

Decoding a Prompt

1. Context

What central **issue**, **problem**, or **question** does the assignment address?

2. Intent

What does the assignment ask you to **do** (analyze, explain, summarize, etc.)?

3. Thesis/Theme

What could be an initial **thesis** or **theme** for your essay?

4. Audience

What can you assume your **audience** believes, knows, and values?

5. Genre

What kind of **evidence** and **format** does the assignment require?