



# Self-Editing for Fiction Authors Redefining & Rethinking Editing

Julie L. York

Presenter



You know there is  
More to editing than  
grammar and punctuation—  
but did you know that  
**ANYONE** can learn to edit  
their own writing?



Did you know...  
by re-thinking  
what editing is,  
you can learn ways  
of editing that work  
*with* your style and genre?



What if I told you,  
editing starts before  
you write one word?



## In this presentation I'm going to:

- help you learn a new way to think of editing
- show you a few ways to work WITH what you already do
- show you how to be aware of your weaknesses
- show you how to fit self-editing into a system you are comfortable with

# Redefining, Rethinking Editing





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- change on a computer



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- add



# Plotter vs. Pantser

If editing is something you do before you write, then which one you are matters a lot.



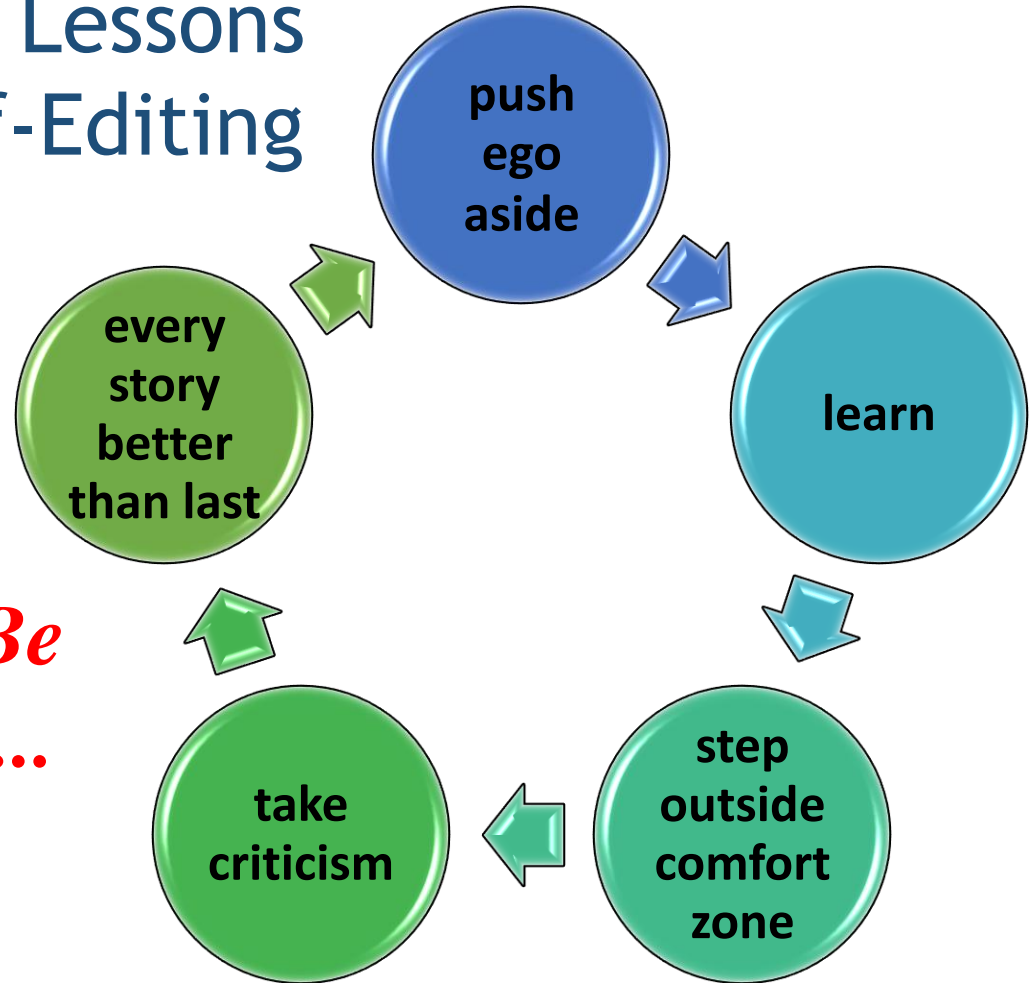
## "The 5 Most Common Writing Mistakes that Break Reader Immersion"

by Jefferson Smith

*"When we draw a graph of the WTF frequencies...I was absolutely shocked to see the following results. Yes, mechanical editing is the single most common WTF type...But as a group...accounting for only 25% of all the WTFs. Instead, problems with the way the story is being told are...accounting for almost half (44%) of all the WTFs. And problems with the planning or design of the story account for an additional third (31%). So, combined, 75% of the problems...were for issues that have nothing to do with copy editing." ...*

*"So if you weren't previously aware that readers pay attention to story logic, details of your invented worlds, realistic character behaviors, and so on, don't allow yourself to continue being that kind of author. Become aware."*

# Important Lessons About Self-Editing



***You Must Be  
Willing To...***





# PRE-WRITING

## This is Editing



# PRE-WRITING

## This is Editing

Genre?

Setting?

Length?

Names?

Audience?

When?

Who?

Plot?





# PRE-WRITING

## This is Editing

Story Basics Every Author Needs to At Least Think About Before Writing:

- Beginning
- Middle
- End
- Hero/Bad Guy
- Conflict
- Relationship
- HEA vs HFN



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# PRE-WRITING

## This is Editing

You Need a System

# PRE-WRITING

## This is Editing



### A-Ha Moments

- paper
- digital

### Color Coding

- paper
- digital

### Notebooks

- one vs. many

### Phones

- apps

### Storyboards



# PRE-WRITING

## This is Editing

What Goes In Your System?



# PRE-WRITING

## This is Editing

What Goes In Your System?

Anything & Everything  
You Need to Keep Track of...



# PRE-WRITING

## This is Editing

Tools to Keep Your System Organized

Non-Technology Based Tools



# PRE-WRITING

## This is Editing

Tools to Keep Your System Organized

Single Software Tools





# PRE-WRITING

## This is Editing

Tools to Keep Your System Organized

Multiple Software Tools



# DURING & AFTER WRITING

## Self-Editing Rules

### Rule #1

At the end of EVERY writing session, use the built in grammar and spell check.



# DURING & AFTER WRITING

## Self-Editing Rules

### Rule #2

Line Edit after each grammar and spell check - do NOT worry about content.



# DURING & AFTER WRITING

## Self-Editing Rules

### Rule #3

After typing "The End"..  
Walk. Away.



# DURING & AFTER WRITING

## Self-Editing Rules

### Rule #3a

Print out the story, double spaced, ½" margins, single sided. Now edit for content, and ONLY content. Twice. First, for huge holes, then for scenes.



# DURING & AFTER WRITING

## Self-Editing Rules

### Rule #3b

Print a clean copy and do an in depth line edit search. Read Out Loud, or have it read to you. Do NOT mix editing—you can't look through a microscope and telescope at the same time.



# DURING & AFTER WRITING

## Self-Editing Rules

### Rule #4

This really is Rule #1 of all editing Rules,  
but only happens After "The End"...

You Need a REAL editor,  
preferably two. Content and Line.



# DURING & AFTER WRITING

## Self-Editing Rules

### Rule #5

Make use of Beta and ARC readers.





Seems like a cake walk, right?

But...

there is SO much I didn't cover



## Here's some of things we couldn't do:

1. Specifics about each system I mentioned
2. MORE systems, non tech and tech based
3. Full list & descriptions of everything that should go in a system, and how to decide what you need
4. Details and How To Use each system and organization
5. More details about those Self-Editing Rules
6. Comprehensive list of content/line edits to look for
7. In depth look at books, blogs, and sites all authors can use
8. FREE online software, and How To Use them...
9. ...



# Self Editing



for fiction authors

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