

Say It Simply

Good writing is simple prose that expresses ideas clearly and succinctly.

These suggestions for good writing are culled from William Strunk and E.B. White's classic *The Elements of Style*. Ithaca, NY: W.P. Humphrey, 1918. Online: www.bartleby.com/141/.

- . Use the active voice.
- . Put statements in positive form.
- . Use definite, specific, concrete language.
- . Omit needless words.
- . Express like ideas in similar form.

- . Keep related words together.
- . Keep to one tense.
- . Place yourself in the background.
- . Write in a way that comes naturally.
- . Plan what you want to say -- and hold to it.

- . Write with nouns and verbs.
- . Do not overwrite; do not explain too much.
- . Do not overstate.
- . Avoid using qualifiers.
- . Use preferred spellings (the first in a dictionary).

- . Avoid constructing awkward adverbs.
- . Be clear.
- . Avoid injecting opinion, unless it is appropriate to do so.
- . Use figures of speech sparingly.
- . Avoid foreign phrases or terms.

- . Revise and rewrite.