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# UNIT 1 PROOF-READING

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## 1.0 AIMS' AND OBJECTIVES

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Proof-reading is essential training for any writer who wishes to appear in print. The task should not be left entirely to other people's care. Since there is no such creature as a perfect proof-reader, the author must himself correct the proofs even if other people are reading them. Except for learning the proof-reading symbols, there isn't much to proof-reading, except great carefulness. You must remember that:

- errors found in a book are laid at the author's door;
- authors themselves must learn proof correction methods;
- the conventional symbols understood by all compositors should be used,
- proper correction marks should be put in the text, as well as in the nearest margin, neatly and legibly, with a fine pen, directly against the printed line;
- on no account should the text be rewritten at the proof stage; and
- publishers' deadlines about returning proofs should be scrupulously met.

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## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

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In Blocks, 1, 2 and 3 you learnt about the content and structure of creative writing. Once your manuscript has been edited and approved by your publisher, it will be passed on to the printer. The printer may set the manuscript in type by hand or mechanically. He will send back to you, for checking, the 'proofs' of your script. There are some symbols and universally accepted conventions for 'proof-reading'. When you have familiarised yourself with this you will be able to check the 'proofs' for all kinds of errors.

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## 1.2 THE NECESSITY FOR PROOF-READING

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You will have to correct the mistakes the compositor may have made. If you feel that the publisher will ensure that all the mistakes have been eliminated, you are mistaken. The amount of care you can take in correcting mistakes, no one else will. If the mistakes are left in, and the book gets printed with them, it will cause you distress and your readers will not be too happy. If you are a scholar, the mistakes may be taken as your own, damaging your reputation, And, at a later stage when the

books are sold out, even if you wished to correct each mistake on each page of the book, you might not be able to do so as, very likely, the pages of the first edition would be photographed, to be printed by offset. Thus, the maximum amount of care should be taken by you while reading the proofs.

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## 1.3 METHODOLOGY

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Once you appreciate that no mistakes should be left in your book, you may wish to know the methodology of **correcting proofs**. Your publisher may send you instructions on how to **correct proofs**. Generally, publishers don't do that. They expect you to know the **art** of proof-reading. Therefore, you should know what the proof correction marks **are**.

Along with this Unit you will find a list of proof-reading symbols. They **are not** exhaustive, but they are all understood by the compositor. You should, therefore, use only these marks and **not** any that you **may have devised**.

When you receive the **proofs**, you will notice that they have margins on both sides of the printed matter. You should use the left **hand** margin for the left hand **portion** of the text while making corrections. Corrections should be neatly done with a fine pen. Don't make **corrections** on the printed portion, because the compositor should be able to see which letter, word or line needs to be corrected.

### 1.3.1 Gally proofs and page proofs

You **may** sometimes **receive** galley proofs first and not the page proofs; the reason is that if the compositor has left out any major portion of the text while composing, it would be **difficult** to introduce that **after** the page proofs have been made. This is **because** the **composed matter** of all the pages would then have to be altered and **pushed backward**. At the **galley** proof stage, this can be done easily as **no running titles or page break-ups are involved**.

### 1.3.2 No major change at the page proof stage

**As an author**, you may **have** the temptation to **make** changes in the text at the proof stage. This has to be **resisted**, unless the work is going to suffer in the absence of the correction. You should know that the publisher **will** charge you extra for major **corrections**. This is because in some processes of composition, like **the linotype** process, the metal of the **whole page**, often pages together, has to be recast in the event of such changes. The printer will charge the publisher for these changes and the publisher will pass on the charges to you. You have to be, therefore, very careful **at** the manuscript stage **itself**. The manuscript submitted to the publisher should be complete in every respect—the final unalterable copy.

### 1.3.3 Use proof-reading symbols carefully

Go through the **proof-reading symbols** enclosed. **Keep** them in front of you and use them as shown on a **sample page**, also enclosed with this lesson. And, if your **publisher** offers a few **more** symbols, for the **convenience** of his compositor, accept them. The basic consideration should be that the printed page is without any mistakes. It is the common **belief** that the author misses his own grammatical and **spelling** mistakes. You **have** to be able to catch them. For that, you have to be slow and **cautious**. Whenever you are in doubt, look up a good dictionary, preferably one, with usage, such as **Webster's Third International Dictionary** or the **Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English (OUP)**.

### 1.3.4 Meet the deadlines scrupulously

Printers and publishers **generally** maintain deadlines for printing of the text. You have to **return** the **proofs** in time to help your **publisher** in meeting the deadline. After you have **returned** the first proofs, you **may get** another set of proofs if the **mistakes** still persist. If the **mistakes** are few, you **are likely** to get the final page

proofs instead. **You** have to **follow** the **same procedure** in making corrections on the page proofs as you have done while correcting galley proofs. After returning the first set of page proofs you will receive the final set of page proofs. No major changes should be made at that stage. After checking the pages finally, if you notice that no further corrections are necessary, you may inform the publisher that he could go **ahead** with giving the print-order to the printer.

### 1.3.5 Each publisher follows his own practices for sending proofs

It should be noted that the practice of sending proofs to the author varies from publisher to publisher, **depending** on whether one or more persons are reading the proofs at the publisher's office and whether the printer is good. You may have to read three sets of proofs, or only one, but whatever the number, you should be prepared to find **time** to read the proofs very carefully. Mistakes in the printed **book** will hurt you most; it is after all your book.

### 1.3.6 Proof correction symbols

—	Substitute letter indicated	∅ #	Delete and leave space
∧	Substitute word indicated	≡ #	Make spacing <b>equal</b>
∧	Insert new matter indicated	□/∧	Indent one em
⊙/∧	Insert full stop	▢/∧	Indent two ems
∧/∧	<b>Insert</b> Comma	≡	Move lines to the right
⊙/∧	Insert Colon	≡	Move lines to the left
—/∧	Insert Hyphen	≡ m	Insert em rule
∅	Delete character indicated	≡ 2m	Insert two em rule
⊙	Delete and close up	↪	Combine the paragraphs
○	Remove space and <b>close</b> up	[take over	Take letter or word from end of one line to the beginning of next
⊙	Invert type	]take back	Take letter or word from beginning of a line to <b>the end</b> of preceding line
x	Replace broken letter	~~~~~	Change to bold face
—set	Leave as printed	↓	Lower lines
↔	Transpose the order of letters or words	↑	Raise lines
⊙→	The abbreviation or figure to be spelt out in <b>full</b>		Correct vertical alignment
= Caps.	Change to capital letter	==	Straighten lines
= S. Caps.	Change to small <b>capital</b> letter	[n.p.	Begin a <b>new paragraph</b>
= l.c.	Change to lower-case letter	∅	Substitute apostrophe
— Ital.	Change to italic words underlined	∅	Insert apostrophe
w.f.	Wrong fount	∅	Insert quotation marks
#/∧	Insert space	∅	Insert inferior figure
#>	Increase space between lines or paragraphs	∅	Substitute inferior figure

## 1.4 SPECIMEN OF A GALLEY PROOF WITH READER'S MARKS

∅/∧	In these times <del>of</del> / <b>when</b> publishers <del>are</del> / <b>are</b> besieged with manuscripts a good physical presentation of your ideas	a. 17
do A	in a manuscript will <del>have</del> wonders in <b>favour</b> / <b>impressing</b>	ably /
⊙/∧	the <b>publisher</b> <del>If</del> the manuscript is got up in an appropriate manner and complete in all respects one can hope for its quick evaluation by the publisher. It is with this aim in mind that this paper has been <b>written</b> <del>The</del>	l. 0
#	important points which an author should know about the preparation <del>and submission</del> of manuscripts have been briefly discussed <b>below</b> . <u>Outline</u> . Let us start with the	SS /
∅	author who <del>has a</del> / <b>topic</b> to work on.	[n.b. — Ital

---Stet  
[ n p  
= l.c.  
x =  
a #/  
3 toke back

Before the actual work is started, a basic design of the topic **depending** upon the theme and **purpose** of the **publication** is prepared. At **this** stage all the existing published information on **the** subject is gathered.

[The **required** materials **besides** books and articles in periodicals **should** be traced from reference books, **bibliographies**, **special** library catalogues and documentation lists. Also, it is **worthwhile** to contact specialists in the **field** who could give **some** **useful** advice. From each **relevant** source the required information along with the **bibliographical** details is **recorded** on a 3" x 5" card. After the available sources have been **completely** sifted **through**, the cards so **compiled** are arranged **according** to the **predetermined** order of the design. When the information on a card is to be **utilised** as a reference in more than **one** section, **required** **number** of copies should be made from the card and filed in the **appropriate** sections. These cards are also used for the **compilation** of **Bibliography** and notes, at a later **stage**.

= l.c.  
tr. caps  
= l.c.  
= w.f.  
= l.c.

**The Schedule**

As soon as the outline of the Work is **ready**, an **arbitrary** time schedule **should** be prepared, and the author should have some idea in advance about the **approximate** date of completion of the work.

= l.c. el

**Basic Revision**

When the **preliminary** text is ready, it should be given a **thorough** revision. At **this** **stage** **little** correction work **should** be left for the publishing concern. Since writing **English in India** is based on **British** **stds.**, only **British** **spellings** should be used. **Punctuation**, abbreviations, **rendering** of **mathematical** material, notes, bibliography etc., should be carefully **recorded** and **consistency** maintain\*

# L  
9 #  
= caps  
el ?

**1.5 SPECIMEN OF A CORRECTED GALLEY PROOF**

In these times of ours when publishers **are** besieged with manuscripts, a good physical presentation of your ideas in a manuscript **will** do wonders in favourably impressing the publisher. If the manuscript is got up in an appropriate manner and complete in all respects, one can hope for its quick evaluation by the publisher. It is with **this** aim in mind that this Unit has been written. The important points which an author should know about the preparation and submission of manuscripts have been briefly discussed below.

Outline: Let us start with the author who has a topic to work on. Before the actual work is begun a basic design of the topic, depending **upon** the theme and purpose of the publication, **is prepared**. At this stage all the existing published information on the subject is gathered.

The required materials, **besides** books and articles in **periodicals**, should be traced from reference **books**, bibliographies, **special** library catalogues and documentation lists. Also, it is **worthwhile** to contact specialists in the field who could give useful advice. From each **relevant** source the required information, along with the bibliographical details, is **recorded** on a 3" x 5" card. After the available sources have been completely sifted through, the cards so compiled are **arranged** according to the predetermined order of the design. When the information on a card is to be **utilised** as a reference in more than **one** section, the **required** number of copies should be made from the card and filed in the appropriate sections. These cards are also used for the compilation of a **bibliography** and notes, at a later stage.

**Time schedule:** As soon as the outline of the work is ready, a tentative **time** schedule should be prepared, and the author should have some idea in advance about the approximate date of **completion** of the work.

**Basic revision:** When the **preliminary** text is ready, it should be given a **thorough** revision. At this stage, little correction work should be left for the **publishing** concern. Since **English** in India is based on British standards, only British **spellings** should be used. Punctuation, abbreviations, rendering of mathematical material, notes, **bibliography etc.**, should be carefully recorded and consistency **maintained**.

### Activity

Proof-read the following pages using the proof-reading symbols given at **item** 1.3.6.

From 1557 when first book was printed in India by a Jesuit missionary to 1980's when about 17,000 titles are published every year, Indian publishing **has** created a history of **four** and a quarter centuries. This history in order to prepare the balance **sheet** keeping mainly in view of vastness of our country, the number of languages we speak, the growth of literacy the colonial impact on the **growth** of government in the recent past after Independence. **All** these factors, coupled with many more have contributed to varied levels of growth in Indian publishing both **Qualitatively** and **quantitatively**. In some states like Kerala and **Tamilnadu** the publishing has improved a great deal, but **in** most of the other states, and **in** the country as a **whole**, publishing in India **has** yet to make its mark. Why has it taken so long, when a country

like Japan with a vigorous **publishing** history of only one century ranks **among** the first four countries in the field of book production: Indian ranks 12th in this list? In this article such as I will **highlight** some of the important factors that are responsible for the haphazard growth in **Indian** Publishing and would like to note the important challenges that are now before the **Indian** publishers

**Publish Establishments** The **publishing establishments** in India are **generally small**. And, the bigger publishing houses, a few dozens only in number are **much smaller than** the big **international publishing** houses in terms of capital, number of employees, the **number** of copies sold and the amount of sales per year. For instance, in Japan, ninety-five publishers out of about 3,000 have a Capital of 100,010,000 yen. **Six** publishers keep a staff of 1000 each **including** a large number of Editors. And, more than 70 publishers have a staff ranging from 201 to 1000 each. One wonders, as to how the publishers in Japan have grown so big in their business and establishment when in India most of the publishing houses are doing small business.

(Check your answer with the model answer given at the end of this Unit.)

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## 1.6 SUMMING UP

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If you feel that, as a creative writer, you are not concerned with the mechanical act of proof-reading, you are sadly mistaken. Just as an author has to be his own editor, he also has to be his own proof-reader. This is because the author is the person who is most intimately familiar with the subject matter. He alone, therefore, should be the proper person to proof-read his copy with a view to **checking** up all printer's errors. **All** that a writer has to do is to learn a few commonly used symbols which **will** enable him to ensure that the final printed copy is accurate in all respects. If an author chooses to leave the task to some other proof-reader, he runs **the** risk of letting several printer's errors stay in the text. **Will** this not damage an author's reputation?

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## 1.7 ACTIVITY: MODEL ANSWER

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From 1557 when the **first** book was printed in India by a Jesuit missionary to 1980s when about **17,000 titles** are published every year, Indian **publishing** has

created a **history of four** and a **quarter centuries**. **This** history should **be judged** in order to prepare the **balance-sheet, keeping** mainly in view the vastness **of** our country, the number of languages **we** speak, the growth of literacy and the readers, the colonial impact **on the** growth of indigenous literature and the efforts made by **the** publishers and **the** government in the **recent** past, after Independence. **All** these factors, coupled **with many** more, have contributed to varied levels of growth in Indian publishing, **both** qualitatively and quantitatively. In some States **like Kerala** and **Tamilnadu**, **publishing** has improved a great deal, but in most of the other States, and in the **country** as a whole, publishing has yet to make its mark. Why has it taken so long, when a country like Japan with a vigorous publishing history of **only** one century ranks **among** the first four countries in the field of book production? India ranks 12th in this list. In **this** article I will **highlight** some of the important factors that are **responsible** for the haphazard growth in Indian publishing and note the important **challenges** that are now before the Indian publishers.

#### Publishing **Establishments**

The publishing establishments in India are generally **small**. And the bigger publishing houses, a few dozen only in number, are much smaller than the big international **publishing** houses in terms of capital, number of employees, the number of copies sold **and** the amount of sales per year. For instance, in Japan, ninety-five publishers out of about 3,000 **have** a capital of 100,010,000 yen. **Six** publishers keep a staff **of 1000** each, including a large number of editors. And more than 70 publishers **have** a staff ranging from 201 to **1000** each. One wonders as to how the publishers in **Japan** have grown so big in their business and establishment when in India most of **the** publishing houses are doing small business.

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## 1.8 GLOSSARY

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You will find in the **Glossary** a short list of the terms used in this Unit.

**Linotype:** machine for **producing** lines of words at one casting as substitute for type-setting with **single types**, used in printing newspapers.

**Monotype:** impression **on** paper from inked design on glass etc.; composing machine that casts and **sets** up single type.

**Compositor:** one who **sets** up type for printing.