

## Teaching Writing → Writing Conventions

Level: Middle School

*The rules for spelling, grammar, capitalization, and punctuation are there to help people communicate clearly. When you follow these rules and conventions, not only do you communicate better, but also, your reader knows you've taken the trouble to get it right.*

Use the checklist below to check your essay or story for spelling and punctuation.

Rule	Checked
<b>Spelling:</b> Follow spelling rules, such as, “i” before “e” except after “c”	
<b>Spelling:</b> When using homophones, ie., to/too/ two and their/there/they're, ensure that the spelling matches your meaning.	
<b>Spelling:</b> Review words suggested by spell checkers carefully before choosing. Spell checkers suggest words that are close to your spelling, but they don't read for meaning. Make sure that the word you pick has the meaning you want.	
<b>Punctuation:</b> Every sentence must have end punctuation (period, exclamation point, question mark).	
<b>Punctuation:</b> Use commas to separate phrases or clauses that should be set apart.	
<b>Punctuation:</b> Commas separating independent clauses must be used with a conjunction. If no conjunction is used, separate your clauses into two sentences.	
<b>Punctuation:</b> Use quotation marks to indicate words spoken in dialogue, by a particular person, or taken directly from a source.	

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