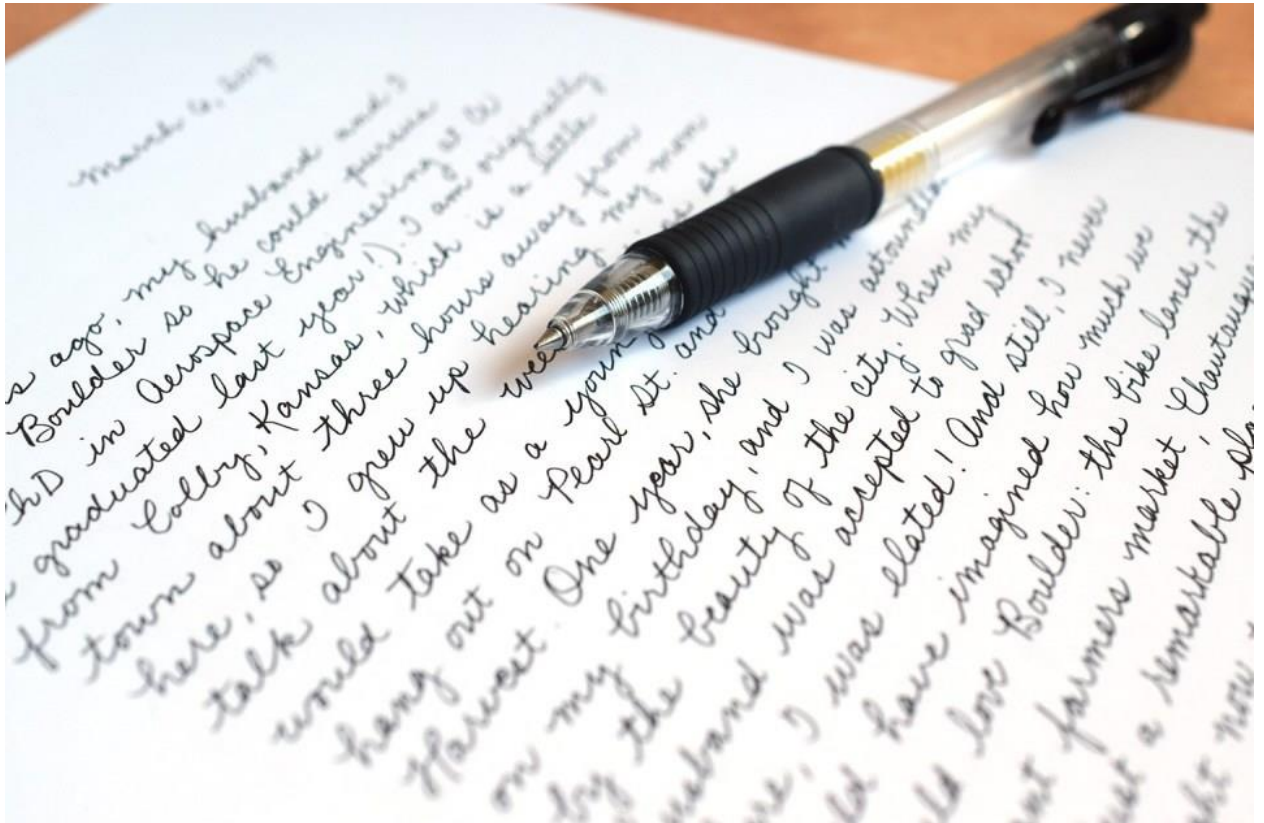
Rhythm: the patterns of flow and movement in your writing. Do you use rhyme or alliteration (several words in close proximity that begin with the same sound)? How do you arrange your words and sentences? What types of repetition do you use?

Literary Devices: techniques that convey your meaning to the reader. Is [your work](#) full of imagery or symbolism? Do you use hyperbole (exaggeration) or irony (the

sentence meaning is different from the literal one)? Do you use comparisons like simile (using "like" or "as") or metaphor (implying that one thing is actually another)? What about foreshadowing (hinting at things to come) or back-story (filling in what happened earlier)?

Dialogue: what your characters say to one another. Dialogue can reveal your own beliefs, biases, values and personal experience as a writer.

Now that you know the basics, you can easily determine your style and enhance your unique writing voice.



Some Sample Style Problems (and a quick fix for each):

Here are some of the more common style problems that writers have:

Wordiness: saying more than you absolutely have to. [Wordiness](#) makes you come across more like a blustering politician than a professional writer, so you need to watch for it.

Watch for clichés and substitute new ways of saying what you mean. Clichés are tired old ways of saying things "He bit off more than he could chew," "She was as good as gold," "A rose by any other name," and many more.

Cut qualifiers like "very" or "really." Cut almost any adverb (they usually end in "-ly").

Watch for prepositional phrases ("an," "in," "for," "over," "of," "at," etc.) and cut them out.

Watch for stock phrases (those things that "everyone says") and find a better way to say things. Stock phrases can include "the reason for," "in the event that," "in regards to", "it is possible that," "prior to," and many other "fluff" phrases that you hear in business.



Verb Troubles: passive voice and weak verbs, while grammatically correct, don't make the best writing.

Passive voice uses a "to be" verb, and hides the actor by putting it somewhere after that action. "The newspaper was read," "The fire was set," "New cars were displayed." The cure for that is to switch the sentence around and choose an action verb instead. "I read the newspaper," "The arsonist set the fire," "Volkswagen displayed their new cars."

Weak verbs are the "to be" verbs and the "have" verbs. You can almost always replace those with stronger, more specific verbs that give a better image to the reader. "We were walking down the yellow brick road" becomes "We strode down the yellow brick road" and gives the reader a better idea of the action in the scene.

