

## SKILL: Essay Writing

# Reflective-Essay Checklist

**Directions:** Use this guide to check your own essay, or exchange papers with a classmate and use the list to check each other's essays. In the margins of the essay you are checking, make notes about anything that needs to be revised.

## Introduction

- ✓ Does the first sentence grab readers' attention?
- ✓ Does the first paragraph provide a general overview of the essay's topic?
- ✓ Does the first paragraph include a thesis statement that strongly and clearly states your central idea? Does the thesis clue readers in as to what the essay is going to be about?

## Body Paragraphs

- ✓ Do they contain personal experiences that relate to your thesis?
- ✓ Do they describe your emotions related to the topic?
- ✓ Do they contain facts that support your thesis?
- ✓ Is the information arranged in a way that makes sense, with similar experiences or ideas grouped together?

## Conclusion

- ✓ Does the last paragraph remind readers of the main points of the essay, without going into *too* much detail and repeating everything readers just read?
- ✓ Is the conclusion free of new information (such as another experience)?
- ✓ Does the last sentence leave readers with a strong final impression?

## General

- ✓ Does one idea flow smoothly into the next?
- ✓ Do the sentence structures and lengths vary?
- ✓ Does every sentence relate to the thesis?
- ✓ Does everything make sense?
- ✓ Is the essay honest? Does it truly reflect you?
- ✓ Are the grammar, punctuation, and spelling correct?