(from https://www.reddit.com/r/JordanPeterson/comments/9i18n6/jordan\_peterson\_writing\_guide\_in\_a\_more\_concise/)

Essay Checklist

* Pick a topic that has meaning
  + It must be interesting for you, or else it won’t be for the reader
  + This helps you discover your why for your paper giving you a reason to formulate your ideas on a topic
    - Put these in question form.
      * 1.
      * 2.
      * 3.
      * 4.
      * 5.
      * 6.
      * 7.
      * 8.
      * 9.
      * 10.
* Eat, Sleep, and Be Merry
  + Put yourself in a space that will not annoy you
  + Have a wrist wrest
  + Large/multiple screens
  + Eat a solid meal
  + Be well rested
* Levels of resolution/formatting
  + Words
    - Pick the right words
  + Sentences
    - Place those right words in the right place in a sentence
      * Concrete verbs
      * Expressive (But not flowery) Adjectives and adverbs
      * ORDER THE SENTENCES IN THE MOST OPTIMAL WAY
        + If you have the time, keep rewriting the sentence then pick the best version
  + Paragraphs
    - Single idea MAX
    - 100-300 words
      * Less you don’t have a good grasp
      * More it’s multiple ideas
  + Paragraph Progression
    - Should be a logical progression
      * Don’t be afraid to move sentences (particularly factual ones) between sentences
    - Paragraphs should be stepping stones to the destination
      * Close enough together that it isn’t hard to navigate the waters
      * Wide enough that they can actually step on it
      * Direct enough that they don’t wander off the path
  + The Essay itself
    - The essay is more than the quality of the sum of its parts
    - The essay needs to be 1) inherently interesting 2) important 3) ideally both
    - There is no locus of the mistake here
      * The failure is a lack of creativity or originality
    - The ideas are more important than the words
    - You should have your mind set straight by now
  + The reader
    - Remember your purpose is to communicate a cause to an audience
      * Know who the audience is
  + The readers culture
    - Remember that cultures change, so write agnostic to your current culture
* Aesthetics
  + Be brief
  + Be poetic
    - Give your writing a tempo/melody
  + If you’re bored along the way, ask yourself why

Content

* Pick a subject in which your answer will result unworthy of ugliness
  + Picking a question is the hardest part and the most important
    - Even if you’re given a topic you still have to determine why it should be written
    - Find an interesting topic, and use it to formulate a question
  + Doing this will make your interest shine through the paper
* Finish before you perfect
  + If there isn’t more that you have to write - READ
* Sources/Reading
  + Use encyclopedias/ wikipedia to find sources
  + 5-10 sources per 1,000 words/4 pages
  + List your sources badly then refine as you write
  + Take notes as you read
    - Rewrite the important things you learned in your own words
    - Include only important details
      * Essays are a dialogue with other writers; not consolidations, not expansions
    - Take 3-7 times the notes as you will need for your paper
  + Reading 1.
    - Notes:
  + Reading 2.
    - Notes:
  + Reading 3.
    - Notes:
  + Reading 4.
    - Notes:
  + Reading 5.
    - Notes:
  + Reading 6.
    - Notes:
  + Reading 7.
    - Notes:
  + Reading 8.
    - Notes:
  + Reading 9.
    - Notes:
  + Reading 10 (repeat if necessary).
    - Notes (repeat if necessary):

Writing

* Get into writing
  + Just do it
  + Don’t wait for a massive block of time, use the time you have, or make time
* Your first draft should be 25-50% longer than your final
  + Your draft isn’t going to be good, so you’ll need to cut it down
* Write an outline
  + Provides fundamental form and structure
    - 10-15 sentences regardless of length
      * As Main points i.e. first line bullets
        + Authors and examples are exempt from count
  + Outline sentence 1:
  + Outline sentence 2:
  + Outline sentence 3:
  + Outline sentence 4:
  + Outline sentence 5:
  + Outline sentence 6:
  + Outline sentence 7:
  + Outline sentence 8:
  + Outline sentence 9:
  + Outline sentence 10:
* Writing the paper
  + Start with paragraphs
    - 10-15 sentences per heading
    - Edit both the outline and the sentences.
  + Single space to see more
  + Don’t worry about sentence structure or grammar
    - Your draft should be quick and dirty
  + After you write your paragraphs separate into sentences
    - Write at least 1 other version of the sentence
    - Try your best to make every sentence better
      * Flow
      * Precision
      * Meaning
    - After that reorder the sentences in the best possible manner
  + Move to the Essay
    - Adjust paragraph order
  + Move to the meta
    - Read your essay
      * Rewrite your outline from memory
        + This forces simplification - gets to the essence of the argument
      * Be excited to throw away bad material
        + This will remove any substandard material
      * Wait a few days and repeat
* Format your paper per instructor guidelines

Editing

* Start with the sentence
  + Separate your first paragraph into sentences
    - Write at least 1 other version of the sentence
    - Try your best to make every sentence better
      * Flow
      * Precision
      * Meaning
      * Shorter (15-25% if possible)
    - Original Sentence
    - New Sentence
  + Recognize the difference in meaning between old and new sentences
  + Read aloud for flow before moving on
* Move to the paragraph
  + Reorder the paragraphs sentences
    - Original Paragraph 1:
    - New paragraph 1:
    - Repeat for each paragraph:
* Move to the essay
  + Take the new paragraphs and copy all of them
  + Reorder them into the best order
  + Paragraphs in original order:
  + Paragraphs in new order:
* Redo your outline
  + Read your current draft below:
  + Move below
  + Don’t look back
  + Rewrite your outline below (This simplifies your paper)
  + Fill in the new outline with the relevant information from about
    - Be encouraged to cut unnecessary material

Repeat as necessary

Add a title and references page

Congratulations you wrote your best essay on this topic!

References

*Peterson, J.B. (2014). Essay writing for writers*