REVIEW: CATCHING THOSE BLOOPERS

*B*LOOPERS are those little things that undo a perfect paper. Like:

> Misspelled words.
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> Typos.
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> Run-on sentences.
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> Grammar.
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> Punctuation.
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> Tense agreement.
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> Format.
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> Onion-skin or erasable bond paper.

Use this checklist to go over your paper before calling it quits. Misspelled words can be easily corrected; look up a word and be sure, or use the spell checker if your computer program has one.

Typos are hard to catch because we read what we think should be there. Ask someone to go over your paper and look for transposed letters. It is all right to pencil lightly a correction or two, but if there are more than three, redo.

Run-on sentences make it hard to figure out what idea is being presented and make the reader wonder if you know your subject and know that it is better to say one thing at a time rather than trying to cram a whole bunch of ideas into one long, long sentence. Confusing, to say the least.

Grammar, punctuation and tense agreement are important. Subject and verb must agree. If you start in the present tense, stay in the present (or past, past perfect, future) throughout the paper. The exception to this rule is when you are using a quote; then use the exact wording from the text. Put a period at the end of every sentence. If you are unsure where and when to use commas, semi-colons and colons, refer to a dictionary. Loads of useful information can be found in the front and back of a dictionary.

Be sure you know what your teacher expects of your final paper. The format, or how it looks, is very important to present your ideas dressed in the right style.

Use good bond paper. Onion-skin and erasable bond typing paper make it difficult to read; the ink smears and smudges on the paper and it is hard on the eyes to read. Present your paper neatly, *a title page a must* and in a report cover. First impressions can make the grade!