Argument-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 point of view? Does the thesis clue readers in as to what the essay is going to be about?

Body Paragraphs
✓ Do they contain a total of at least three points that support the thesis?
✓ Do they provide details to further explain each of the supporting points?
✓ Are the supporting points presented in order from weakest to strongest?
✓ Do you acknowledge an opposing point of view and then explain why you think it isn’t strong enough to change your point of view?

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 supporting point)?
✓ 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 convincing?
✓ Are the grammar, punctuation, and spelling correct?