Just a few last-minute hints . . .

- Beware of words like *very* and *really*. They're rarely necessary and weaken your point.
- “All” means all! Be careful how and when you use it. Do you really mean “all”? (The same goes for *everyone, everything*, etc.)
- Numbers above ten can be written with numerals; single digit numbers should be written as words. Some exceptions: 1) Whenever a number begins a sentence, it must be written out in words. 2) If you’re using other numbers in a sentence or paragraph, you may want to break the rule so that all are either words or numerals.
- Dates – write them correctly: September 17, 1787 or September 17th. Do not mix formats.
- Generally, commas and periods go inside the quotation marks (“ . . . fight.”) while question marks and exclamation points go outside.
- Speaking of exclamation points, do not use them! I’m using them here because this is an informal note to you; your paper is formal writing and exclamation points have no place unless it is within a quote.
- Beware of abbreviations. In formal writing, few abbreviations are used. When in doubt, spell it out. An exception is when you are using an organization, for example, such as the Royal Air Force, or RAF. Spell it out the first time, they use the abbreviation thereafter.
- Remember transitions … 1) Transition sentences to open a new supporting point 2) Transition words and phrases, such as also, however, needless to say, consequently, in addition, first, finally, therefore, obviously… and a hundred others. These make your paper flow.
- Generally, you will use people’s last names when referring to them in a paper. For example, Morse would be used, not Samuel, when referring to Samuel F. B. Morse. When starting a new supporting point, however, use the full name.
- Did you know that TWO SPACES must follow the end of a sentence when typing? Commas, colons, semi-colons, quotation marks all are followed by one space. High schools and colleges are very picky about this, so get in the habit now.