
PROOFREADING

RATIONALE AND TYPES

Your reward for proofreading—however tedious the task may seem—is the satisfaction of an error-free publication. Although when to read proof varies with the publisher and frequency of revision, at least two different types of proofreading are essential. One type (A) is a comprehensive proofreading of text, tables, and illustrations for scientific integrity as well as for presentation (correct style, usage, and grammar) and internal consistency. The second type (B) is a conventional proofreading for such items as spelling, typographical errors, or incorrect word breaks. Both types can be done simultaneously, although the techniques for each differ.

Comprehensive proofreading (A) is a rigorous exercise that requires (1) a cool, objective appraisal of the science, (2) validation of any mathematics, and (3) checking for factual agreement among text, references, tables, and illustrations and their captions. Think of comprehensive proofreading as a technical review of your own work—difficult, but vital.

Conventional proofreading (B) is perhaps more difficult than comprehensive proofreading because it requires scanning textual and graphic material with little regard for meaning. At least one conventional proofreading session should be done with another person (see techniques for two-person proofreading).

The more frequently the report is revised, the greater the need for proofreading. Errors seem to multiply insidiously with each new printout, despite your best efforts to proof them away. Still, that one last try may catch the very error that might prove embarrassing to you or to the Survey. At best, your thoroughly proofed copy inspires a publisher's confidence in the care with which you prepared the report.

WHEN TO PROOFREAD

Your Branch or Office may advise you when to proofread your report, and your local editor undoubtedly will ask you to proofread your USGS book or map at least once in the publication process. You may have to proofread on your own initiative more frequently as the manuscript progresses. If you know you won't be available for proofreading, designate someone who will do it as meticulously as you would.

Changes are feasible before the manuscript is typeset, but changes to galley proofs and check prints are discouraged, except to correct typographical errors, serious factual errors, or deviations from the mill copy used as a guide by the typesetter or drafter. Extensive changes at galley-proof or page-proof stage are time consuming and costly.

Comprehensive proofreading (A) usually is done while the science and documentation are fresh in mind—for example (1) just before a report to be published by the USGS is sent for technical review or (2) just before a report to be published outside the USGS is sent to the journal. If technical review necessitates considerable rewriting and reorganization, however, another comprehensive proofreading of the revised report is advisable.

Conventional proofreading (B) generally is required (1) right after the report is first typed, (2) just before the final mill copy is submitted for Director's approval, and (3) when you receive galley proofs or page proofs and check prints. (See section "Preparing Maps and Other Illustrations," p. 210–213, for advice on proofreading check prints of illustrations). This is your last chance to make corrections, although they should be rare at galley-proof stage.

Conventional proofreading at (1) and (2) is most effective if you can let a little time elapse (several days perhaps) before you begin to proofread. Errors are more apt to leap from the page after the manuscript has cooled a bit and the wording of the text is no longer quite so fresh in your mind.

GENERAL TECHNIQUES OF PROOFREADING

Accurate proofreading is exacting work and demands concentration. Choose a time when you are wide awake and alert, and take a short break when you begin to tire.

If you are proofreading alone, try to avoid proofing something that you have just finished typing. You are much more likely to see errors if you leave the report for a while. You may want to read aloud to yourself. For example, words with multisyllables and vowels are commonly misspelled; you can check them carefully by consciously pronouncing each syllable. You can read backward (from right to left), which will force

you to focus on individual words. A spelling program on a word processor is useful, but it won't flag words correctly spelled but incorrectly used ("now" for "not").

Proofreading tabular data requires extra diligence and a ruler to ensure that you are reading across just one horizontal line at a time. Check the vertical alignment in each column to be sure that all numbers are aligned on the decimal point (or whatever symbol has been chosen, such as a hyphen denoting range).

A list of commonly used proofreader's marks and an example of their usage are at the end of this section. Although typeset copy is shown, the same principles and marks apply to typewritten text as well. See also the U.S. GPO Style Manual (1984, p. 5, 6).

TWO-PERSON PROOFREADING

When proofreading with another person, first agree how to proceed. For example, you won't say a capital letter at the beginning of a sentence and you'll tap a pencil to indicate a period at the end of the sentence. You should, however, say aloud all nonobvious punctuation and spell out uncommon words. The session will be less tiring if you take turns; one reads aloud from the original document while the other silently checks the new copy.

The author, if proofing, should follow the original while the other person (a typist, perhaps) reads aloud from the redone copy. This way, any errors or omissions in the new copy will automatically be read out.

Typographical errors, however, may still escape detection. At some point in the proofreading, every single word of the new copy must be read individually and deliberately if all typographical errors are to be eliminated.

HOW AND WHERE TO MAKE CORRECTIONS

Instructions and marks should be legible, intelligible, and close to the change desired. Avoid marginal notes that dogleg around the page and "skyrockets" that zoom a change from text to a distant part of the page.

BEFORE TYPESETTING

Instructions, changes, additions, or deletions to a manuscript before typesetting can be made in the body of the text, in the margins, on a copy of the illustration, or on a separate piece of paper—just as

long as they are intelligible to the person who must read or type from them. Separate pieces should be clearly marked: for example, "Insert A" or "Part 1 of 3." Make a small check in the right margin next to the line containing a minor change that might be overlooked; you may want to make a check for every change in the line.

AFTER TYPESETTING

When you receive galley proofs or page proofs and check prints, the typesetter or editor may have marked them already. Some of the marks may be queries to the author, which you should answer. Make corrections clearly and legibly in the margin of the proof as close to and as much in line with the error as possible; the typesetter is not obliged to search the body of the text for changes. Use common proofreader's marks. Indicate by AA (Author Alteration) or AC (Author Correction) any changes that differ from the copy used as a printer's guide. Do not mark the guide.

COMMON CHANGES

Six changes are most common: insertion, deletion, substitution, transposition, punctuation, and capitalization (or lowercasing). The following examples show conventional marks for indicating these changes:

Insertion

To indicate that something should be inserted, place a caret (^) at the point on the line in the text where the insertion should be made, and write in the margin what is to be inserted:

o Profread [^]carefully

Deletion

To indicate that something should be taken out and not replaced by anything else, draw a line through it and place the "dele mark" (d), a form of "d" meaning "delete," in the margin.

d Profread ~~read~~ carefully

Substitution

To indicate that something is to be substituted for the matter deleted, mark through the matter to be replaced and write the substitute matter in the margin.

Proofread ~~erratically~~ carefully

Transposition

Transposition is more common in early drafts of a report than in galley or page proofs. To indicate that something should be in a different place (transposed), draw lines to indicate the switch and write "tr" in the margin.

tr. (carefully) Proofread

If more than a few words are to be transposed and the change involves several lines, write the revised version on a separate piece of paper, cross out all the obsolete lines, and write "Insert A" (or whatever you have labeled the piece). This procedure allows for far less error than does drawing lines in text.

Punctuation

Place punctuation or other marks that might be obscure to the left of a diagonal stroke, thus: ,/ ;/ -/.

The diagonal stroke is also used (1) to separate one correction from the next where they are crowded in the margin and (2) to indicate the end of the corrections.

↑ Cheer, cheer, for the fourth of July, its our Nation's birthday. ;/ 2/ 0

Capital or Lowercase Letters

To indicate capitalization, draw a slash through the letter that is to be capitalized and write the letter with three lines under it in the margin.

P /proofread carefully

To indicate lowercase, draw a slash through the letter that is to be lowercased and write l.c. in the margin.

Proofread /carefully (l.c.)

COMMONLY USED PROOFREADER'S MARKS

USE WORDS IN MARGIN and lines in text. Mark clearly and distinctly. Write out instructions that might be ambiguous. For more marks, see the GPO Style Manual (1984, p. 5).

Boldface *b.f.* (in margin)
mv (in text)

Print CONTENTS in boldface.

b.f.

Brackets [/]

[Brackets indicate supplied information.]

]

Capitalization:

Caps and small caps C + SC

For authorship: By DIANE CURTIS.

C + SC

Small caps SC

Use SMALL CAPS for headings.

SC

Uppercase caps

That map shows Ogden and Salt Lake City.

l

Lowercase /

Where have the animals and birds gone?

l.c./l.c.

Caret ^

General indicator used to mark exact position of error.

i

Close up ∩

can ∩ not

∩

Delete S

You might want to write the word "delete" in the margin also.

S

Indentation] [3]

A box with a number indicating how many spaces.

] [3]

Insert:

Apostrophe ↴

Colon ⋮

Comma ↵

Exclamation point !

Hyphen =

Parentheses /)

Period ⦿

Question mark ?

Quotation marks “/”

Semicolon ;

Space #

1-em dash $\frac{1}{M}$

1-en dash $\frac{1}{N}$

Water was ponded at the glaciers edge. ↴

in the following sequence ⋮

garnet, wollastonite and tremolite ↵

Please be careful !

olive green schist

as noted by Page (1964)

Water, then, was ponded ⦿

Why did the river turn south ⋮

“These beds, said Powell, are Green River.” “/”

Many volunteered, few were chosen. ;/3

Rocks littered the road. #

two different types of granite and syenite $\frac{1}{M}$

only 10, 12 years old. $\frac{1}{N}$

(em and en are printer's terms for the size of a space; an en is half the width of an em. The 1-em dash is represented by two hyphens in typewritten copy and the en dash by one hyphen.)

Italic *ital* (in margin)
— (in text)

Spiriferina pulchra

Paragraph ¶

Regional uplift then ensued. ¶

No paragraph No ¶

Ash, however, continued to fall. No ¶

Position:

Move right]

Move left [

Move up ⌈

Move down ⌋

Center horizontally ⌋⌈

Center vertically H

Spell out Sp O

The sample contained only (Fe) Sp O iron

stet (let it stand) ---

Use dashes in text and word in margin. *stet*

Subscript [inferior] ^

H₂O ↵

Superscript [superior] ✓

Fe⁺ ↵

Transpose tr.

Use loop in text (tr. and) in margin. tr.

Geochemistry

n/b.f. caps

¶ [2] A geochemical survey to evaluate the mineral potential of the Flat Tops Wilderness included samples from streams which drain the Hack Lake Wilderness Study Area (Mallory and others, 1966). The analyses of these samples revealed no anomalous concentrations of any elements that might indicate outcropping mineralized rocks. H₂O is prevalent in streams.

MINERAL AND ENERGY RESOURCES

¶ l.c. [2] No mineralized areas were identified in the wilderness study area; however, gypsum and anhydrite may be present in the Eagle Valley Evaporite. In the vicinity of Eagle, about 20 mi southeast of the study area, the Eagle Valley Evaporite is about 9,000 ft thick and contains isolated pods and lenses of gypsum and anhydrite (500-1,000 ft thick, Mallory and other, 1971). It may be present beneath a thick cover of basalt (base approximately 3,000 ft beneath the area). The Eagle Valley Evaporite thins northeast of Eagle and is not exposed in the study area.

The Belden Formation, approximately 4,000 ft beneath the wilderness study area, may contain beds of coaly shale. Bass and Northrop (1963) noted that coal in the Belden is discontinuous near the wilderness study area.

¶ stet. The wilderness study area lacks favorable host rocks and structural traps for oil and gas. The potential for uranium is low because the wilderness study area lacks host rocks favorable for uranium.

¶ #/# [2] The low mineral resource potential in the wilderness study area is assigned a certainty level of B (fig. 3B) for all commodities because the distribution of occurrences in rocks beneath the area cannot be observed and has not been well defined near the wilderness study area.

REFERENCES CITED

Mallory, W.W., 1971, The Garcia Valley Evaporite, northwest Colorado—a regional synthesis: U.S. Geological Survey Bulletin 0000-A, 37 p., 3 pl.

[2] Nadeau, J.G., 1977, Mineral investigation of the Melone Lake Wilderness Study Area, Cayer County, Colorado: U.S. Bureau of Mines Open-File Report MLA 00-00, 7p.

l.f./□ Table 1. # Conversion factors for SI metric and U.S. customary units of measurement. Continued

¶ tr. [2] Bass, N.W., and Northrop, S.A., 1963, Geology of the Field Springs quadrangle and vicinity, northwestern Colorado: U.S. Geological Survey Bulletin 0000-A, 74 p.