

Self-Editing Checklist

Instructions: Use this checklist to review your expository essay before submitting. Mark each item, reflect on gaps, and plan improvements.

1. Thesis Clarity and Focus

- ☐ My thesis clearly states the main point.
- ☐ It directly answers the essay prompt.
- ☐ It previews the key points I explain in the essay.

Improvement Tip: If unclear, rewrite your thesis in one precise, objective sentence.

2. Paragraph Organization

- ☐ Each paragraph focuses on a single main idea.
- ☐ Evidence and analysis are connected logically to the topic sentence.
- ☐ Transitions guide the reader smoothly from one paragraph to the next.

Improvement Tip: Split or reorganize paragraphs that mix multiple ideas.

3. Evidence Sufficiency

- ☐ Each claim is supported by at least 2–3 credible examples or data points.
- ☐ Evidence comes from reliable sources (peer-reviewed, academic, or credible publications).
- ☐ I explained how each piece of evidence supports the thesis.

Improvement Tip: Add or replace weak evidence with specific facts or examples.

4. Transition Effectiveness

- ☐ Sentences and paragraphs flow logically.
- ☐ Transition words are appropriate for cause/effect, comparison, sequence, or emphasis.

Improvement Tip: Add transitional phrases to connect ideas more clearly.

5. Citation Accuracy

- ☐ All sources are cited in-text according to the required style (MLA, APA, Chicago).
- ☐ All sources appear in the Works Cited/References list correctly.

Improvement Tip: Double-check formatting and spelling of authors, dates, and titles.

6. Grammar and Mechanics

- ☐ I checked for sentence structure, punctuation, spelling, and word choice errors.
- ☐ No first-person pronouns or personal opinions appear inappropriately.

Improvement Tip: Read aloud or use grammar-checking tools to catch errors missed while writing.

7. Formatting Compliance

- ☐ Margins, spacing, headings, and page numbers follow assignment requirements.
 - ☐ Font size, style, and alignment are consistent throughout.
- Improvement Tip:** Compare your essay to the rubric or assignment sheet for final confirmation.
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Reflection Box:

- **Top 3 areas I need to improve before submission:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

- **Immediate next steps:**