

# Essay Flight Check

## Assignment

- Read the original assignment sheet.
- Circle the instructor's original question(s).
- Underline extra requirements (Works Cited page, etc.)

## Quick read

- Does the paper actually answer the assignment question(s)?
- Is the paper free from off-topic rants?
- Is the major support outside sources, not student's personal opinions?
- Is there a reasonable "path" through the paper? (Does it begin *here* and get to *there* in a way that makes sense?)
- Is the paper free from major jumps—places which feel like something is missing and the reader must simply guess how we got there?
- Are the extra requirement items fulfilled?

## The pieces

### *Title*

- Does title give a reasonable prediction of the paper's content/direction?
- No grammar errors in title?

### *First paragraph*

- Does it set a good **focus**?
- Is it **interesting**?
- Does it **familiarize** the reader with the topic?
- Does it **immerse** the reader in the topic?
- Is the **thesis** sentence obvious and clear?

***Body paragraphs—ask these questions of each one***

- Decent topic sentence?
- Does the paragraph support or explain a part of the thesis?
- Is there a reasonably obvious path through the paragraph?
- Does it link well with the previous paragraph?

***Final paragraph***

- Is it a logical conclusion to the paper? Is there a sense that the reader has arrived at a destination?
- Does it avoid flying off in a new direction at the last second?

**Reading closely**

***Language/Rhetoric***

- Does the paper have an academic/business tone?
- Is the paper free from words/language/images which could be offensive?
- Is the paper free from private jargon?
- Is the paper free from words/language you threw in just to impress?

***Citation format***

- Do you know whether the paper is supposed to be MLA, APA, or some other format?
- Look at each in-text citation.
  - Is each one the right format?
  - All the same? (Not a mixture of MLA, APA, and your own inventions)
- Format and layout of bibliography page.

***Grammar/Spelling***

- Final reading for grammar and sentence structure problems
- Final reading for spelling problems