**PROOFREADING**

**Proofreading is the last stage of the Writing Process and it deals with the mechanics of writing (such as grammar, punctuation, and spelling).**

**PROOFREADING TECHNIQUES**

* Read out loud as you check for coherence and logic.
* Read sentences from last to first to determine that each sentence is complete in order to spot run-ons and fragments.
* Scan your paper looking at pronouns, verb-tenses, and prepositions, and articles.
* Go over selected areas of a text at a time, not the whole document.
* Have someone read over your paper and/or read aloud to them for feedback.
* Take a break while editing to come back to your paper refreshed.

**A Revision Checklist for Essays**

**Organization**

* Is there a clear and informative title that applies to the content within the paper?
* Is there a clear introduction, body, and conclusion?
* Does the introduction provide sufficient background for the reader? Are the “who,” “where,” “why,” “what,” and “how” questions addressed?
* Is there a thesis statement? Is the purpose of the essay clear?
* Does the essay move from general to specific?
* Are there good transitions between related ideas?
* Is the overall organization murky or clean? In other words, does the writer avoid introducing new material in the conclusion or switching subject in the middle of a body paragraph?
* Does every paragraph address the subject matter of the thesis in some way?

**Content and Style**

* Does the essay show that the writer has a knowledge of the audience?
* Is the length appropriate and adequate?
* Has the writer used sufficient examples and detail to make his or her points clearly?
* Has the assignment been addressed?
* Has the writer avoided insulting the reader?
* Is the tone of the essay professional and appropriate?
* Is the language convincing, clear, and concise?
* Has the writer used fresh language and a creative approach?

**Research and Sources**

* Are all sources credible?
* Is the research accurate, unbiased, and complete?
* Has the writer fully interpreted the findings?
* Has the writer commented on each source used?
* Is the analysis based on hard evidence?
* Is the analysis free of faulty reasoning?
* Is the documentation in the Works Cited page and body of the essay correct?
* Are all quotations introduced? Is the flow of the essay seamless?
* Are all long quotations set off from the text using block quotes?
* If material was paraphrased, are the sources still mentioned?
* If necessary, are limitations clearly spelled out?
* If included, are recommendations based on accurate interpretations?
* Have all facts been checked for accuracy?
* Have any potentially libelous statements been eliminated?
* Does the paper adhere to MLA or APA format both within the text ad on the Works Cited page?

**Proofreading**

* Has the writer checked that subjects and verbs agree?
* Do all pronouns have clear antecedents?
* Has the writer checked that adjectives and adverbs have not been missed?
* Has the writer avoided using passive voice?
* Is the paper free of run-on sentences?
* Has the writer checked all ending punctuation marks?
* Are all commas used correctly?
* Are conjunctions preceded by commas when necessary?
* Has the writer checked the first few words of each sentence for dependent clause phrases?
* Has the writer scanned the paper from comma to comma?
* Has the writer tried reading the paper backwards to check the mechanics?
* Has the writer used a list of his or her common mistakes?
* Has the writer used Spell Check to help correct spelling in the essay?
* Are the pages numbered correctly?
* Is the title capitalized correctly?
* Has the writer used the correct margin and font?

**Specific Types of Papers**

Argument Papers

* Is the claim or proposition clearly stated?
* Are all assertions supported by evidence?
* Is the evidence (facts, interpretations of facts, opinions) appropriate?
* Is the evidence’s arrangement logical?
* Is the evidence carefully documented?
* Is the reasoning sound, avoiding all logical fallacies?
* Are controversial or ambiguous terms defined?
* Are opposing arguments considered and refuted?

Literature Papers

* Does the writer use examples from the text to support his or her own interpretation?
* Has the writer avoided a simple plot summary as the basis of the essay?
* Are parts of a work clearly and accurately indicated? Writers must refer to sections or parts by saying “the scene where…” or “at the end of Chapter 1.”
* Does the writer use the present tense to describe events from the story?
* Are titles properly punctuated?
* Has the writer referred to author properly, initially using the full name then subsequently using the last name?

**Exercise:**

**Try using the techniques described in this handout to proofread the following**

**paragraph.**

Sylvia got to school 30 minutes early, it was the first day, and she wants to be sure she would have enough time to find her first class. She checked her schedule and realized that her first class was English. She couldn’t find room on her own, so she asked one of the teachers for directions. “Room 201 is just down the hall,” she was told by the teacher with a smile. Sylvia thanking her and found it easily. Her English teacher’s name was Ms. Murray and she seemed very nise. “I know that you all are probably worried about starting new year of school,” Ms. Murray told them, “but I promise you that we male it through this year together if you work heard and pays attention in class, the year will be easy for you. Who knows? It might even be enjoyed by you?” Sylvia smilled as she left the classroom at the end of the period. She knew she were going to like Ms. Murray’s class.