

# EDITING: GENERAL

## GO THROUGH YOUR STORY AND ...

- Run an automated spellchecker. You'll be surprised how many typos you catch, but that's only a start. Use an online grammar checker or get someone else to read and edit. Seriously consider a professional editor.
- Omit needless words.
- Avoid subtle redundancies. ("He clapped his hands." What else would he clap?)
- Use the word "that" only for clarity – otherwise delete it.
- Avoid overuse of adjectives particularly double adjectives. Focus on strong nouns and verbs.
- Maintain a single point of view in each scene (and yes, famous authors violated this rule).
- Show don't tell. Don't over explain the obvious. If someone puts their fist into a wall, we know they are mad.
- Avoid clichés.
- Avoid describing mannerisms. Andrea dropped to her knees. "I'm scared". Instead, Andrea dropped to her knees in fear.
- Avoid similar descriptions of characters. It's easy for a reader to get confused.
- Every character you introduce by name has to change somehow. They all need stories. Cut characters out if they don't.
- Cut anything that doesn't contribute something to the story. What about that beautiful prose you wrote for a dream sequence that has no influence on the plot and doesn't contribute to the characterization? Cut it.
- Assure characters are well rounded in fiction and memoir. Make sure to describe them thoroughly.



# EDITING: DIALOGUE

GO THROUGH YOUR STORY AND CHECK THAT THE DIALOGUE...

- Makes it clear who is speaking and their relationship
- Makes it clear why they are speaking – there is a point to the conversation that ...
  - Develops the story
  - Develops the characters
  - Introduces new information
  - Is appropriate to the speaker's personality
- Writing format is consistent
- Conveys appropriate body language
- Conveys subtext through word choice, pauses, and interruptions
- Conveys the speaker's personalities
- Hints at things unsaid or plot points
- Conveys emotions appropriate to the personality characteristics
- Conveys convincing arguments that end with a clear outcome
- Includes a pace to the conversation appropriate to the scene, and finally
- Contains something memorable



# EDITING: STORY

GO THROUGH YOUR STORY AND CHECK FOR ...	CHAPTER & PAGE NO. THAT NEED EDITED
<input type="checkbox"/> Weak opening	
<input type="checkbox"/> Weak ending	
<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of story development	
<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of character development	
<input type="checkbox"/> Too much information	
<input type="checkbox"/> Missing or insufficient information	
<input type="checkbox"/> Pacing problems - too fast or too slow	
<input type="checkbox"/> Illogical / unconvincing behavior	
<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of character motivation	
<input type="checkbox"/> Confusing description of action	
<input type="checkbox"/> Confusing description of thoughts / emotions	
<input type="checkbox"/> Confusing description of setting	
<input type="checkbox"/> Timeline errors / anachronisms	
<input type="checkbox"/> Inconsistencies in character appearance	
<input type="checkbox"/> Unresolved plot threads	



# EDITING: WORD USE

GO THROUGH YOUR STORY AND CHECK FOR ...	CHAPTER & PAGE NO. THAT NEED EDITED
<input type="checkbox"/> Unnecessary repetition of words or phrases	
<input type="checkbox"/> Misspelled words or awkward phrases	
<input type="checkbox"/> Repetitive sentence length	
<input type="checkbox"/> Repetitive sentence structure	
<input type="checkbox"/> Unclear sentences / passages	
<input type="checkbox"/> Inconsistencies in tense	
<input type="checkbox"/> Ambiguous pronouns	
<input type="checkbox"/> Inconsistencies in use of names and titles	
<input type="checkbox"/> Inconsistencies in formatting thoughts	
<input type="checkbox"/> Inconsistencies in capitalization	
<input type="checkbox"/> Missing sections	
<input type="checkbox"/> Inconsistencies in voice and tone	
<input type="checkbox"/> Inconsistencies in settings	
<input type="checkbox"/> Inconsistencies in point of view	
<input type="checkbox"/> Awkward sentences	
<input type="checkbox"/> Misused words	

