

Essay by: _____ Reviewed by: _____

Essay Checklist and Response*

Generally speaking, and in the lists below, **problems with thinking** are often directly related to, or indistinguishable from, **problems with writing**, or expression.

Evidence of Clear Thinking: (logic, focus, development of ideas)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> thesis is a complex arg. (not a statement of fact) | <input type="checkbox"/> remarks show precision in thinking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> intro. par. is focused (begins w. reference to poem) | <input type="checkbox"/> evidence is cited for generalizations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure of the essay is clear | <input type="checkbox"/> no obvious contradictions in arg. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> paragraphing is good (one idea per paragraph) | <input type="checkbox"/> implications of arg. are explored |
| <input type="checkbox"/> paragraph transitions (signposts) are solid | <input type="checkbox"/> no important ideas are buried |
| <input type="checkbox"/> arguments are adequately developed, supported | <input type="checkbox"/> you comment on each quotation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> clear logic is used (no flawed logic) | <input type="checkbox"/> ALL evidence is considered/weighed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> each par. refers to details in the poem | <input type="checkbox"/> conclusion is solid and interesting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> each par. shows some critical analysis | <input type="checkbox"/> topic & approach is focussed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> you avoid too much summary or paraphrase | <input type="checkbox"/> this essay is easy to understand |

Practicing Good Writing (grammar, style, organization, expression) CHECK IF RELEVANT:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> sentence fragments | <input type="checkbox"/> run-on sentences |
| <input type="checkbox"/> comma splice | <input type="checkbox"/> convoluted sentence structure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> subject/verb agreement | <input type="checkbox"/> possessives; apostrophes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> noun/pronoun agreement | <input type="checkbox"/> spelling (always proofread) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> faulty parallelism | <input type="checkbox"/> imprecise diction, use of wrong word |
| <input type="checkbox"/> writing in the past tense (write in present tense) | <input type="checkbox"/> ineffective use of tone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> material is repeated unnecessarily | <input type="checkbox"/> wordiness clouds sense in spots |
| <input type="checkbox"/> clarify references (“This” is not a noun) | <input type="checkbox"/> typos (always use spellcheck) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> dangling or misplaced modifiers | |

Format (See the MLA Handbook for conventions for the presentation of scholarly writing):

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> essay is double-spaced <u>throughout</u> (no extra spaces) | <input type="checkbox"/> correct Works Cited page included |
| <input type="checkbox"/> good title (subject & focus are clear) | <input type="checkbox"/> last name & page # are on each page |
| <input type="checkbox"/> title conventions are observed (title in quotes “”) | <input type="checkbox"/> citations are free of misquotes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> quoting conventions are observed in body ¶s | <input type="checkbox"/> essay is stapled in upper-left corner |
| <input type="checkbox"/> parenthetical citation conventions are observed | <input type="checkbox"/> this essay looks professional |

Response:

* Adapted from a Rutgers University Composition Teaching Checklist

