

CHECKLIST FOR ESSAY

Before beginning your self-revision, please be sure you have the following components in your essay:

- **Introduction**
 - **Title and author of your book**
 - **The topic(s) covered in the essay**
 - **Clear thesis that outlines a very clear purpose for your essay**
- **Body Paragraphs**
 - **Parenthetical citations for all facts/details (from book and outside sources)**
 - **At least 3 direct quotations (total)**
 - **Each one begins and ends with your own thought/idea (no citation for first or last sentence)**
- **Conclusion**
 - **Revisits the thesis**
 - **Answers the “So what?” question**
- **Works Cited**
 - **At least 4 citations that match your parenthetical citations in your essay**
 - **At least one source from a MEL database (or Britannica School).**
 - **Hanging indent, alphabetical order, and double spacing**
 - **All punctuation and italicization matches samples**

Check your own essay for these problem areas...

Problem Area: Phrases to Avoid

- “My research showed me that...”
- “An outside source said...”
- “I think that...”

Easy Fix:

Most of the time you can just omit the troublesome phrase.

~~A website with information about the Holocaust said that SS officers used violence to intimidate the prisoners in the concentration camps (“Concentration Camps in Germany”).~~

Problem Area: Problems with Quotations

- No context (an entire sentence is a quote and has no words of your own)
- Overly long quotations

Easy Fix:

- 1) In both situations, think about paraphrasing when possible and quoting **ONLY** the most important or irreplaceable part of the sentence.

“The veterans’ brains veterans’ brains did not show signs of the neuro-degenerate disease known as punch drunk syndrome, which is caused by multiple concussions” (Vassilis).

Studies show that “veterans’ brains did not show signs of the neuro-degenerate disease known as punch drunk syndrome” (Vassilis).

2) When appropriate, you may give credit to the source within the sentence itself.

“The veterans’ brains veterans’ brains did not show signs of the neuro-degenerate disease known as punch drunk syndrome, which is caused by multiple concussions” (Vassilis).

Dr. Steven Vassilis, a neurologist who studies the long-lasting effects of concussions, says, “The veterans’ brains did not show signs of the neuro-degenerate disease known as punch drunk syndrome” (Vassilis).

Problem Area: Overly Wordy Sentences/Paragraphs

- Using redundant sentences/ideas throughout a paragraph
- Not using the process of reduction (unit 4)

Easy Fix:

Edit out anything that is not adding to your essay. If it isn’t contributing, it’s taking away from your writing.

By watching out his window Bruno wonders why his father has taken a job where it was so filthy. He sees all the people in the camp, and he doesn’t know what they’re doing. Also by looking out the window, Bruno and Gretel see filthy looking people (Boyne 30).

Looking out his window with Gretel, Bruno sees filthy people and wonders why his father has taken this job (Boyne 30).