

Mechanics Proofreading Checklist

Why? To avoid losing points for careless or avoidable errors in any written work, especially compositions.

How to use? Re-read your composition one time for each of the categories listed below, asking yourself the questions suggested.

I. VERBS

- _____ a. Is the verb conjugated correctly? Do not invent new verb forms. Also be sure you are using the correct verb. (Ex: J'ai chaud. NOT Je suis chaud.)
- _____ b. Indicative or subjunctive? If you're not sure – ASK!
- _____ c. What tense? Are you consistent with the tense(s) you are using? (Don't forget: English and French don't always use the same tenses to express the same idea. Ex: Je te parlerai quand je te verrai. NOT quand je te vois.)
- _____ d. Do the subject and verb agree? The subject of a sentence is not always obvious.
- _____ e. Imparfait ou passé composé? Remember:
 - 1. Passé composé – completed past action
 - 2. Imparfait -
 - a. condition or state of being (non-action verbs)
 - b. repeated or habitual past action (used to do)
 - c. continual past action (was doing)
- _____ f. Etre or avoir in passé composé and other compound tenses? (Watch out for monter, sortir and descendre.) Agreement of the past participle?

II. OBJECT PRONOUNS & PREPOSITIONS

- _____ a. Does the verb take a direct or indirect object in French? Does it take the preposition à before an object? Watch out for verbs that are different from English. Ex: I'm looking at Paul. (ind. obj.) BUT Je regarde Paul. (dir. obj.) Also: He obeys his father. (dir. obj.) BUT Il obéit à son père. (ind. obj.)
- _____ b. Remember: me, te, nous, and vous are used as both direct and indirect objects, BUT:
 - him, her, them (dir. obj.) – le, la, les
 - to him, to her, to them (ind. obj.) – lui, leur
- _____ c. Are the object pronouns in their proper place in the sentence?
 - before the verb (simple tenses)
 - before the auxiliary (compound tenses)
 - before the infinitive (compound verbs)
 - after the verb (affirmative command)

III. ARTICLES, GENDER & ADJECTIVES

- _____ a. Gender of nouns? If you're not sure, LOOK THEM UP!
- _____ b. Which article? (definite? indefinite? partitive?)
- _____ c. Contractions? (à + le = au; à + les = aux; de + le = du; de + les = des)
- _____ d. Position and agreement of adjectives? Remember: BAGS

IV. RELATIVE PRONOUNS

- _____ a. Particularly QUI ou QUE? Remember: When qui and que are serving as relative pronouns (that relate or link two clauses) QUI always serves as the subject of the relative clause and QUE always serves as the object of the relative clause. (Do not confuse these with the interrogative pronouns qui and que which ask the questions "who, whom" and "what.")
- _____ b. Never omit the relative pronoun in French. Ex: The man she saw ... L'homme qu'elle a vu...

V. VOS "BETES NOIRES" – Fill in this section with any recurring difficulties that YOU encounter in your compositions

