**Stop the Insanity!!!!!!**

**Grammar/Usage/Spelling Mistakes that Make Me Crazy**

Spell Check does NOT catch everything! It doesn’t know you didn’t need to use an apostrophe or that you meant a completely different word, even if everything was spelled “correctly.”

Example: Spell Check is no going to cat any of this stupid mistakes I just mad.

Apostrophes are for possessives or contractions, NOT plurals!

Example: The girl’s books are ruined, NOT The girl’s book’s are ruined!!!!

It’s = it is

Its = possessive

Example: It’s not acceptable for a society to permit its language to be abused by giving in to lazy grammar study.

There = location

Their = possessive

They’re = they are

Example: They’re going there to pick up their lottery tickets.

You’re = you are

Your = possessive

Example: You’re not giving me a very good impression of your education with all this bad grammar.

Who’s = who is

Whose = belonging to whom

Example: Who’s the slob whose room is starting to smell like a morgue?

Weather = climate

Whether = either/or

Example: The weather today will determine whether or not we go to the park.

Lose = misplace

Loose = not tight

Example: The knot on that bag is too loose, so you might lose the contents.

Everyday = common

Every day = each day

Example: Every day in spring, I put on my everyday clothes and putter in the garden.

A lot = much

Alot = NOT A WORD

Then = time, sequence

Than = a comparison

Example: Then he told her that his mom was prettier than hers. That did not go well.

Effect = noun

Affect = verb

Example: Of course, his story has an emotional effect on me, but I’m not going to let it affect my work.

Principal = adj: main

Principal = noun: the top administrator in a school

Principle = noun: a professed rule of conduct; a fundamental law or truth

Example: The principal reason that the principal would not agree to their demands was that it violated his principles.

Through = a preposition

Threw = past tense of throw, a verb

Example: He was in trouble when he threw the rock through his neighbor’s window.

Apart = not together

A part = a segment of something, a theatrical role

Example: She didn’t mind that they had to be apart while he went to school as long as she felt she was still a part of his life and heart.

Could have = might have been able to

Could’ve = a contraction for could have

Could of = absolutely meaningless

The same applies to “would have” v. “would of” v. “would’ve”

Example: I could have accepted your use of “could of,” but then I would’ve lost my grip on the English language.

Like = to enjoy, approve of

Like = comparison

Like is NOT an appropriate interjection

Example: I do not like it when a student makes herself sound like an airhead through the frequent, random, and useless interjection of “like” into her vocabulary. I hate to hear a girl say, “I wasn’t, like, gonna go, like, crazy or anything. I just, like, want to talk, if, like, I can.”

**An essay is not texting/emailing/IMing, so please note the following:**

4 does NOT = for

Example: The bird is crazy 4 cocoa puffs. NEVER OK!

U does NOT = you, and ur does NOT = your

Example: I admire u for ur looks. NEVER OK!

2 does NOT = to

Example: Can I send flowers 2 your sister? NEVER OK!

**Commonly misspelled words:**

Separate, NOT seperate

Definitely, NOT definately

**Words I DON’T want to see in your writing:**

Thing

Stuff

A lot

Very

Definitely

ANY contraction whatsoever, like don’t, can’t, isn’t, it’s, shouldn’t, etc.

(Why? Contractions are lazy writing and they detract from the formality an essay requires. See my Tips for Writing Formally.)

ANY slang terminology whatsoever. You’re not at the mall—you’re writing something that should

indicate to me your stellar command of the formal English language.)

**A Fun List of Words that are NOT Words!**

Irregardless

Supposably

Conversate

Expresso

Whole nother

Here’s an answer key for the above (the real words, I mean)

Regardless

Supposedly

Converse

Espresso

Another or a whole other

**And just for kicks and giggles:**

If you are sick to your stomach, you are not “nauseous.” You are nause*ated.* If you are naus*eous*, you nauseate others.

Example: That nauseous smell from the kitchen made me feel utterly nauseated. (By the way, using both those in the same sentence is stylistically a bad idea.)

Also, if you “could care less,” then clearly you DO care at least a little bit. When you can’t care less, that means you absolutely do not care.

Finally, you read a whole OR an entire book; you don’t read a whole entire book. That’s redundant.