



PROOFREADING

Do you really want to get better grades? Then take the extra time to work on the presentation of your assignments. Content is still the most important, but try to approach the papers you write as if they were resumes for a job. You want them to look good, and be easy to read. Any assignment you write, be it an essay, a research paper, a report, or any other type of paper, should be proofread thoroughly before you hand it in. Proofreading does not mean simply skimming through what you have written one last time while sitting in traffic. It means revising what you have written to make it better. Here are some suggestions:

1. Avoid waiting until the last minute to finish your report. If you can, finish it two or three days before it is due. Then set it aside for a day so that when you proofread, you are approaching it with a fresh perspective.
2. Know what to look for. From the comments of your professors, from the Writing Center or instructors on past papers, make a list of mistakes you need to watch for.
3. Check it all carefully for spelling errors. If it is written on a computer, use your spell checker, but also check it manually. Spell checkers only tell you if the word you used is not a correct spelling, not if you have used the proper spelling of the word (for example: there, their, and they're). If you're unsure of the spelling, look it up in a dictionary.
4. Work from a printout, not the computer screen.
5. Use a blank sheet of paper to cover up the lines below the one you're reading. This technique keeps you from skipping ahead of possible mistakes.
6. Check the report for grammatical errors. Again, some programs will check your grammar, but you should also do a manual check.
7. Read the entire paper through out loud. This is a test of the "flow" of the words. By reading it out loud, you can tell if some paragraphs are too choppy, or if some things come out sounding awkward.
8. Get a parent or friend to read it over. Another person can often pick out mistakes that the report writer would have missed. The Writing Center (**MH 45, 714-278-3650**) on campus is another great resource for you, especially to receive assistance in writing and proofreading papers. Never turn in a written assignment without first having it proofread.

Information gathered from various on-line resources.