Editing Checklist for Research Papers or Essays

This list can be used to plan and proofread research papers or personal essays.

Getting Started

___ Before I started writing, I chose a topic and decided on the key points or message I wanted to present. (Need help? Try using the Idea Mapping Worksheet to brainstorm and organize your main ideas.)

____ I researched or developed my ideas or key points using at least three sources or examples from observation and experience to back up my conclusions or theme.

___ I kept a list of the sources of any quotes or references (i.e., careful copies of quotes with book titles, author, publishing information and page numbers).

___ I asked someone to read a draft and give me feedback on whether the information was clear and well organized.

___ I went through my last draft and corrected any punctuation or spelling errors, incomplete sentences or missing information.

Final Paper

___ I put my name and the date on my essay or paper and on any research notes or worksheets I will be submitting.

___ I gave the essay or report a title that fits the topic and will make people want to read more.

____ I started my essay or paper with a short paragraph that introduces my topic and key idea(s).

____ I used the main section or body of the essay to provide necessary information and examples.

___ I remembered to include quotes, findings from research or helpful examples to support my central message or theme.

___ If it was helpful, I included images, artwork or other materials (with appropriate captions and references) that help make the topic understandable and interesting to my audience.

___ I ended with a powerful closing statement that brings all the parts of the essay or report together.

___ I remembered to give credit and list sources for any research or quotes.

___ I made sure I proofread the document one last time for any spelling, grammar and writing mistakes.