

# Checklist for Editing

## Are my sentences clear?

**Do my words and sentences mean what I intend them to mean? Is anything confusing?** Check especially for these:

- Exact language (pp. 511–522)
- Parallelism (pp. 398–404)
- Clear modifiers (pp. 359–367)
- Clear reference of pronouns (pp. 345–351)
- Complete sentences (pp. 330–337)
- Sentences separated correctly (pp. 338–344)

## Are my sentences effective?

**How well do words and sentences engage and hold readers' attention? How appropriate is the voice created by words and sentences? Where does the writing seem wordy, choppy, or dull?** Check especially for these:

- Expression of voice (pp. 14–15)
- Emphasis of main ideas (pp. 378–386)
- Smooth and informative transitions (pp. 87–89, 109–110)
- Variety in sentence length and structure (pp. 405–412)
- Appropriate language (pp. 502–510)
- Concise sentences (pp. 523–530)

## Do my sentences contain errors?

**Where do surface errors interfere with the clarity and effectiveness of my sentences?** Check especially for these:

- **Spelling errors** (pp. 531–534)
- **Sentence fragments** (pp. 330–337)
- **Comma splices** (pp. 338–343)
- **Verb errors**

Verb forms, especially -s and -ed endings, correct forms of irregular verbs, and appropriate helping verbs (pp. 272–288)

Verb tenses, especially consistency (pp. 289–295, 355)

Agreement between subjects and verbs, especially when words come between them or the subject is *each*, *everyone*, or a similar word (pp. 301–308)

- **Pronoun errors**

Pronoun forms, especially subjective (*he*, *she*, *they*, *who*) vs. objective (*him*, *her*, *them*, *whom*) (pp. 264–271)

Agreement between pronouns and antecedents, especially when the antecedent contains **or** or the antecedent is *each*, *everyone*, *person*, or a similar word (pp. 309–313)

- **Punctuation errors**

Commas, especially with comma splices (pp. 338–343), with **and** or **but** (422–424), with introductory elements (425–426), with nonessential elements (427–429), and with series (443)

Apostrophes in possessives but not plural nouns (*Dave's/witches*) and in contractions but not possessive personal pronouns (*it's/its*) (pp. 452–457)