PROOFREADING YOUR PAPER

1. Draw 2 lines under each verb and 1 line under the subject of each verb, to make them stand out from the rest of the paper and each other.

   Check for:
   a. subject-verb agreement (present tense verbs)—no possessive marks on verbs
   b. missing –ed ending (past tense verbs)
   c. irregular past forms (check dictionary)
   d. unnecessary tense shifts

2. Draw a circle around every form of be, have, and get.
   Check for missing –ed endings following these verbs to ensure correct passive voice and perfect tense constructions (for instance, “I was respected,” rather than “I was respect”).
   Be careful of irregular constructions! (e.g. “I was beaten,” rather than “I was beat” or “I was beated”)

3. Draw a circle around every pronoun (e.g. him, her, she, he, it). Find the noun the pronoun replaces.
   Draw a box around the noun.
   Check for:
   a. pronoun/antecedent agreement
   b. point of view shifts
   c. vague reference (e.g. “Jason hit Sam. He ran away.” Which one ran away?)
   d. appropriate case (for example, “He ate breakfast,” rather than “Him ate breakfast”)

4. Run-together sentences (comma splices).
   Underline every comma. Check to see if there is a complete sentence on both sides of the comma.
   a. if whole sentences are not on each side of the comma, the sentence is probably okay.
   b. if complete sentences are on both sides, is there a joining word (e.g. “and,” “or,” “because,” “however”)?
      a. if you do not have a joining word, you have a RTS
      b. if there is a joining word, does it successfully divide the sentence into two complete thoughts?

5. Read backwards, sentence by sentence, from the last sentence to the first sentence in order to see the sentences as individual pieces rather than connected parts of a whole. Find and correct any fragments.

   Reminder: most fragments are part of the preceding sentence. Phrase fragments usually require a comma; dependent clause fragments usually require no punctuation.

6. Proofread with a pencil word by word for missing words.
7. Underline every word you think may be misspelled; check spelling in your dictionary.

8. Circle every instance of homonyms (words that sound alike but are spelled differently; “there,” “their,” and “they’re,” for instance). Is this the appropriate form?

9. **Missing possessive markers.** Underline every noun that ends in s. Decide whether the noun ends in s because it is plural or possessive. (It may be both). (“my pens” versus “Endre’s pens”)

10. Underline “one of the…” “many of the…” Check to see if the noun that follows has its plural marker. (“One of the tutors” instead of “one of the tutor”)

11. **Adjective Clauses**
    Draw a box around the adjective clauses.
    
    Draw a circle around the relative pronoun (e.g. “that,” “which,” “who”) and an arrow back to the noun it refers to.
    Check for:
    a. inappropriate use of adjective clause
    b. vague reference (make sure the reader understands what the adjective clause refers to)
    c. incorrect relative pronoun
        - For instance, “my father that is dead visited me last night.”
    d. incorrect placement of adjective clause
        - For instance, “a dingo ate my baby, which is a cute and furry animal.”

    Draw 2 lines under the verb in the adjective clause and 1 line under the subject.
    Check for:
    a. subject-verb agreement
    b. correct use of who/whom

    If there is a preposition at the beginning and/or end of the clause, transform the clause into a sentence to be sure the preposition used is appropriate.

12. **General proofreading**