Diagnostic Essay Trends:

* Don’t ask rhetorical questions in an essay. This isn’t like a speech or a conversation. An essay is an extended proof of a fact
* Do not use contractions in a formal essay unless they are part of a quotation
* Do not begin or end an essay with a quotation. It does not create the epic feel that you think it does
* Avoid first and second person voice in an essay, unless they are part of a quotation
* Paragraphs should all be around the same length. Image if the paper were held at a distance, the sections of text should be equal
* Always cite where there is a numeral, such as a population, average temperature, etc.
* Choose a title that foreshadows the thesis. Ideally, it should include a subtitle with a colon
* [Go and figure out how capitalization works. Seriously.](http://grammar.yourdictionary.com/capitalization/10-rules-of-capitalization.html)
* Avoid brackets unless they are part of a citation or a quotation