

The College A Team: Good Essay Checklist

General

Your Essay Must Meet ALL of the Following Criteria

_____ Uses proper spelling and grammar

_____ Answers the topic question

_____ Gets your point across clearly

Language and Style

Your Essay Should Meet MOST of the Following Criteria

_____ Avoids excessive use of slang

_____ Avoids unnecessary repetition

_____ Avoids the passive voice

_____ Uses verbs to enhance descriptions, not adjectives

_____ Utilizes a grade and age-appropriate vocabulary

_____ Sentence length is varied

_____ Essay flows naturally and is easy to read

Structure

Your Essay Should Meet MOST of the Following Criteria

_____ Introduction grabs reader interest

_____ Body of the essay reinforces an opinion or point stated earlier

_____ Conclusion brings a sense of closure and puts the author's thesis in the proper context

_____ Sentence and paragraph sequence is logical and effective

Impression

Your Essay Should Meet MOST of the Following Criteria

_____ Portrays you (the author) as an intelligent, mature person who wants to further your understanding of the world

_____ Portrays you as a confident person, who still has more to learn

_____ Essay is something an overworked admission officer will enjoy reading

_____ Essay will not offend a reasonable person

_____ Essay gives insight into the author's personality the rest of the application does not

_____ Essay does not portray the author as an excessive complainer or a sycophant