

A Quick & Dirty Guide to Revising your Novel

Lesson 6: Typing in changes and feeling good.

Wow. You did it. You finished Lesson 5, and now you're almost at the end! Can you FEEL THE EXCITEMENT?

This lesson will be (compared to the others) a piece of cake. The first part is completely mindless.

Supplies Needed Today:

- A computer
- Your revised, scrawled-upon manuscript
- A comfy chair

Typing It All In

As the title suggests, you will be taking your novel and typing in the changes. Some pages will require more work, some will be easy. But you will go page-by-page until you've reached the end of your manuscript.

You'll find a rhythm, but it will still take a while. Don't get annoyed or discouraged--be grateful you can zone out after all that hard work!! And, remember: when you finish, you'll be done! This MS will be ready for other eyes!

Dealing With Line Edits

This is one of those steps that, sadly, I cannot teach you. Mostly because everyone's style is different. What I think is lovely, you might hate.

Another reason I can't teach you is that I simply don't have *time* to train you in the more stylistic tools of the trade (from punctuation and grammar to voice and diction). I will assume you already have this wrench in your toolbox.

Line-edits are critical. If your novel doesn't flow, then that agent/editor probably won't be interested.

So when to do this important step?

The easy answer is LAST. Just like you would if you were working with a publishing house, line-edits are the final step in revising.

The more advanced answer is WHEN YOU CAN. I find that my second draft is usually pretty smooth, but if I print it out (poor trees--I know!) and read the MS again, I'll find areas that need polishing. Yes, it takes time and requires more typing-in later, but it's the only way I can really iron out my prose.

You might find you can line-edit well enough during the written changes--Lesson 5. Or perhaps you can line-edit while you type-in (this lesson). It's really up to you to find out what works.

Feeling Good

And that, my friends, is it. I have nothing left to teach you--or nothing I can conjure at this precise moment.

You should be really freakin' proud of yourself right about now. You just conquered a novel. A WHOLE NOVEL! And the manuscript you now possess is without a doubt ten bazillion times stronger than the one you started with.

You rock. I'm proud of you, and you should be proud of you to.

Now go have a cookie. You totally earned it.

And, as always, if you have ANY questions, ask them in the comments!!