

## CLAYTON HIGH SCHOOL WRITING GUIDE

Clayton High School is a community of writers. Students write in all of their classes, producing formal expository essays, creative pieces, research papers and lab reports, as well as informal writing such as learning logs and journal entries. Clayton students use writing as a tool for learning as well as a way of demonstrating knowledge. When evaluating formal writing – in essays, reports, and the like – Clayton teachers have certain minimal expectations for student work. The following reflect these expectations.

1. **Focus**
  - Clear thesis (the main idea or argument that the writing is supporting).
  - Content relevant to the assignment.
2. **Organization**
  - Systematic arrangement related to the thesis.
  - Transitions to establish connections among and within paragraphs to give the writing fluency.
  - Introduction, body and conclusion.
3. **Development**
  - Specific, accurate evidence appropriate to the thesis, in-depth analysis that interprets evidence.
  - Critical and creative thinking.
  - Appropriate documentation of sources besides the writer’s own ideas.
4. **Style**
  - Concise and precise word choice.
  - Sentence variety.
  - Appropriate perspective for the assignment and audience.
  - Objective perspective: no “I”
  - Subjective perspective: uses “I”
  - Appropriate voice for the assignment and audience.
  - Active voice: “The student wrote the paper.”
  - Passive voice: “The paper was written by the student.”
  - Word choice and sentence structure that capture the attention of the audience.
5. **Mechanics**
  - Correct punctuation and usage following the conventions of standard edited English.
  - Accurate spelling.