

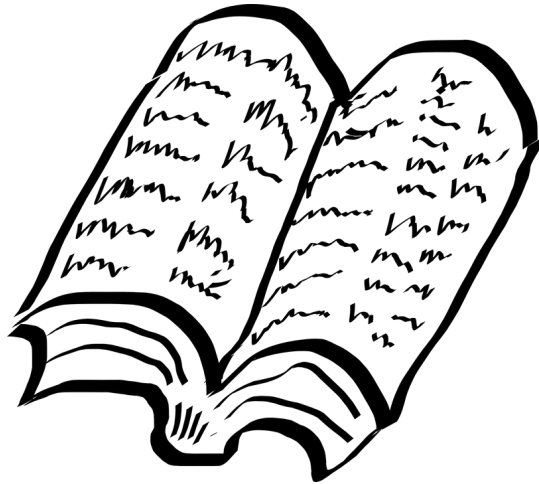


Wielding the Red Pen

How to Make Revisions

About First Drafts

- Stories aren't written. They're re-written.
- Your first draft will not be perfect—don't put that pressure on yourself.
- It can be good, or it can be done. Not both.



Before You Revise...

- Take time away from the piece, so you can come back with fresh eyes.
- Ideally, make sure you're well fed, rested, etc. before sitting back down to write.



Order of Operations



- Bigger edits first.
- Do structural and character edits *before* you look at things like word choice and typos.
- This helps you spend less time polishing prose you'll never actually use.

Questions to Ask Yourself



- What is your intention for the piece?
- How have your characters changed (or failed to change)?
- Is there a beginning, middle, and end?
- What feeling do you want to leave your reader with?
- Does the finish have any loose plot threads needing resolution?

Kill Your Darlings

- Sometimes you'll have to get rid of a line or scene you really like because it doesn't serve the overall plot/structure.
- If you're on the fence, take a moment and ask yourself if it really needs to be there.
- You can always save the line or scene in another document to use somewhere else.



Not all Feedback is Created Equal

- When you're getting feedback ask yourself these questions...
 - How well does that feedback fit with your intention for the piece?
 - How many people had the same concern?
 - Is this person comfortable telling you when something isn't right?
 - What stage is the piece in?



Micro-Edits

- Spell check will not fix everything.
- Reading the piece aloud helps you spot typos.
- Eventually, you'll stop catching things because you've seen the piece too many times. Take a break, or ask a friend to look it over for you.



Revision Exercise

- Revise your worst story ever exercise from session one.
- Take the piece that most speaks to you throughout the course and revise it.

