



Different Kinds of Editing

(From information that Verve Editorial in Seattle sends potential clients)

THE EDITING PROCESS

An editor is a professional trained to read, analyze and suggest improvements to others' writing. An editor works collaboratively with an author, helping the writer express his or her ideas and shape a manuscript into its best possible form. Below we've described three main phases of editing:

Developmental/Structural Editing

- “Big-picture” editing of a completed (or near-complete) manuscript. Editor objectively analyzes the manuscript as a whole and comments on overall structure, clarity, voice, theme, character development, plot, pacing, and factual inconsistencies. *Culminates in a written critique of the manuscript.*
- Developmental editing sometimes involves working with an author to develop a book or other document from initial concept, outline, or draft through any number of subsequent drafts.
- It can also involve researching, or making suggestions on content and organization based on analysis of competing works.

Substantive Editing (“Line Editing”)

A comprehensive edit of your work, focusing on language issues and organization of existing content *at the paragraph-by-paragraph level*. Editor(s) will flag or make suggestions regarding:

- Smoothing transitions; reorganizing, tightening, rephrasing, trimming, or suggesting rewrites of sentences or paragraphs for readability and flow and to eliminate ambiguity;
- Identifying and offering suggestions on overall clarity; querying the Author about inconsistencies or passages/plot points that need clarifying;
- Editing for consistency of tone, also noting repetition or overused words;
- Flagging any names (people and places), dates, and sources cited for fact-checking/confirmation by the Author.

Copyediting (“Mechanical Editing”)

A comprehensive edit of your work, focusing on mechanical issues, including:

- Correcting spelling, grammar, punctuation, syntax and word usage, while preserving the meaning and voice of the original text.
- Checking for and imposing a consistent style and format (e.g., treatment of capitalization, punctuation, numbers, hyphenation, use of abbreviations, etc.);
- Preparing a style sheet that documents style and formatting decisions.
- Some fact-checking, if agreed upon by Author and Editor

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The Author-Editor Clinic
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