

# Analytical Essay Structure Checklist

## [2025]

Use this checklist to ensure your essay is balanced and adheres to the professional standards of analysis. Most students lose marks by providing too much summary and not enough interpretation—this tool prevents that.

### Part 1: Word Count & Percentage Calculator

Enter your **Total Word Count Goal** here: \_\_\_\_\_

Section	Target Percentage	Calculation (Total x Target %)	Your Actual Count
Introduction	10–15%	_____ words	_____
Body Paragraphs	70–80%	_____ words	_____
Conclusion	10–15%	_____ words	_____

**Pro Tip:** If your Introduction is over 15%, you are likely including too much plot summary or unnecessary biography. Cut it down to focus on your thesis.

### Part 2: Section-by-Section Verification

#### The Introduction

- ☐ **Hook:** Does it grab attention in 1–2 sentences without being too broad?
- ☐ **Context:** Is background info limited to only what is necessary for the analysis?
- ☐ **Thesis:** Is it a single, clear, analytical claim (not a fact)?
- ☐ **The "No-Go" Zone:** I have removed phrases like "In this essay I will..." and dictionary definitions.

#### Body Paragraphs (The TEAL Method)

- ☐ **Topic Sentences:** Does every paragraph start with an analytical claim that connects to the thesis?
- ☐ **Evidence:** Are all quotes and data points properly cited with page numbers?
- ☐ **The Critical Ratio:** Is my analysis (explanation) at least **twice as long** as my evidence (quotes)?
- ☐ **Transitions:** Does the final sentence of each paragraph "link" back to the main argument?

#### The Conclusion

- ☐ **Restated Thesis:** Have I rephrased the main claim without using the exact same words from the intro?
- ☐ **Synthesis:** Did I show how my points work together rather than just listing them?
- ☐ **Broader Significance:** Did I answer the "So What?" question?

- [ ] **Finality:** Did I avoid starting with "In conclusion" and avoid adding new evidence?

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### Part 3: Target Word Count Quick-Reference

Total Goal	Intro Target	Body Target (Total)	Conclusion Target
500 words	50–75	350–400	50–75
1,000 words	100–150	700–800	100–150
2,000 words	200–300	1,400–1,600	200–300
2,500 words	250–375	1,750–2,000	250–375

