Name _____   **Date**_____

Writing an Op-Ed Checklist

Picking your Topic

What topic or theme would you like to write about?

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_____

_____

What opinion/argument about this topic do you wish to express?

_____

_____

_____

Can you think of a way to connect the topic to yourself personally?

_____

_____

_____

Can you think of a way to connect the topic to your school, neighborhood or city?

_____

_____

_____

Can you connect your topic to some anniversary or forthcoming event?

_____

_____

_____

Is your topic something that will be in the news some days or weeks ahead?

_____

_____

_____

Developing your Topic

What are the three key points you want to make to develop your argument?

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_____

What are the some of the facts/details/statistics you plan to use to strengthen your argument?

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Have you verified the facts/details/statistics you plan to use? Have you kept a record or file folder of where you found the details?

_____

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_____

Are you planning on bringing up an opposing argument to your own? If you are, how do you intend to disprove it? Be brief—acknowledge the other side, don't advocate it.

_____

_____

_____

Writing about your Topic

What are you planning to say in your lead paragraph that will engage your reader? Will you use a personal anecdote? Humor? A startling fact or concrete image?

_____

_____

_____

Have you kept your lead to one or two paragraphs?

_____

Have you kept your lead to a few short, declarative sentences?

_____

Have you written a one-to-two sentence statement of your position/opinion?

_____

Is your statement understandable to non-experts and people who aren't "close to the subject"?

_____

Have you backed your opinion with at least three supporting arguments?

_____

Have you used details/facts/statistics with your supporting arguments?

_____

Have you offered a recommendation? If so, what is it?

_____

_____

_____

Does your last paragraph conclude emphatically?

_____

Does your last paragraph connect to the premise or opening point you wanted readers to remember?

_____

General "Dos" and "Don'ts"

Is your piece between 600-750 words?

_____

Have you avoided using profane language or ranting about an opposing view or your own?

_____

Have you given thought to where you would like to see your piece published? If so, have you checked what the submission guidelines are and read outside submissions printed or posted by your prospective outlet to judge its general style?

_____