Compiled by Emily Murphy
Adapted from Allison Goff and Julia Gingerich

Essay Proofreading Checklist

Student: _____

Assignment: _____

Check off each item and attach to the back of essay.

Formatting

- ○ Margins: 1" around
- ○ Font: Plain serif (Times New Roman, Cambria)
- ○ Font size: 12
- ○ Double spaced (entire document, including heading)
- ○ No extra spaces between paragraphs
- ○ First page heading on the top-left corner of first page only: Name, Professor/TA, Course, Date
- ○ Pagination in the header (top right corner): Surname Page Number
- ○ Includes a title that indicates the topic and identifies the work/author
- ○ Paper title is not italicized, underlined, bold, or in quotation marks
- ○ Titles of poems and short stories are in quotations / novels, plays, and anthologies are italicized
- ○ Includes proper parenthetical citations (ex: author page number / poet line number/ act.scene.line number)
- ○ Punctuation is on the outside of the citation if the quotation ends the sentence
- ○ Quotations four lines and less are put between double quotation marks (" ")
- ○ Quotations of more than four lines are block quotations
- ○ Verse (including dramatic verse) three lines and less is put between double quotation marks (" ") with a slash (/) separating lines
- ○ Verse of more than three lines is in block quotations
- ○ Spells numbers of one or two words
- ○ Includes a Word Count at the end of the essay
- ○ Works Cited list is on a different page
- ○ Works Cited title is in the centre of the page, not bold, italicized, or in quotation marks
- ○ Works Cited list is double spaced
- ○ Works Cited entries are listed alphabetically by author
- ○ Works Cited entries are indented on the second line (hanging indent)

○ ALL sources are included on the Works Cited
○ Staple pages together

List of Doom

○ Do I use apostrophes correctly?
○ Do I write in the active voice and avoid the **passive voice**?
○ Do I have any comma splices?
○ Do I have any dangling modifiers?
○ Do I have any pronoun agreement problems?
○ Do I avoid talking about "The Reader" (Emily's nemesis)?
○ Do I integrate quotations correctly?
○ Do I write in the present tense?
○ Do I format the titles of works correctly? (*book length*, "short works")

Introduction:

○ Does my introduction introduce the topic without being too general or vague? (No "since the dawn of time" statements.)
○ Does my introduction set up the *argument* that I discuss in the body of my essay?
○ Does my paper clearly present an argumentative thesis in the introduction?
○ Does my introduction indicate how the essay will unfold? (Roadmap that matches the structure of the essay.)
○ Does my introduction include a "so what?"

Body Paragraphs (check for each paragraph):

○ Do my paragraphs match the roadmap I set out in the introduction?
○ Do my topic sentences (first sentences of each paragraph) introduce the *sub-argument* that the paragraph discusses?
○ Do I always back up the claims I make with evidence from the text (quotes)?
○ Do I engage with the quotations by providing analysis instead of paraphrasing or floating?
○ Does my analysis of the specific textual evidence *prove* the argument I propose in my topic sentence?
○ Do my concluding sentences explain the importance of the analysis (linking it to the thesis)?
○ Do the paragraphs build upon one another instead of just listing examples?

Concluding Paragraph:

○ Does my final paragraph explain the significance of the analysis provided in the previous paragraphs?

○ Does my conclusion expand on the argument I've proven and take it further (instead of just repeating my introduction)?

○ When I make connections to larger ideas, do I explain these connections and argue effectively (instead of relying on vague generalizations)?

Overall:

○ Do I need to do another edit?

○ Does my essay present and prove a convincing interpretation of the text?

○ Does my essay actually argue the thesis statement that I set out?

○ Now that my essay is written, do I need to rework my thesis?