

Proofreading Exercises Answer Key

Proofreading Exercise 1 Key:

In Greek mythology, Zeus, an Olympian god, was known as the immortal ruler of both gods and men. Zeus was the son of the titans Cronus and Rhea and presided over his five brothers and sisters, who ruled various aspects of the heavenly and earthly worlds. He was married to his sister Hera, with whom he had three children: Ares—the god of war, Hephaistos—the god of metalworking, and Hebe—the goddess of youth. Hera was often the jealous wife and unhappy with Zeus' many affairs with other goddesses, nymphs, and mortal women. As a result of these affairs, many ancient Greek heroes and rulers were produced, such as Perseus, Hercules, and even the famous Helen of Troy. As a god, Zeus ruled over the most important aspects of nature and human society, and he controlled the laws and fates of men as well as the sky and weather. He is often called by the epithets "The Thunderer" or "Gatherer of Clouds" in the Homeric poems, and his control of such natural forces was represented by his weapons and armor: Zeus was able to fight with both thunder and lightning, and the shaking of his *aegis* (his shield) could create terrible storms.

(See page 2 for the answer key to Proofreading Exercise 2.)

Commented [.1]: Commas always follow an introductory word or phrase. An introductory word or phrase is not essential to the meaning of the sentence, and the sentence can work without it.

Commented [.2]: Numbers under 10 are usually written out in full as opposed to using the numeric symbol (e.g., *eight* versus *8*). The way in which numbers under 10 are written should always be consistent within a document.

Commented [.3]: Commas are used to separate non-restrictive (i.e., non-essential) information that can be removed from a sentence without changing its meaning. A non-restrictive clause often begins with *which*, *who*, *such as*, or *including*.

Commented [.4]: Always remember to check for number agreement between nouns and descriptors and nouns and verbs!

Commented [.5]: Don't forget to double-check words or terms that may be unfamiliar to make sure that they are spelled correctly.

Commented [.6]: Check for extra spaces between sentences.

Commented [.7]: Know when commas are required. In this case, a comma isn't necessary because the coordinating conjunction *and* is separating a dependent clause (*which* doesn't make sense on its own) from the preceding independent clause (i.e., *Hera was a jealous wife*).

Commented [.8]: Look for extra *s*'s on possessive plural nouns or words already ending with an *s*.

Commented [.9]: Ensure that serial comma use is consistent throughout the document. Whether or not serial commas should be included is often dictated by the style guide being used. If no style guide is in use, default to the style of English in which the document is written: American English usually employs the serial comma, while British English often omits it.

Commented [.10]: Make sure words that need to be capitalized are capitalized, including the names of people and places.

Commented [.11]: Make sure the correct form of a word is used, particularly when the word is a homophone.

Commented [.12]: Check every sentence for comma splices (i.e., two independent clauses separated by only a comma).

Proofreading Exercise 2 Key:

Moose-related deaths are on the rise in Canada. As highways expand and encroach on the habitats of Canadian wildlife, vehicle collisions with Canadian wildlife are becoming more commonplace, especially in provinces such as British Columbia, New Brunswick, and Newfoundland and Labrador. According to Wildlifecollisions.ca (2014), in 2014 there were four to eight large animal vehicle collisions an hour within Canada. A large number of these collisions involve moose and deer species, so much so that a class-action lawsuit was brought against Newfoundland's provincial government for not controlling the explosive moose population in that province. In situations where average highway speeds are 100 km/hour and the average moose weighs 700 kg, collisions can be fatal for both the animal and the vehicle occupants. These types of incidents will continue to increase on the Canadian island as human populations expand alongside the moose, which is considered an invasive species on the island and has no natural predators.

(See page 3 for the answer key to Proofreading Exercise 3.)

Commented [.13]: Always check for hyphenated compounds used as adjectives. These can include adjective-adjective pairings (blue-green), compounds that contain affixes (moose-related), verb-verb pairings (freeze-dried), or compounds containing prepositions, articles, or conjunctions (salt-and-pepper).

Commented [.14]: Look for tricky number agreement. Here, multiple habitats are being referred to by the encompassing term "Canadian wildlife."

Commented [.15]: Never put a comma before a restrictive such as clause. If the sentence doesn't make sense without the information following the comma, then no comma is needed!

Commented [.16]: Remember to capitalize all proper nouns.

Commented [.17]: Though this information should be covered in an edit, always point out anything that is missing a proper citation. If a source is named and isn't cited, it needs to be.

Commented [.18]: Remember, numbers under 10 must be consistently written.

Commented [.19]: Ensure there are no typographical errors (e.g., extra letters).

Commented [.20]: The pronoun that often introduces restrictive information, which should not be separated from the rest of the sentence by a comma. How do you know if something is restrictive? Remove that information—if the sentence doesn't make sense, it doesn't need a comma!

Commented [.21]: Sometimes, capitalization slips in where it shouldn't. This often happens when naming groups associated with a capitalized proper noun.

Proofreading Exercise 3 Key:

The past decade has witnessed the rise in popularity of the fictional monster known as the zombie. From movies and TV shows to iPhone apps and bestselling novels, the zombie has permeated popular culture. What if a zombie plague was possible? Surprisingly, there are quite a few scientists who have taken a serious look at the causes and probability of a zombie pandemic occurring in the real world. They have broken down the common symptoms of zombie-virus sufferers to determine what might actually be going on in those half-eaten brains. First, the most common symptom of the zombie illness is the lumbering gait, which indicates a loss of coordination and neurological damage. This may go hand-in-hand with the classic loss of intelligence and penchant for moaning. Second, the insatiable zombie appetite for other humans could be associated with lost *hypothalamic* functioning. Zombies' rage, one-track minds, and inability to remember loved ones are all symptoms of severe brain damage as well, with different areas of the brain being affected. So, what should you do if you're ever face-to-face with a zombie? Much like with T-Rex in *Jurassic Park*, do not run and find somewhere to hide. Zombies suffer from something like Bálint's syndrome, which causes the sufferer to only see whatever requires the most attention.

Commented [.22]: Remember to check for hyphenated compounds!

Commented [.23]: Check for broken connecting phrases, such as first . . . second, not only . . . but also, and on the one hand . . . on the other hand. You can't have one without the other!

Commented [.24]: Unfamiliar or technical terms should be italicized unless they are familiar to the particular readers being targeted.

Commented [.25]: Know how to use a semicolon (;) properly. In this case, semicolons are not needed to separate the short elements of the list.

Commented [.26]: Brush up on your homophones so you can tell if words such as affect and effect are being used in the correct context.

Commented [.27]: Speaking of which, you must be able to spot a misused your in the place of you're, or an it's standing in for its.

Commented [.28]: The titles of movies and books should be italicized.

Commented [.29]: Double-check for unnecessary possessives!