

Proofreading Checklist

Ideas and organization

- Somewhere in the first paragraph, I state my thesis in a simple, direct sentence.
- My thesis expresses an opinion rather than summarizes the story or states something that is simply factually true.
- The body of my essay consists of three or four reasons that “prove” my thesis or examples that support it.
- Every paragraph has a topic sentence which states the main idea of that paragraph. Everything in the paragraph relates to that topic sentence.
- The points are organized in a way that a reader can easily follow the argument.

Style

- Every sentence is clear and graceful.
- Most sentences have active verbs rather than “being” verbs, such as “is,” “was,” “were,” “are,” etc.
- My nouns are specific rather than vague or abstract. (“tree” is vague; “willow” is specific—“trouble” is abstract; the death of her daughter is specific)

Conventions and Usage

- Every word is spelled correctly
- Every sentence is complete (no fragments).
- I have no fused sentences or comma splices. I’ve changed run-on sentences with too many jumbled together ideas into simpler sentences.
- Possessive nouns have apostrophes. Conjunctions have apostrophes.
- Proper nouns are capitalized, and every sentence begins with a capital.