

Essay Writing Checklist

Introduction

- The first sentence is the hook and is designed to grab the reader's attention
- Transition from the hook to the thesis statement
- The thesis statement is the *last* sentence in the introduction paragraph
- The thesis statement clearly and directly responds to the essay prompt (the words in the prompt may be used to formulate the thesis statement).
- The introduction is at least 4 – 6 sentences

Body Paragraphs

- The topic sentence is the *first* sentence of each body paragraph
- The topic sentences are an extension of the thesis statement—each topic sentence clearly proves and supports the thesis statement and responds to the prompt or writing assignment
- Topic sentences do not summarize plot or make general comments
- Body paragraphs are developed with *at least two* supporting passages/quotes from the literature
- Provide reader with the *context* for each supporting quote: *speaker + occasion*
- Follow each quote with *at least two* sentences of analysis that explain how the quote supports and proves the topic sentence and therefore the thesis statement
- The last sentence of each body paragraph is a concluding sentence that summarizes the paragraph and/or transitions to the next paragraph

Conclusion

- Restates the thesis statement
- Summarizes the main ideas without being repetitive
- May possibly revisit the hook or provide an appropriate quotation
- Expands on the ideas in the essay, leaving the reader thinking and pondering
- The conclusion is at least 4 – 6 sentences
- Never write “In conclusion...”

Other Important Aspects

- Use formal writing style, tone, and language
- Avoid slang, poor diction, non-specific language, and contractions
- Avoid addressing the reader and the use of first-person
- Avoid asking rhetorical questions
- Be mindful and aware of MLA format in citing your sources in the text
- Pay attention to spelling, punctuation and grammar
- Always proofread and self-edit your work
- Give your essay a creative, thoughtful and interesting title

Take pride in your work and give the essay 100% of your effort!