

MRS. JAMES'S WRITING RULES

When proofreading written work, pay attention to the following rules. If you make an error in your writing, rewrite your work with the corrections. Your final grade will be based on your revised work. Take advantage of proofreading and revising.

1. The first letter of a sentence and proper nouns are capitalized.
2. The first sentence in a paragraph is indented.
3. Double-check your spelling before submitting your work.
4. Make sure your sentences are complete, not fragments.
5. There are no contractions (isn't I'm) in a formal paper (written assignment).
6. Do not use "you" in a formal paper (written assignment), instead, use he, she, him, her, one, it, they, "the teacher", "the student", etc.
7. Singular nouns take singular verbs. [He is.]
8. Plural nouns take plural verbs. [They are.]
9. The word "I" is capitalized.
10. Double negatives are inappropriate [Don't use no double negatives.]
11. A pronoun should match its antecedent. [The birds flew after they were scared.]
12. Colloquialisms such as "kinda, allot, coulda, got, gotta, gonna, sorta, etc." are not used in a formal paper (written assignment).
13. Sentences should be parallel. [The car was racing. The plane was flying.]
14. Words in groups or lists should be parallel. [The girls were running, jumping, and skipping.]
15. After "if" or "wish," the past singular changes to plural. [If I were... .I wish I were...]
16. "Of" is a preposition not a verb. [I should have, *not* I should of]
17. Commas and periods go inside the quotation marks. [I said to "Go," then to "Stop."]
18. A paragraph must have structure and flowing content. [Use linking words or phrases such as then, finally, first, however, etc. between sentences]

19. Sentences should make sense and be supported by evidence in the paragraph.
20. There should be no unwarranted or unnecessary change in tense. [I went to the store, and I will buy some milk.]
21. Apostrophes show possession, not plurality. [The boy's book, *not* The book's of the boys.]
22. Between two main clauses, the coordinating conjunction (and, but, however, etc.) is preceded by a comma. [The dog ran, and the cat climbed the tree.]
23. Two main clauses cannot be joined without proper punctuation. [Run-on sentence: The dog ran and the cat climbed the tree.]]
24. When the subordinate clause appears first, there is a comma.
25. There is no comma when the main clause is followed by the subordinate clause.
26. A comma cannot join two main clauses by itself. [The dog ran, the cat climbed the tree.]
27. Do not start a sentence with a conjunction (and, but, etc.).
28. Do not use abbreviations or symbols in your writing (&,#, b/c, etc.).
29. Written essays (more than one paragraph) should have a title.
30. PROOFREAD your work!