

# Editors' Association of Canada

Editors' Association of Canada

# Proofreading Study Guide

Editors' Association of Canada Certification

test overview | practice test | marking guidelines



BASED ON  
**PROFESSIONAL EDITORIAL  
STANDARDS – 2009**

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# INTRODUCTION TO THE PROOFREADING TEST

The Proofreading test for EAC Certification is based on standards A1 to A12 and E1 to E18 of PES, available in Appendix 1 and on the EAC website ([www.editors.ca](http://www.editors.ca)). Like other certification tests in the program, the Proofreading test examines your knowledge, skills, and judgment. The test assesses your understanding of the publishing process and your ability to follow standard proofreading practices to ensure that errors are corrected. In addition, the test assesses your ability to judge when *not* to make changes and when to query an author or supervising editor about a particular change.

## WHO SHOULD TAKE THIS TEST

The Proofreading test, like the other certification tests, is intended for editors who have at least five years' experience and can, in the words of section E of PES, "examine material after layout to correct errors in textual and visual elements."

If you wish to become a Certified Proofreader, you must write and pass the Proofreading test. If you wish to obtain full certification and become a Certified Professional Editor, you must pass all four certification tests: Structural Editing, Stylistic Editing, Copy Editing, and Proofreading.

## WHAT TO EXPECT IF YOU TAKE THIS TEST

The Proofreading Practice Test in this study guide is typical of the test you will actually write. It is presented here as a study aid to help you prepare for the real test. Like the Practice Test, the real test will have two parts. The first part will consist of short-answer questions and should take approximately one hour to complete. The second part will consist of a passage to proofread. The passage will be preceded by a scenario that represents what your employer, client, or supervisor would tell you in preparation for completing the work: what specifics you should concentrate on, what additional materials you should submit,

what to do if you have questions, and so on. The passage should take approximately two hours to proofread.

The real Proofreading test will be invigilated. You will have three hours to complete your work. You will be expected to bring the following items to the test:

- pens and pencils (a photocopy of your test will be reviewed by markers, so make sure the pens and pencils you bring will produce clear marks for photocopying; note that the test is photocopied in black and white, not colour, so do not mark up or code by colour)
- eraser(s)
- ruler(s)
- one calculator (simple mathematical functions only; no data storage or communication functions permitted)

You will also be allowed to bring the following items if you think you may need them during the test:

- pica ruler
- magnifying glass
- earplugs
- seat and/or back cushion
- bottled drinking water

The Proofreading test has been set with the expectation that candidates will use reference books during the test. You will be allowed to bring one Canadian dictionary, *Editing Canadian English*, and up to three additional current style guides:

### Dictionaries (choose 1)

- *Canadian Oxford Dictionary*
- *Nelson Canadian Dictionary of the English Language*
- *Gage Canadian Dictionary*

### Style guides (choose up to 3)

- *The Chicago Manual of Style*
- *The New York Public Library Writer's Guide to Style and Usage*
- *The Canadian Style*
- *The Canadian Press Stylebook* and its companion, *CP Caps & Spelling*

You may add tabs to your reference books to mark particular sections, but you may not insert additional pages or attach extensive notes. You will not be permitted to use other reference materials or editing aids, including computers, during the test. You will be provided with scrap paper.

In addition to your writing supplies and reference books, you may need other equipment or items not mentioned here. If this is the case, please submit your written request to use anything not listed above to the National Office at least 15 business days before the test. Also, if you will need to eat or take medication during the test, please indicate this when you register for the test (see the “special needs” section of the registration form).

If you have any questions about what is and is not permitted during the test, please submit your question(s) in writing to the National Office at least 15 business days before the test.

## HOW TO PREPARE

With the Proofreading test, as with the other certification tests, it's very important for you to prepare by doing some hands-on exercises. Since the test is skills-based, your chances for success will increase the more you practise.

Becoming familiar with PES and your reference books is essential. You may find it helpful to take courses or EAC seminars on proofreading. Working through EAC's *Proofreading: Meeting Professional Editorial Standards* (PR: MPES) is another excellent way to prepare. You will certainly want to brush up on using standard proofreading markup if that is something you lack experience in or do not do on a regular basis.

One of the best ways to prepare is to take the Practice Test in this study guide. It will familiarize you with the test format and instructions; it will also give you a sense of how much time you will need. Follow these steps to review the knowledge and skills you will need.

### Step 1: Try the test

- Study the standards found in PES (see Appendix 1 or the EAC website).
- Complete the Practice Test (beginning on page 7), marking the text with standard proofreading symbols. Allow yourself three hours to complete the test.
- While taking the test, consult a Canadian dictionary, *Editing Canadian English*, and whatever style guides you usually use, but keep in mind that the Practice Test and the real test have been set with the expectation that you will use at least one of the style guides listed on page 5.

### Step 2: Assess your performance

- Consider the Standards and Tasks section (page 31), and note that each question or problem in the test has an answer or solution that corresponds to a particular standard.
- Read the General Marking Guidelines section (page 34).
- Compare your test with the Answer Key (beginning on page 35).
- Use the blank Marking Sheet (beginning on page 59) to assign yourself marks.
- Calculate your grade. If you score at least 112 out of 140 (80%), you will have earned a pass on the Practice Test. In the real test, the precise pass mark will vary a little from one administration to the next, but it will be close to 80%.

### Step 3: Learn from your results

- Take note of any standards you had difficulty with and work to improve your performance on those standards.
- Undertake research and study in areas where you were weak. PES and PR: MPES can help you.

### Step 4: Learn from the sample responses

- Study the pass and fail results in the Sample Responses and Markers' Assessments section (beginning on page 67).
- Consider whether you overlooked any of the same points overlooked in the sample responses.
- Note particularly any comments made by the markers that apply to your test.

**PROOFREADING PRACTICE TEST**

## Section A: Questions

For questions 1 to 12, put a check mark beside the option that best answers the question or completes the statement. *(2 marks each)*

1. Which one of these publications would most likely be designed with ragged right text?
  - (a) corporate newsletter
  - (b) genre fiction book
  - (c) professional journal
  - (d) trade non-fiction book
  
2. For reference while editing and proofreading a product catalogue, you've been given access to a product database. Images have been switched often during production of the catalogue. At which stage would you normally check the prices provided for all the items?
  - (a) the first round of stylistic editing
  - (b) the last round of proofreading
  - (c) the first round of structural editing
  - (d) the last round of copy editing
  
3. Which of the following is the responsibility of the proofreader?
  - (a) Remove jargon, trite expressions, and clichés.
  - (b) Check consistency and accuracy of running heads and captions.
  - (c) Improve sentence construction while eliminating wordiness.
  - (d) Ensure paragraphs are of an appropriate length and that appropriate transitions are used.

**SCENARIO****PROOFREADING PRACTICE TEST****Dwarf Sour Cherries***(84 marks)*

The Saskatchewan Sour Cherry Marketing Board (SSCMB) is an organization devoted to making sour cherries a key part of the everyday diet of Canadians. In addition to funding ads designed to raise the profile of sour cherries with the general public, the SSCMB also publishes practical guides for sour cherry producers. These books are intended to present the latest scientific research from the field in a way that is accessible and useful to the average cherry producer.

You are the proofreader of one of these books: *Dwarf Sour Cherries*. You have just received Chapter 5, which covers marketing. Previous chapters discussed such issues as cultivars and propagation; orchard establishment; culture, pests, and diseases; and handling and storage. The package you received includes the author's manuscript, marked up by the copy editor, and the first proofs, which have been laid out and in which the copy editor's changes should have been incorporated. You were given a style sheet with Chapter 1, reproduced on page 15. You may want to add to it.

A note from the author is also attached (page 14), which requests the addition of sentences to this chapter. When you began the project, the developmental editor warned you to use your judgment when incorporating these last-minute additions by the author: the author is a fervent sour-cherry devotee whose enthusiasm tends to run away with him at times. The copy editor added that although the author has lived in Canada for a long time, he was born in the United States, so his spelling tends to fluctuate between the U.S. and Canadian systems.

Since both the SSCMB and the design firm doing the layout are small operations, it is important to both organizations to track and assign responsibility for errors and the related costs. Consequently, you have been asked to label editor's errors and note author's inserts.

Your task is to check the proofs of Chapter 5 against the marked-up manuscript and deal with the author's requested insert.

## OTHER GUIDES IN THIS SERIES:

**Copy Editing Study Guide**

**Stylistic Editing Study Guide**

**Structural Editing Study Guide**



### *Proofreading Study*

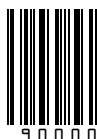
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canadienne des réviseurs (EAC /ACR), the voice of Canadian editors. EAC's membership includes both in-house and freelance editors, whose work enhances the quality and readability of all forms of word-based communication. With more than 1,600 members across the nation, EAC promotes effective communication among editors and between editors and their clients, and works to develop and maintain professional standards of editing. More information on EAC /ACR is available online at [www.editors.ca](http://www.editors.ca) or [www.reviseurs.ca](http://www.reviseurs.ca), or by contacting EAC /ACR at [info@editors.ca](mailto:info@editors.ca) or [info@reviseurs.ca](mailto:info@reviseurs.ca).



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## Proofreading Study Guide

Editors' Association  
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This is the primary resource for anyone who wants to become a Certified Proofreader.

Inside you will find information on the certification program and testing process, a practice test and marking guidelines, and practice test results from both a successful and an unsuccessful candidate. Whether you use this guide for independent study or in a workshop setting, you will learn more about the knowledge, skills, and judgment required to earn your Certified Proofreader credential.

Since 2006, EAC has administered certification tests across Canada and awarded credentials in Proofreading, Copy Editing, Stylistic Editing, and Structural Editing. EAC certification credentials are now recognized by both government and industry as proof of editorial excellence. Further information about EAC Certification can be found online at [www.editors.ca/certification](http://www.editors.ca/certification).