Revision and Proofreading Checklist

The following questions should help you assess the general quality of your written work. You may wish to copy this worksheet for each paper that you write.

Paragraph or Essay Structure

☐ Consider the essay’s or paragraph’s content and its overall organization.
☐ Has my writing addressed all the requirements outlined in the assignment guide?
☐ Does my paper adhere to the appropriate genre (e.g., narrative, analysis, etc.)?
☐ Is each paragraph unified and coherent (clear)? Is the paper logically organized, and does it flow well?
  Can my reader easily understand my ideas in the manner in which I have organized them?
☐ Is the opening paragraph adequate as an introduction? That is, does the introduction include relevant background information for the audience and, depending on the assignment, a clear thesis statement that conveys the topic and makes a claim about it?
☐ Does the thesis statement indicate purpose, essay organization, and, if an argumentative paper, a statement of opinion?
☐ Do the body paragraphs discuss main points that directly support the thesis?
☐ Does each paragraph have a clear topic sentence?
☐ Are there enough details and examples to support the topic sentence?
☐ Are there any points in the paper where the reader is likely to become confused?
☐ Is the closing paragraph an effective conclusion that does more than simply repeat the introduction? ☐ Have I included an appropriate title that indicates my paragraph’s or essay’s topic?

Sentence Structure

☐ Review sentence variety and construction as well as word choice and conciseness.
☐ Are all sentences complete, containing a subject and a verb?
☐ Have all comma splices, run-ons, and fragments been edited?
☐ Are sentences constructed similarly, or have I implemented a variety of sentence lengths and types (simple, compound, complex, compound-complex)?
☐ Are sentences properly coordinated or subordinated?
☐ Do my sentences begin differently (prepositional phrase, transition word, dependent clause)?
☐ Have I used transition words (therefore, however, in addition, etc.) to ensure that my writing flows smoothly, connecting related thoughts or signaling shifts in ideas?
☐ Have all unnecessary words been omitted? That is, are my sentences concise?
☐ Have I used precise words and avoided clichés?
☐ Is my language appropriate for my audience (tone, point of view, word choice)?
☐ Is my point of view consistent (first person, second person, third person)?
☐ Have I properly used tense (present, past, etc.)? ☐ Are all parallel structures balanced?

Grammar

☐ Think about the essay’s or paragraph’s grammatical elements, particularly those that have been challenging in previous writing assignments.
☐ Do the subject and verb of each sentence agree?
☐ Do pronouns properly refer to their antecedents?
☐ Are irregular verbs used correctly?
☐ Are there any split infinitives? [A split infinitive occurs when an adverb is improperly placed between


“to” and a verb. E.g., I asked my brother to not tease me. (The infinitive “to tease” is awkwardly interrupted by “not.” The sentence should read as follows: I asked my brother not to tease me.)

Do adjectives and adverbs describe the correct noun or verb?

Mechanics

- Pay attention to punctuation, spelling, and formatting.
- Have I proofread for spelling, even after using spell-check? A spell checker does not catch all spelling or grammatical errors, and it may even cause errors, especially with homonyms (words such as “their” and “there”).
- Are sentences correctly punctuated?
- Are words properly capitalized and/or abbreviated?
- Have I inadvertently omitted any words?
- Have I properly formatted my paper and documented my sources using MLA, APA, or any other documentation method required by my professor? (*Proper formatting usually also includes page numbering, placement of your name and course, among other requirements.)
- Have I correctly acknowledged, according to MLA, APA, or other documentation standards, any outside sources that I have summarized, paraphrased, or quoted?

** If you are unsure of any of these term or requirements, ask your instructor or see a tutor. **

Use this space to record patterns of grammatical errors or mechanical issues that you notice in your revision and proofreading processes.

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