Writing a College Essay: A Checklist

♦ Have you thoroughly understood the prompt or teacher’s instructions?

♦ Have you responded appropriately to those instructions?

♦ Have you stated a clear purpose or central idea?

♦ Have you offered a purposeful and useful introduction?

♦ Have you provided plenty of supportive detail?

♦ Have you structured your paper so that each paragraph has its own topic and each paragraph follows logically from the one before it?

♦ Have you created transitions to provide for a smooth movement from one paragraph to the next?

♦ Have you provided an adequate sense of closure, a closing that reflects on what you have learned?

♦ Have you used language that is precise and appropriate to your subject and audience?

♦ If required to use outside sources, have you integrated that material seamlessly within your own writing?

♦ Have you, in that case, cited your source in the format required by your instructor and by the discipline in which you are writing?