Essays - Reviewing Your Paper

Review the Steps in Writing the Research Paper

Listed below are the steps need to complete an essay. They do not always have to be done in this order, and you may need to go back and forth during the writing process as your thesis or point of view may change as you do your research.

1. Select the topic.
2. Brainstorm/mind map to get ideas and supports down on paper.
3. Narrow the material to a few relevant main points.
4. Decide on an approach and point of view to focus your research.
5. Write a thesis statement that clearly states the topic and viewpoint.
6. Search for references and select appropriate ones for the topic.
7. Gather notes recording who, where, and what you will use from the sources.
8. Categorize/group notes according to your main points and supports.
9. Develop an outline.
10. Write a rough copy following the order in the outline.
11. Leave it for a day or two.
12. Revise your work and recopy any sections that may need it.
13. Edit and proofread to complete a final copy.
14. Construct a reference list including all of the resources you used in the essay.

Revision Checklist - focuses on paragraph structure and essay content and coherence

____ Do I have a clear introduction leading to a thesis and a preview of the main points?
____ Do I fulfill the claim of my thesis and is the purpose of the essay carried out?
____ Do I have topic sentences for my paragraphs?
____ Do I have enough clear and specific supporting details that fit with each main point?
____ Have I included a variety of examples and evidence to prove my points?
____ Are the ideas arranged in a logical order and do they flow with smooth transitions?
____ Does the conclusion include the thesis and summary of the main points?
____ Do I have a thorough and strong introduction and conclusion?
Editing Checklist - focuses on individual sentence structure, grammar, and word choice

_____ Have I read the essay out loud or asked someone else to read it to see if it sounds clear?
_____ Are my sentences complete – no fragments, run-ons, or comma splices?
_____ Are my sentences varied in structure and length?
_____ Do all subjects and verbs agree in number and person?
_____ Are the verb tenses consistent?
_____ Have I cited quotations and paraphrases properly in the body of the essay?
_____ Have I used a tone appropriate for academic writing and eliminated unnecessary words?

Proofreading Checklist - focuses on surface errors in mechanics, format, and typing

_____ Did I follow assignment guidelines for font style and size, margins, title page, and length?
_____ Are all words spelled correctly? (do not rely completely on Spell check; use a dictionary)
_____ Did I capitalize the first word in each sentence and other words appropriately?
_____ Are there any missing or repeated words or typos?
_____ Have I checked all the punctuation? (be familiar with the rules)
_____ Is my formatting consistent throughout the essay? (indentation, spacing, margins, headers)
_____ Is the reference page completed according to the proper style or instructor’s directions?