

Proofreading Checklist

Writing Proficiency

MCLENNAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE - WRITING CENTER

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Writing Center (SC-222)
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Proofreading Checklist

Writing Proficiency

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Proofreading for Context

1. ability to recognize material that does not make sense
2. ability to correct that material
3. a line may have been omitted
4. error in fact
5. organization of the material may cause misinterpretation
6. accuracy of dates
7. accuracy of inside address with original source and with envelope
8. agreement of salutation and inside address
9. agreement of closing with tone of message
10. check figures figure-by-figure
11. check accuracy of all numbers, dates, appointments, and addresses
12. if columns are totaled, add columns on typed copy and compare totals with original copy.

Proofreading for Format

1. proper label (for identification purposes)
2. correcting paragraphing
3. correct placement on page – horizontally and vertically
4. correct line spacing (letters single-spaced but manuscript double spaced)
5. correct headings or titles
6. page numbering
7. visually attractive

Proofreading for Grammar

1. nouns
2. pronouns
3. personal pronouns and their antecedents
4. relative pronouns (who, whom, whoever, whomever)
5. the pronoun after “be” (It was she—not her)
6. proper adjectives (answer questions: which, what kind of, and how many) (good, better, best)
7. articles (a person, an application, the manager)
8. verbs (sit-set, lie-lay, rise, raise)
9. tense (present, past, future)
10. agreement of subject and verb (Mr. White dictates...)
11. contractions (do not—don’t, cannot-can’t)
12. infinitives
13. participles
14. adverbs
15. prepositions
16. conjunctions (and, but, or, nor)

Proofreading for Spelling

1. hope-hoping (drop “e” before adding “ing”)
2. lone-lonely (keep “e” to add ending)
3. die-dying (change “i” to “y” and drop “e” to add “ing”)
4. will-willful (keep double letter and add suffix)
5. occur-occurred, fix-fixed (double consonants/do not double consonants)
6. worry-worried (change “y” to “i” and add “ed”)
7. belief, priest, friend, receipt, freight, seize
8. receive—recieve (transposition)

Proofreading for Capitalization

1. comma (dates, sentences)
2. period (3.45; \$16.13, R. L. Andrews; Miss; Mrs.; Mr.)
3. semicolon
4. question mark (after direct questions)
5. exclamation point
6. colon
7. apostrophe
8. possessive form of words (secretary's letter, boy's hats, Burn's poems)
9. dash, hyphen
10. parentheses (with other marks of punctuation)
11. quotation marks (with other marks of punctuation)
12. spacing after punctuation marks
13. lists of itemized data
14. paragraphing
15. underlining
16. capitalization (names, title, etc.)

Proofreading for Word Usage

1. you-your
2. aloud-allowed
3. bear-bare
4. no-know
5. break-brake
6. medal-meddle
7. capital-capitol
8. through-threw
9. to, too, two
10. adapt, adept, adopt
11. affect, effect
12. all ways, always
13. finally, finely
14. quiet, quite

Errors Likely to be Undetected by a Writer

Errors may be classified as either mechanical or content-- two very different kinds of errors.

Mechanical errors are those which can be recognized without specific reference to the meaning.

Content errors are errors of information or fact -- much more difficult to locate than mechanical errors. Content errors may cause misunderstanding or confusion in the reader. Therefore, be sure to proofread for accuracy of facts, statistics, etc. but also ask, "Does it make sense?"

1. Errors are frequently undetected in headings or subheadings
2. Errors are frequently undetected near the beginning or at the end of lines.
3. Errors are frequently undetected toward the bottom of the page.
4. Errors are frequently undetected in long words that occur rather frequently
5. Errors involving additions or omissions are often undetected.
6. Errors involving letter transpositions are frequently undetected.
7. Errors are frequently undetected in captions or footnotes.
8. Errors are frequently undetected in proper nouns.
9. Errors are frequently undetected in vertical enumerations.
10. Errors are frequently undetected in number combinations.