

First Impressions:

- What are the biggest strengths of this essay?

- What does this essay show about the author?

Purpose:

- What is the message of this essay? The themes/central ideas?

- Are these topics appropriate to the assignment? Why or why not? Is it too big or too narrow of a topic?

- Does the essay stay on track the whole time?

- Which Common App question is this essay answering? Is it clear?

Structure:

- What is the story of this essay? Does it make sense?

- Does the introduction grab your attention? How?

- Examine the balance within the essay: Are some parts out of proportion with others? Does it spend too much time on some parts and not enough on others?
- Is the tone and mood appropriate? Why or why not?
- Does the essay follow a pattern that makes sense?
- Are transitions between ideas and paragraphs smooth?
- Would the essay work better if something was moved around? If so, what?
- Does the conclusion tie up the essay in an interesting way? How?

Style

- Are sentences varied? If not, please underline repetitive sentence structures?
- Does the essay include rich and specific vocabulary?
- Are there any words or phrases that repeated twice or more?