

CollegeReadyParent.org

COMPETITIVE ESSAY CHECKLIST

Before your student hits submit, use this checklist to evaluate whether the essay is clear, compelling, and aligned with what scholarship reviewers or honors programs are really looking for.

- Specific Story or Moment

The essay includes a vivid example - not just a list of traits.

- Prompt is Clearly Answered

It's obvious which question is being answered - and it stays on topic.

- Reflection Shows Growth

The writer doesn't just describe what happened - they reflect on what it meant.

- Voice is Clear and Authentic

The writing sounds like a real person, not a résumé or a robot.

- Program or Scholarship Connection

The essay ties back to what the reader is looking for - values, mission, or goals.

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