

CHECKLIST FOR PAPERS

NAME _____

BEFORE HANDING IN YOUR PAPER CONFIRM (BY SIGNING ABOVE) THAT YOU:

PROOFREAD ONLY ON PAPER COPY.

- Proofreading transcends simply identifying and correcting misspellings. Read aloud your assignment word-by-word and sentence-by-sentence. In addition to confusing your argument, errors of style severely damage the rhetorical power of your paper. Do the words on the page convey your thoughts AND do so using correct grammar and style?
- The only way to proofread effectively is on paper; it is simply too easy to miss errors on a computer screen – especially missed words and homonyms. By proofreading in a different medium than the one in which you wrote, you are more likely to see what you actually wrote, rather than what you thought you wrote.

Use as concise, clear, and correct language as possible at all times.

- No sentence (or even word) in a short paper can be wasted. Write as though ink were the world's most precious resource.
- If you are not 100% certain about the definition of a word, it should not appear in your paper.
- Avoid using weak adverbs such as “really, obviously, truly, very, etc.”
- If a phrase seems awkward to you, it will annoy and confuse anyone not privy to your private thoughts and intentions.
- Avoid unnecessarily verbose constructions such as “... is that...”, “the fact that...”: e.g. “the interesting thing about Achilles in the *Iliad* is that...” You can **always** rephrase in a way that makes your point clearer. To make your writing more concise and persuasive, replace flaccid, verbose constructions of noun + “to be” with a comparable active verb: e.g. change “this is a demonstration of...” to “this demonstrates...”
- You must be very precise when discussing literary phenomena. In a phrase like “Virgil takes up the Underworld from Homer,” “takes up” is far too vague to convey your analysis to your audience.
- When discussing cultural phenomena, avoid cultural loaded words and phrases like *boyfriend*, *sin*, *karma*, etc.
- N.B. *irony* refers to (1) *dramatic irony* in which the significance of a character’s words are apparent to the audience but not the speaker; (2) expression using language that normally signifies the opposite, often to humorous effect; (3) a state of affairs that is deliberately contrary to expectations, and is often amusing as a result.

Compose your academic paper using academic language.

- Academic style is emotionally detached, logical, and persuasive.
- The first person (“I”) is almost never appropriate in academic style.
- Avoid colloquial words and phrases, slang, derogatory terms unless they are necessary for your argument. In particular, avoid generic colloquial words like “get” or “put”. If you are uncertain whether a word is appropriate, verify its usage in a (good) dictionary or ask me. For example, avoid contractions (let’s; it’s), and “though” for “although”.

Include the following in your first paragraph:

- An introduction to your essay; *i.e.* what is your topic; **N.B.** do not begin with banal or tangentially related generalizations: e.g. “There are many interpretations of the *Oresteia*” or “People have always found *x* interesting.”
- A preliminary statement of your thesis, *i.e.* what do you hope to demonstrate in the essay.
- The titles of the text or texts (or other evidence) you plan to use to prove your thesis.
- A “roadmap” for how your essay will proceed.
- When you have finished your rough draft reconsider your introductory paragraph. Rewrite if your introduction fails to announce the topic and problems to be discussed, explain their background and context, formulate a thesis, and set out how and in what sequence the issues will be presented.

Compose every paragraph to fulfill a specific purpose.

- While every paragraph need not follow the typical format of **topic sentence, illustration, explanation**, each paragraph must have a purpose and fulfill a specific step towards supporting your thesis.

Use footnotes to cite sources or further elaborate a point that is not integral to your argument.

- The footnote reference (¹) always comes after all punctuation in the sentence.
- Footnote references should only be placed in the middle of sentences when placing it at the end would cause severe confusion or incorrect attribution.
- Footnotes, whether citations or full sentences, end with a period.

Use the correct format for citations.

- ALWAYS *italicize* or underline titles. ‘The’ is never considered part of the title of an ancient work: e.g. “in the *Iliad*.”
- When referencing secondary literature, use a consistent format (either in-text or footnotes); e.g. Blundell 1992, 120.
- The proper format for citing classical texts: Author, *Title* Book/Section.Line #s cited; e.g. Homer, *Iliad* 18.141–143; Sophocles, *Antigone* 904–922; Cicero, *First Catilinarian* 14.2
- If you are generically citing a specific book in a work, capitalize both elements (Book Eighteen or Book 18 or Book XVIII); generic references, such as “several books in the *Iliad*,” should not be capitalized.
- If you are including a parenthetical citation at the end of a sentence – e.g. (Homer, *Odyssey* 1.1–3) – the period follows the citation.
- In formal usage “quote” is a verb; “quotation” is a noun. You give a “quotation.” You “quote” a source.
- For more information, see Departmental Guide: <http://www.haverford.edu/classics/resources/citing.php>

Use the correct format for quotations.

- Quotations are not substitutes for argumentation but should support your argument. The importance of quotations is not self-evident. Explain why you are introducing them and what conclusion a reader should draw from them.
- For quotations over 2 lines long: omit quotation marks, **indent 1 inch**; single-space; do not reduce font size.
- **Commas and periods** are placed **inside quotation marks**; **colons and semicolons, outside quotation marks**; **dashes, question marks, and exclamation points, inside quotations if part of the quotation**. The closing quotation mark comes after all punctuation.
- If you omit words in a quotation, use an ellipsis, three dots (...), or four at the end of a sentence.
- If there is a grammatical or factual error in a quotation, you should insert “[sic]” immediately following the error. *E.g.* “In 1961 [sic], the Civil War began.”
- For poetry, preserve the divisions between verses: *e.g.* “Son of Atreus, the Greeks are out to make you, / My Lord, the most despised man on earth” – the “/” indicates a new line.
- Additional guidelines available at: www.haverford.edu/classics/courses/omni/citations.html

Avoid self-referential statements such as: “as I was saying” or “as I said above” or “to continue.”

- Such statements probably indicate a breakdown in the logical development of your argument.

Underline or italicize foreign words and phrases: *e.g.* pietas; *xenia*.

- Note: *i.e.* introduces an alternative, clarifying word or phrase; *e.g.* introduces examples.

Use the small 'g' god when writing about Greco-Roman divinities.

- Capital “G” God is reserved for a monotheistic deity.

Spell characters' names correctly.

- In general, remember that small errors can have a large impact on the authority of your argument.
- Use consistent spelling of ancient names: *e.g.* Hector or Hektor; Hecuba or Hekuba.
- Don't be afraid to add the correct spelling of foreign names and words to your spellchecker's dictionary.

Correctly indicate possession.

- *E.g.* Hector's honor; Achilles's honor; the Greeks' honor, their honor, its glory

Differentiate between “there” and “their” and other homonyms (words that sound the same but have different meanings).

- With the rise of computer-assisted spell checking, this is a particularly relevant issue while proofreading.
- *E.g.* ‘there’: the opposite of ‘here’; ‘their’: 3rd person plural possessive, ‘their book’; ‘its’ is used to indicate possession; ‘it’s’ is an abbreviation for ‘it is’; ‘advise’ and ‘prophecy’ are verbs; ‘advice’ and ‘prophecy’ are nouns.

Correctly use “which” and “that.”

- “That” always introduces a restrictive clause (contains information critical to the meaning of the sentence).
- “Which” introduces a non-restrictive clause (adds information about its antecedent without limiting it to a particular individual or group). Non-restrictive clauses are set off by commas.

Use proper punctuation

- *hyphen* (-): should only be used to combine words (“well-being”); *en-dash* (–): for inclusive dates and numbers (“70–19 BCE”, “pp. 31–43”); *em-dash* (—): significantly longer than a hyphen, this mark creates a strong break in the sentence and can be used in place of parentheses—that is they can enclose a word, phrase or clause—or they can be used to set off such elements at the end of a sentence
- *semicolon* (;): (1) divides elements of long lists where a comma by cause confusion; (2) separate two closely related—and usually adversative—independent clauses.

Format your paper per assignment instructions.

Attach a cover page including your name, course name, and an attention-grabbing title that indicates the subject and thesis of your paper: *e.g.* *The Concept of Divine Retribution in Homer and Herodotus*. **N.B.** Since the title introduces your argument, do not be too general, *e.g.* *Hector in the Iliad*. Do not repeat this information on the first page of your paper proper.

Include page numbers on bottom of every page. Page numbers begin with 1 after the title page.

Attach a properly-formatted “Works Cited” page to the end of your paper (if applicable).

Verify that you have satisfied the requirements for avoiding plagiarism: http://bit.ly/hc_plagiarism

After verifying that your paper adequately fulfills the injunction of each item, check each item on the list and STAPLE THIS CHECKLIST TO THE FRONT OF YOUR PAPER. I will accept neither papers without this sheet attached nor those that do not demonstrate that the items herein were followed to the best of your ability.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR ASSIGNMENT PLEASE CONTACT ME.

It's always better to ask a question than make a mistake.