

ESSAY CHECK LIST

I. Introduction

- ✓ Does your intro clearly and efficiently introduce the text, its key plot elements, and the focal concern of your essay?
- ✓ Does your intro include a clear thesis statement, which must make a strong argumentative claim?
- ✓ Does your intro establish the larger consequences of your thesis?

II. Body of Essay

- ✓ Does each paragraph begin with a topic sentence that clearly states what the paragraph will argue?
- ✓ Does each paragraph address and argue a single point?
- ✓ Does each paragraph explain the step-by-step reasoning and textual evidence that support that argument?
- ✓ Have you allowed plot summary to dominate your essay?
- ✓ Have you chosen the right textual evidence? Does the evidence match your claims about it?
- ✓ Do you provide sufficient analysis of the textual evidence?
- ✓ Does each paragraph conclude by explaining the larger significance of that discussion?
- ✓

III. Mechanics

- ✓ Is each sentence clear and readable, with minimal interruption?
- ✓ Have you reviewed your punctuation?
- ✓ Have you edited for passive voice, wordiness, verb choice, strings of prepositions?
- ✓ Are all your sentence subjects and verbs as strong and clear as they can be?
- ✓ Do you overuse conjugations of “to be” and indirect constructions such as “it is” and “there are”?

IV. Conclusion

- ✓ Does your conclusion merely summarize your essay’s argument?
- ✓ Does your conclusion discuss the larger significance of your essay?
- ✓ Does your essay back up the claims made in your conclusion?