

Worksheet 4: Queries and Style Sheets

Corresponding Readings: Chapter 2 (pages 29-56) in *The Copyeditor's Handbook*; *The Economist*, "Style Guide"

Key Concepts: Querying; Style Sheets; Cleanup

Assignment:

1. **If you were the note taker** in the last class activity, type up your group's query and bring a hard copy to class (make sure to add your group member's name on the assignment). Here is the scenario from the query writing activity to jog your memory:

Scenario: Pretend you are the copyeditor of a geography textbook and you are making edits on a chapter entitled "Patterns of Immigration." Most of your markings deal with spelling, grammatical, and consistency issues. However, you notice that the author refers to "slaves" as "workers" in several passages. You feel like this error could hurt the authors and publisher you work for (McGraw-Hill Education) and that it might receive negative feedback from your readers. More importantly you feel like the word "workers" whitewashes the history of slavery in the United States. You decide to handle this issue in a query to the authors of the textbook when you send them your edits.

2. **If you were not the note taker** in the last class activity, do some research on style guides and note a few of the differences between them. Focus on standards in writing (spelling, punctuation, grammar, etc.) rather than design (rules for citation). You might start with this introductory website if you are having trouble: <http://stylemanual.org/>. Write a paragraph about what you discovered and bring it to class.

3. Choose one of the three articles below (see schedule for link to articles).

- McClain, Dani "This 'New' Feminism Has Been Here All Along"
- McKirdy, Carla "An Inconvenient Truth"
- Pereira, K.L "Female Bonding: The Strange History of Wonder Woman"

Your task is to read the article and reverse-engineer a style sheet based on the rules of punctuation, spelling, and capitalization in the article. For example, if you come across an em dash, you should create a rule under "em dash" in your style sheet.

In addition to noting rules of punctuation, spelling, and capitalization, you should note any specialized words that might come up again in future articles. For example, if you're reading an article from *Orion*, an environmental magazine, and come across the word "biodegradable," you will want to add that word to your style sheet with a brief definition—and perhaps how to use it correctly in a sentence.

Use the “Economist Style Guide” (see link on our schedule) as an example. Note: You do not have to keep a record of every word and every single style standard. The goal here is to start a running list of important items you may come across again and again. Here is what the layout might look like (see next page):

A-D

Biodegradable (adjective): The disintegration of materials by bacteria, fungi, or other biological means.

All our products are biodegradable.

E-H

Em Dash (punctuation): Use two em dashes in place of two commas and two parenthesis when there is an abrupt change or a series within a phrase.

Who are we, we modern writers, to pass judgment—and with such shocking frequency—on these more simple forms of punctuation?

I-L

M-P

Q-T

W-Z