

# Written Language Strategies

## Editing Checklist I

Read through your paper one time out loud. Then begin to look at the following aspects. Check them off as you finish each. Check "problem" column if you or someone else found a difficulty in this area of your paper.

I. Conceptual Editing	Finished?	Problem?
Opening grabs attention and makes reader want to continue		
Thesis clearly stated in introductory paragraphs		
Major points identified in introductory paragraphs		
Topic of each paragraph in the paper is easy to define		
Paragraphs are in a logical order		
Paragraphs develop sufficient detail and explanation		
Extraneous information removed		
Clichés changed?		
Does it say what I really mean?		
Paper has an over all coherence--it makes sense!		

### A way to check your organization and development:

- Find your paper's thesis statement and copy it onto another sheet of paper.
- Beside each paragraph write one word or phrase to represent the central idea of that paragraph.
- List these words or phrases, in order, below the thesis statement you wrote on the blank sheet.
- Look at this list and ask these questions:
  - Do they relate to my thesis?
  - Is this the best order to present my topic clearly and interestingly?
  - Are all of them needed to develop my topic?
  - Is there anything missing that would help the reader understand?
- Look at each paragraph randomly and ask these questions:
  - Does this paragraph have a clear topic sentence?
  - Do I have enough information in this paragraph to develop this topic?
  - From the reader's point of view, would anything be confusing and need more explanation?
  - Is there a clearer way to say any part of this paragraph?
  - Is there information which is not important or is off topic?

# Written Language Strategies

## Editing Checklist II

After checking the Conceptual aspects of your paper, begin to look at the following Stylistic items. Check them off as you finish each. As before, check "problem" if you or someone else found a difficulty in this area of your paper.

II. Stylistic Editing	Finished?	Problem?
Adequate transition between <u>major sections</u> of your paper		
Adequate transition <u>between</u> paragraphs		
Adequate transition <u>within</u> paragraphs		
Appropriate vocabulary for your discipline, topic, professor		
Variety of sentence structures throughout your paper		
Correct verb usage in sentences (active verbs, verb tense)		
Subject/verb agreement within sentences		
Pronoun reference and agreement within sentences		
Parallel structure within sentences		

### Ways to check your style:

- Look at your list of topics on the separate sheet again. Are there major sections of your paper? If so, go back to your paper and look at the two paragraphs between these sections. Does the second paragraph smoothly change the topic as it should?
- Look at all paragraphs in your original paper. Underline transition sentences and phrase. There should be one at the beginning or ending of consecutive paragraphs?
- Now look at the separated copy of your paper. Within each sentence, circle transition words or short phrases. There should be several in each paragraph.
- Look at your word choice throughout the paper. Could you use a clearer or more sophisticated word at times? Use a thesaurus (electronic or paper) and change at least a few words on each paper.
- Is each sentence simple or complex? If simple, could it be connected to the sentence before or after?
- Skim each sentence and put a star above Fan Boys (Acronym for: "For, and, nor, But, or, yet, so") and words like "however, therefore, moreover." Look on each side of these words. Do you actually have two sentences put together? If so, did you punctuate correctly to allow for this?
- Do these actually connect a list? Look at words or phrases in the list. Does each have the same form?
- Underline the main verbs in each sentence and ask: Is it active or passive? (Avoid passive verbs.) Am I using the same tense throughout the paper? What is subject of each? Do the two agree?
- Skim each sentence and circle pronouns and ask: Is it clear what this pronoun is replacing? Does the pronoun and subject agree?

## Written Language Strategies Proofreading Checklist III

Still looking at the separated version of your paper, look at the following items. Check them off as you finish and mark any "problems" you or someone else found.

III. Mechanical Proofreading	Finished?	Problem?
Spelling correct		
Word usage correct		
Any missing words or word endings?		
Appropriate punctuation		
Appropriate capitalization		
Documentation of all quotes or references		
Documentation in required format		
Pages in appropriate order and numbered		
Cover page or title correct (including your name)		
Appropriate formatting details specific to assignment		

### Ways to check your mechanics:

- Using the separated version of your paper, look at each word individually.
- Read every sentence out loud pointing to each word, not allowing yourself to get ahead of the actual print.
- Watch for homonyms (words that sound alike but have different meanings and spellings) and words or word endings you say but forgot to put down.
- Listen for natural pauses in the sentences. While a pause or breath does not automatically mean that a comma should be used, it does give you a good place to begin checking punctuation. Only enter comma's when you know you actually need them.
- Watch for other punctuation needs especially quotes and possessives.
- At the college level, always document your sources: in the body when you quote and in a reference section at the end.
- Enter all your changes into the first version of your paper. Print it and look at layout (page breaks, numbering, formatting, etc.).
- Recheck your assignment to ensure you have used the correct reference style, format, paper length, and any other special details outlined by the professor.

## Editing/Proofreading Checklists

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Paper: \_\_\_\_\_

I. Conceptual Editing	Finished?	Problem?
<p>Opening grabs attention and makes reader want to continue</p> <p>Thesis clearly stated in introductory paragraphs</p> <p>Major points identified in introductory paragraphs</p> <p>Topic of each paragraph in the paper is easy to define</p> <p>Paragraphs are in a logical order</p> <p>Paragraphs develop sufficient detail and explanation</p> <p>Extraneous information removed</p> <p>Clichés changed?</p> <p>Does it say what I really mean?</p> <p>Paper has an over all coherence--it makes sense!</p>		
II. Stylistic Editing	Finished?	Problem?
<p>Adequate transition between <u>major sections</u> of your paper</p> <p>Adequate transition <u>between</u> paragraphs</p> <p>Adequate transition <u>within</u> paragraphs</p> <p>Appropriate vocabulary for your discipline, topic, professor</p> <p>Variety of sentence structures throughout your paper</p> <p>Correct verb usage in sentences (active verbs, verb tense)</p> <p>Subject/verb agreement within sentences</p> <p>Pronoun reference and agreement within sentences</p> <p>Parallel structure within sentences</p>		
III. Mechanical Proofreading	Finished?	Problem?
<p>Spelling correct</p> <p>Word usage correct</p> <p>Any missing words or word endings?</p> <p>Appropriate punctuation</p> <p>Appropriate capitalization</p> <p>Documentation of all quotes or references</p> <p>Documentation in required format</p> <p>Pages in appropriate order and numbered</p> <p>Cover page or title correct (including your name)</p> <p>Appropriate formatting details specific to assignment</p>		