WHEN SHOULD YOU CAPITALIZE WORDS?

☐ **PROPER NOUNS**
- A person's name, a title, or a place

Example: Sadly, President Barack Obama no longer lives in the White House.

☐ **NAMES OF PROGRAMS, GROUPS, ETC.**
- Capitalize official groups and organizations
- If it has an acronym, it is probably capitalized

Example: There are specific Department of Education (DOE) standards.

☐ **NAMES OF PRODUCTS AND DEPARTMENT NAMES**

Example: I love Ben and Jerry's ice cream.
Example: Let me check with my Sales employees.

☐ **GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES, TIME PERIODS, AND HISTORICAL EVENTS**

Example: She is Canadian and he's from the Twin Cities.
Example: Dinosaurs lived in the Jurassic era.

☐ **GROUPS, RELIGIONS, AND LANGUAGES**

Example: He is a practicing Muslim studying French literature.

☐ **TITLES**
- Capitalize all words except for articles, conjunctions, and prepositions

Example: Practicing Positive Reinforcement in the Classroom
- If a title is two sentences, or contains a colon, always capitalize the first word after the punctuation

Example: Please Don't Eat That: A Guide to Poisonous Plants for Children

☐ **NAMES OF MAJOR PORTIONS OF YOUR DOCUMENT**

Example: See Appendix A for an example.

WHEN SHOULD YOU CAPITALIZE WORDS?

☐ **LISTS**
- Items in a list should begin with a capital letter, whether they're complete sentences or not

Example: The purposes of this report are:
- To evaluate the performance of the instruments
- To expand the database

☐ **NAMES OF TIME PERIODS AND HISTORICAL EVENTS**

Example: Dinosaurs lived in the Jurassic era.
Example: He fled Europe before the Holocaust.

DON'T CAPITALIZE . . .

☐ **NAMES OF SEASONS**

Example: I love Portland in the summer.

☐ **DIRECTIONS**

Example: The office is two blocks north of here.

☐ **ELEMENTS, PLANTS, OR ANIMALS**

Example: My favorite plant is the orchid; my favorite animal is the beluga whale.

☐ **TO EMPHASIZE SOMETHING**
- Use italics, bold, or underline instead

Example: I am SO hungry.
Instead: I am **so** hungry.

QUICK AND DIRTY TIP: ASSUME IT'S LOWERCASE UNLESS IT'S A PROPER NOUN.