**Proofreading: Check Your … Everything!**



**Spell Check is not your friend.** Yes, it catches some obvious errors, but it only highlights words that are not in the dictionary and doesn’t consider if the word is appropriate for the context of your sentence. For example, “The dog eight on the patio” will go undetected as being the same as “The dog ate on the patio” because *eight* and *ate* are both words in the dictionary. Proofreading is a task you will need to actively participate in.

**How to Proofread an Assignment**

Proofreading is more than checking your spelling and punctuation. There are a few other things you should be looking for. When proofreading, it is best to look at a printed version of your assignment and to also take your time in reading through it slowly aloud. Why aloud? It is common to have missing words in your sentences and if you’re reading silently to yourself, your brain will automatically fill in the blanks for you and the error will go undetected. Here’s what you should be looking for as you read:

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* Repeated words/phrasing--assignments should be concise; word choice should be varied
* Spelling--are there any errors where the wrong word that sounds the same is used (ex: their, there, they’re)? Are there any obvious spelling errors?
* Punctuation--are you using the appropriate punctuation? Are your apostrophes in the proper position? Did you abbreviate properly?
* Grammar-- If it feels like something is missing, you might have a fragment sentence. Does it feel as though the sentence drones on and on and on and never seems to end? It’s possible that you either have a wordy sentence or are needing punctuation to indicate a pause. [link to grammar website]
* Clarity--are your sentences clear and easy to read?
* Proper citations--are you citing in MLA or APA? Are you consistent with proper citations? If you’re not sure, please purchase an MLA or APA handbook or use the Purdue OWL (Online Writing Lab) for help with all things citation