

Literary Argument Final Draft Checklist

Language (RP 34)

- Avoid the use of first person (I, me, my, we) and second person (you)
 - o **Instead of "I think,"** just state what you are thinking.
 - o **Instead of "you,"** tell us who "you" is. Society? Teenagers? Citizens? **Be specific.**
- Remove all vague words and **replace** them with more specific references, amounts, names, etc.
 - o Instead of *this, that, these, those*, specify what "this" or "that" is. For example, identify what "**these problems**" are.
 - o Instead of *a lot*, specify how much.
 - o Instead of *things or something*, specify what things or what something you are talking about.
 - o Instead of *it*, specify what "it" is.
- Remove **unnecessary phrases** by either deleting them or improving the language (**ex: Machiavelli's political philosophy illuminates...**)
 - o This quote means
 - o This quote is saying
 - o This means that
 - o This shows that
 - o This is important because

Verbs (RP 33, 36)

- Discuss works in present tense in body of essay
- Avoid tense shifts in body of essay
- Identify and removed **passive voice** in my essay by...
 1. Circling all "to be" verbs (am, is, are, was, were, be, being)
 2. Underlining the past participle that is next to (or near) the "to be" verb (these usually end in -ed)
 3. Moving the "doer" into the subject position
 - **Example:** The crown is dramatically refused by Caesar.
 - **Correction:** Caesar dramatically refuses the crown.
- Simplify verb forms by...
 1. Highlighting all "to be" verbs (am, is, are, was, were, be, being)
 2. Underlining the -ing verb that is next to or near "to be" verb
 3. Rewriting the verb in present tense
 - **Example:** Machiavelli is saying
 - **Correction:** Machiavelli says

Punctuation (RP 42-46)

- Eliminate comma errors, run-ons (including comma splices), and fragments.
- Eliminate apostrophe errors.

Formatting (RP 23-24)

- Devise a correctly formatted **heading (pg 1 only)** and **running head (all pages)**
- Double-space, set **AFTER-PARAGRAPH SPACING @ 0**, set margins at 1 inch
- Use a **12-point font with feet, like Palatino or Book Antiqua**
- Format all literary titles correctly throughout the essay: *The Prince; Julius Caesar*
- Format all chapter titles correctly throughout the essay: "How Princes Should Keep Faith"
- Do not exceed 4 pages—use concise style tips & consolidate explanations!

Quotations & Lead-ins (RP 35)

Provide thorough evidence from each text to support your argument

- Remove all **ellipses** from the **beginning** and **end** every quotation (these are only necessary when omitting material in the middle of the quoted passage)
- Introduce ALL direct quotes with **lead-ins** (even the hook!), and vary lead-in types
- Include literary **context** (the *who, what, where, and when*) in lead-ins for Shakespeare
- Cite and punctuate direct quotations correctly
- Cite paraphrased claims (from Machiavelli) correctly

Content

- Devise a **hook** to engage the reader's attention
- Devise an introduction that serves as a transition from the reader's world to the world of your paper
- Devise a **thesis claim** that includes a "so what" or significance factor (ORC 1 & RDI 3)
- Devise **subclaims** that emphasize clear, connected points
- Emphasize **the relationships between ideas** by using transitional words and phrases (**RP 34**)
- Explain **evidence** and emphasize significances regarding **power, politics, society and/or human nature** (RDI 2 & 3)
- Discuss *the author's claims* through phrases like, "according to Machiavelli," "Machiavelli criticizes," "Shakespeare suggests," and "the playwright illustrates"

Works Cited (RP 26-27)

- The works cited page must include all works quoted or paraphrased* in the essay, including
 - o *The Prince*
 - o *Julius Caesar*
 - o Any news article or background information I referenced