Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Grammar Check

1. Introduction
   1. Hook the audience from the start
   2. Answer the question early
   3. Give background information
2. Titles
   1. There should be 3 Titles
      1. It can be short. 1-3 words long
      2. It can be medium in length. 4-7 words long
      3. It can be long. 7+ words in length
   2. Title hints
      1. Try to be clever but not obscure, make sure the title can be explained.
      2. With short titles, bold, strong, or unusual words work best
      3. Try to steal from your own paper for ideas, and if you strike out there think about great lines from other books you’ve read of movies you’ve watched. (Basically, think about using an allusion)
3. Be verbs
   1. The Be Verbs: is, am, was, were, are, be, been, being
   2. Circle the Be Verbs in the paper. All of them.
   3. Eliminate as many of these verbs as you can.
      1. Through combination
      2. Through stronger verbs
      3. Through imagery, figurative language, sentence structure, etc.
      4. This is especially important in a short paper. Be verbs are placeholders and you don’t have space for placeholders.
4. The “dud” sentences
   1. We all have sentences that we just don’t like. Maybe they don’t fit the style, perhaps they are boring, or maybe they don’t convey the meaning intended. Choose your least two favorite sentences and underline them.
   2. Change one sentence using figurative language. Change the other using one of the 5 senses (imagery).
5. Repetition of Nouns
   1. Find and circle the noun or pronoun used with the most frequency in the paper.
   2. Change as many as you can using different but similar words or phrases. Again this is important for a short work like this. You shouldn’t use the same word more than two or three times.
6. Check for possession rules
   1. Carl’s house, the dog’s breakfast, reader’s attention
   2. Its house, its breakfast, its attention (*Its,* is the only possessive that does not use an apostrophe because the contraction it’s (for it is) requires one.)
   3. Their house, their breakfast, their attention (Their, is the possessive form; there, is a place distinction; and they’re, is a contraction of they are.)
7. Awkward sentences
   1. Each sentence should flow into the next. Each sentence should be easy to **read aloud**. I’m not kidding, read the paper out loud.
   2. Don’t end sentences in *of* or at, or any preposition.
8. Right word? Don’t rely on spell check. Or the thesaurus.
   1. There/their/they’re; To/too/two; Which/witch; Your/You’re; its/it’s
   2. Real/really (as a general rule, adjectives describe a noun, adverbs describe a verb or an adjective)
   3. Effect/affect; than/then; less/fewer; that/which; accept/except; educate/learn; woman/women; chose/choose; later/latter; an/and; ounce/once; steal/steel; alot/a lot/allot
   4. Thesaurus; friend or enemy? (Not every synonym means the same thing)
   5. Look for misspelled words (getto instead of ghetto), and missing words (Warning: keep knives out of children)
9. Grammar
   1. Stop tense changes (be sure to keep the text in the same tense throughout the paper.)
      1. YOU (this word is taboo in formal writing)
      2. MLA present tense
      3. APA past tense
   2. Eliminate dangling modifiers or pronoun confusion (I like golf more than my wife.)
   3. Titles of books are underlined or italicized. Stories within a book have quotation marks. Cd’s are underlined; songs are in quotation marks. Movies are underlined. TV shows are underlined, episodes are in quotation marks.
   4. Spell out any number that is lower than ten. But be consistent.
   5. All languages are always capitalized
   6. Proper nouns and proper pronouns are always capitalized. (My mom and dad. Mom and Dad bought this for me.)
   7. Very unique, very dead, very pregnant (Make sure it’s a shade of something before you put very in front of it)
10. Quotations
    1. Punctuation, pull out quotation
    2. Set up your quotation
    3. Explain your quotation
    4. Avoid Large bulky quotes
    5. End with a quotation?
    6. Above and beyond (other sources)
11. Good paper writing
    1. Don’t make large statements that cannot be proven (usually wrong) (always, never)
    2. Fix choppy paragraphs
    3. 1 paragraph = 1 main idea; 1 sentence = 1 thought
    4. The speaker should be understood (Eliminate I believe, I think, I know)
    5. Eliminate vague comments, expecting the reader to understand
    6. Define your terms
    7. Eliminate circular or unproven reasoning
    8. Give background Info (AGAIN?)
12. Style
    1. Avoid using the same word over and over.
    2. Avoid confusing internal monologues
    3. Avoid asides
    4. Use strong verbs
    5. Eliminate Slang, conversational tone or cliché (as the play goes on, you know, take it for granted)
    6. Eliminate vague words (really, very, so, a lot)
    7. Use a varied Sentence structure and length
13. Conclusion
    1. Witty or funny?
    2. Quotation?
    3. Call to action?
    4. What’s next?