

## Short Story Student Writing Checklist

[Insert writing prompt.] Use this checklist to guide you while responding to the writing prompt.

General
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> The <b>title</b> captures my story in an original or creative way.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> I show awareness of <b>task, purpose, and audience</b>.</li></ul>
Story Elements and Literary Devices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> I introduce the <b>narrator</b> and establish and maintain a consistent <b>point of view</b> unless I intentionally write from multiple viewpoints.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> My beginning <b>engages</b> readers. I present a <b>setting, characters, and central conflict</b> that sets my story in motion.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> My <b>plot</b> is <b>original</b>; the story is <b>well-paced and developed</b>.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> I <b>sequence the events</b> in a logical order. If I use multiple plotlines, flashbacks, or flash-forward, readers can follow the storyline.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> I build a gripping <b>suspense</b> to create tension and present a <b>climax</b> that shows the turning point.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> My <b>dialogue</b> purposefully moves the plot forward by revealing feelings, interactions between characters, reactions to setting or events, and so forth. <b>Dialogue tags</b>, when needed, enhance the dialogue.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> I use <b>dialect</b>, as appropriate, to signify a character's geographical <i>origin, social status, bias, era in which he/she lives, and so on</i>.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> My <b>ending</b> resolves the central conflict and answers questions readers might have.</li></ul>
Description
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> I use precise and accurate <b>vocabulary</b> and avoid unnecessary repetition.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> I compose relevant <b>figurative language</b>—imagery, simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole—to vividly <b>describe events, settings, and characters</b> and to elicit a <b>mood</b>.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> I include strong verbs in <b>dialogue tags</b> and describe reactions, gestures, or movements only as needed and not overdone.</li></ul>
Sentence Structure and Transitions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> My writing does not include <b>run-on sentences or fragments</b>.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> I vary my <b>sentence beginnings</b> and use different <b>sentence patterns</b> for rhythm and stylistic effect.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> I include <b>parallel construction</b> to enhance my writing.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> I add appropriate and varied <b>transitions</b> to connect sentences so my writing flows, to convey event sequence, and to show shifts in time and place.</li></ul>
Grammar, Conventions, and Format
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> I use <b>proper grammar</b> except for stylistic effect, such as writing in a character's voice who does not speak in standard English.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> My <b>conventions</b> are correct—spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> I use proper mechanics for <b>dialogue</b>.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> I know when to use new <b>paragraphs</b> and indent them appropriately.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> I <b>format</b> my paper correctly with proper margins and a heading. If I type, I use appropriate font style, color, and size. If I handwrite, it is legible.</li></ul>