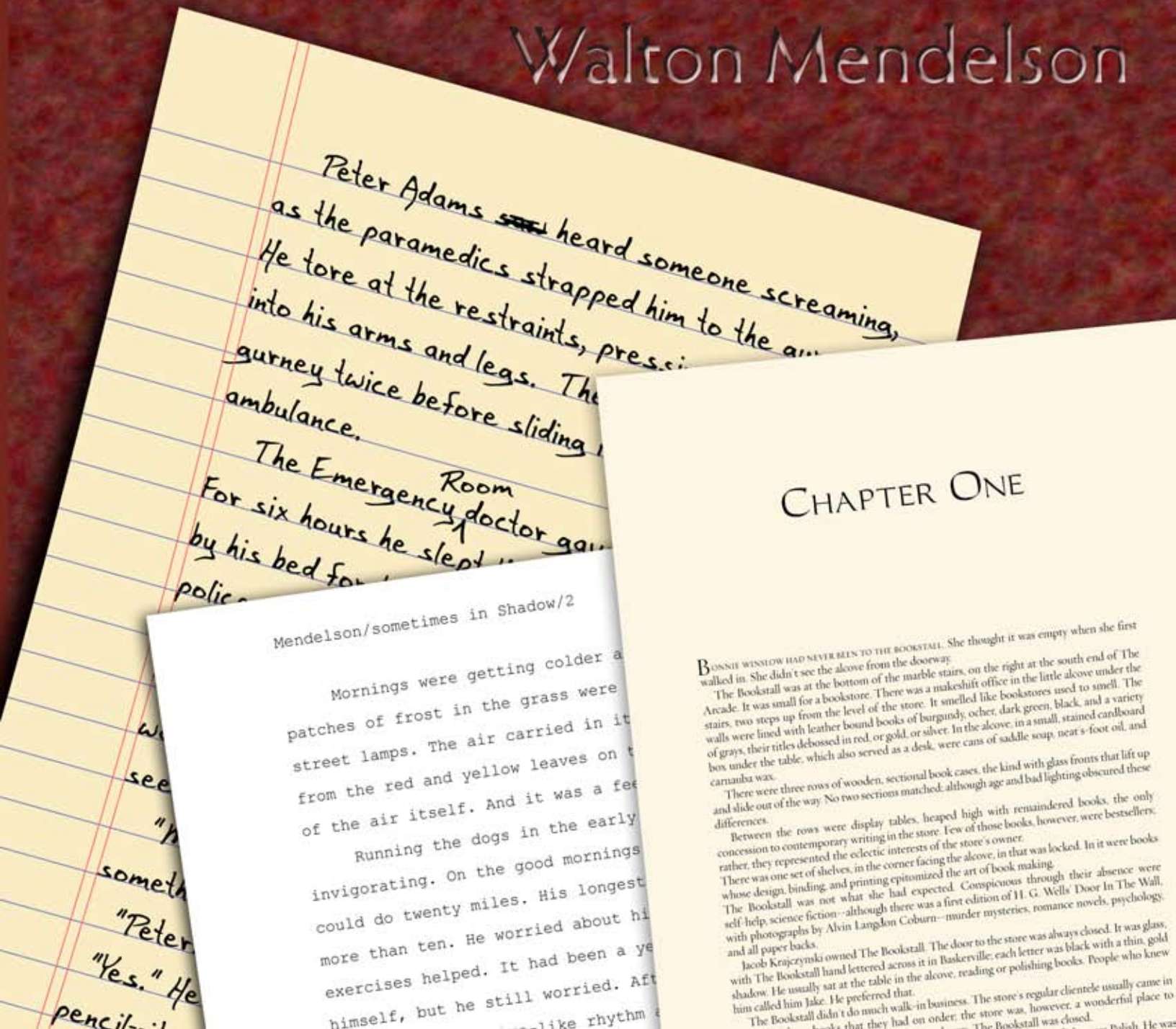
Fallacies, Fables, and Fiction

a complete guide to writing your first book

Walton Mendelson



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Introduction

Do you want to write a book, or have you started? Have you asked, "Where do I start? What do I do next?" If yes, *Fallacies, Fables, and Fiction* is for you.

I once edited a book by a newspaper reporter. He should have known and done better. It was a good story told badly. Not only were there spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors, it was typed single spaced with small margins. It was not a rough first draft, but the final one. It could not be scanned because the old typewriter should have been cleaned. Most of the counters (the enclosed parts of *o*'s, *e*'s, *d*'s etc.) were filled so they all came out the same when scanned and the manuscript had to be to be retyped. With a little more effort on his part, it could have been a good story told well.

It might occur to you that your library has a book or two about how to write a book. But even a modestly sized library might have hundreds of how-to books. Whatever—memoirs, murder mysteries, science fiction, romance, the great American novel—it's there and more. When I wrote my first book, no single book helped, but a few did. *Fallacies, Fables and Fiction* will try to address some of the things I wish I had known early on.

Lincoln's Gettysburg Address was 285 words; Edward Everett's was 13,590 words.

I want to give you bits and pieces that will help you be comfortable with the process.

What is surprising is that even if you know how to write and have taken classes on writing, a book is a unique animal.

If you've already written a book, you probably know how to begin book two, which is not to say you can't learn more, but this book is for the anyone either in the throes of their first book or about to start.

When I was teaching Adult Basic Education and literacy, I realized how having too ambitious a goal can undermine your best efforts. The program was voluntary, so my goal was to see my students come back the next day. Here, my first goal is to encourage you to write your book. My second goal is to show you how to make it better.

Although I will tend to describe the novel, I hope that if you are working on any other book length format you'll find equal help, including screenplays and stage plays. So when I say *book*, take it in the most general sense.

I was chatting with an editor from Simon & Schuster at a party. Someone said, "I've always wanted to write a book." The editor smiled and said, "Then write it." So simple, almost blunt, but true.

If you have asked, "Where do I start? What do I do next?" here is my answer: *write your book.* Write your first page, then the second, then the third . . . . I don't want to be flippant, so here are some things to consider.

Never judge a book by its movie—J. W. Eagan

Every writer I know has trouble writing—Joseph Heller

Write your first draft from your heart. Rewrite with your head—
from *Finding Forrester*

What is a Book

A book is a group of pages that are bound. Empty books might be sketch books or diaries. Books can have pictures, no pictures, stories, memoirs, whatever. *Fallacies, Fables, and Fiction* is about how to write your book. Getting published is another story—many how-to-write books end by explaining how, with a few query letters, you'll get an agent and get published, during which time you'll write your next book—see Association of Author's Representatives (www.aaronline.org/mc/page.do); for necessary warnings see Writer Beware (www.sfwwa.org/BEWARE/agents.html).

Years ago, books had to be of a certain length. Books under about 50 pages, or a quarter inch thick including content and covers were treated by binderies as juvenile books, and published to meet certain physical standards. Today, with digital files, digital images, and print on demand books, small books are much more practical.

The question you need to resolve is whether or not your story can become a novel: not all stories can. The conflict and characters must be of enough substance that you have the stuff to write.

In general, a poem places tremendous weight and expectation on each word. Think of the meaning of a haiku:

Snow will fall
It is cold
The caw of one crow

How much is expected from a few words.

Conspiracy of silence: Attributed to the Victorian poet Sir Lewis Morris. He said to Oscar Wilde, "Oscar, there's a conspiracy of silence against me. What shall I do?" "Join it," Wilde said.

A short story ranges from the 500 word micro story (Kawabata called them *palm-of-the-hand stories*, others call them *flash fiction*) to 7,500-10,000 words. One might think of the average short story as being around 2,000 to 2,500 words. It usually has one incident, a single plot, and few characters. A novella runs 20,000-40,000 words.

A novel is usually 40,000 words and up. Typically it has many characters, subplots, locations, and it may cover a broader period of time. It is the most expansive narrative form. Less is expected from each word than from words in the shorter forms. That is not to say that you can get away with the almost right word, but simply that less is needed from each word to convey your ideas.

Proportional to length is the concreteness of the propelling idea of the work. A poem must be far more abstract than a novel. We expect longer works to be specific.

My friend Brent was brutally murdered. He was a wonderful person and a gifted artist. Jane, his wife, also a talented artist, became the suspect, as spouses usually do. They had been planning a birthday lunch for her grandmother, and she spent the morning with her before going home to pick him up and then going for lunch. Jane returned home to find Brent dead on the kitchen floor with a 10" chief's knife in his back, his face bashed in with two large rocks. The police botched the

investigation. No charges were brought against her. Her lawyer advised her to sell her house and move. She did, and no one here has seen her or heard from her since. For the record, I believe she is innocent. I suspect a mutual acquaintance of the murder, but no one cares.

If I wanted to write about my or Jane's feelings of loss, I might write a short poem.

If I wanted to tell the outline of the story and show the horror of returning home to find her life turned upside down, I might write a short story.

If I wanted to explore the story, watch how the murder split families and rippled through the community; if I wanted to have a trial and study how the jurors dealt with it, I'd write a novel.

A non-fiction book would examine the crime and the evidence. It would follow the police investigators, and it would show a tragically botched investigation, with no justice, regardless who might have committed the crime.

If I were making a movie of it, I might show the murder and exaggerate Jane's plight, with the police watching her every move. Either before a trial or during it, her lawyer's investigator would find the evidence—evidence willfully overlooked by the police—that would exonerate her.

If I were making a stage play, I might concentrate on a trial or a family, showing how a single murder could ripple outwards shredding people's lives far removed from the actual murder.

There are, of course, many other possibilities for each format, but I want to show quickly how the story's complexity or simplification is served by each format. Movies, plays, and short stories cannot show as much as a novel. Each form controls the nature of the content.

Clue: In the late 1300's a *clue* or *clew* meant a ball of yarn or thread. By the 1500's, people used clues to guide them out of labyrinths and mazes: a clue helps solve a mystery.

Contrary to the common myth that anything can happen in fiction: only one thing can happen in a story, if the story is told well. Nothing else will work. Whereas, *anything* can happen in real life that often cannot be written because it would not be believed.

Many years ago, I was sitting with a friend in his attic apartment, drinking beer on a hot, muggy, summer afternoon. He asked me one of those youthful, third beer, questions, "You ever wonder what happened to someone? Really wonder?"

He asked, so I said that in fact I had. Some years before, several Dürer wood cuts were stolen from the Cleveland Museum of Art. The newspapers called it the work of an international art theft ring. But within days what had actually happened came out. A high school student—I was in high school at that time, and I loved the museum—had discovered the museum. He had grown up in a part of the city that did not have field trips to the museum, or a culture that saw the museum as an asset. He fell in love with the Dürer's. They were in flag mounts: metal standards with two sheets of glass and two images between them. These stuck out from the walls like flags. Mounted in a hall by the cafeteria, he watched people walk by them without any notice. What he loved with a passion were ignored and neglected, so he took two.

When the papers started writing about the international art theft he went to his priest, who then negotiated the return of the wood cuts; and with their safe return, no charges were brought against him. "I wonder what ever happened to him."

My friend's face was ashen. "Are you okay?" I asked.

"You're talking with him," he whispered.

That's it. A great little story, absolutely true. But were the odds? Who would accept it as the *right*

ending for a two thousand word story, or a scene in a book? Just because it is true, does not make it believable.

But it couldn't it be told? I told the story to the curator of photography at the Getty. He said, "Impossible," no such thing could have happened under Sherman Lee's directorship at the Cleveland Museum of Art. The curator would not have been the reader of such a tale, but he represented a highly informed one—who knew such things could never happen. But it had, so I told him another story: about how Frederick Sommer had had a show there in 1964 and two of the photographs were returned with ballpoint pen scribbles on them. "Impossible!" But I had seen the check from the Cleveland Museum of Art to Sommer, and I had read the correspondences between Lee and Sommer that stretched out over close to three years. "Impossible!" Yes, I tried a third time. After Sherman Lee's retirement, I was at a party with him. He said, "I know everything about art, but I don't know what I like." A playful turn of phrase? His real feelings? I don't know, but I repeated it.… "Impossible." (Sherman Lee was a remarkable director, and I meant none of the stories to be derogatory in any way. I assume that most museums, not least the Getty, would have some very interesting stories; certainly, Thomas Hoving, who retired as director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1977, published quite a few.)

In telling a story, there is an internal truth: something that supports and sustains the fictive dream. Something that makes the story worth telling and worth believing. John Gardner would say that good art is moral—not in the sense of ethics or religion, but that there is in it something that speaks to us.

A book—novella, short story, play, screenplay—starts with character and conflict: the hero and the villain fighting like two dogs over a bone. (We will see these two dogs again.) It uses contrast—from the sentence level, the paragraph, the scene, to the chapter—to tell the story: alternating between this/that, long/short, good/bad, fast/slow, action/non-action, summary/scene, description/dialogue, fact/metaphor, etc. Often their are several things happening, and the resolution may extend over some time or come in a flash.

If you think that none of this applies to you because you are writing a nonfiction—say a history, travel, or science book—you haven't read Barbara Tuchman, Bill Bryson, or Dava Sobel.

Step 1:
Write Your book

It is easy to get distracted or overwhelmed by trying to write the perfect sentence; and it's harder still to finish a book. Get it done. Only you can write your book. Write it and finish it!

At some point, you should be aware of the proper format for your book, see page 49. I feel that it is easiest to work in the correct format; however, if this is too much, remember, the format means nothing if you don't finish your book.

Some writers edit as they write; but most write then edit and revise. Here are several strategies: Write the entire book—rough, down and dirty—then go back and edit and revise. Or, start each day's writing by reading and editing what you wrote the day before. The hybrid: write with some editing as you go. It is easy to get sidetracked looking for the right word or name for something: have good reference books (including visual dictionaries); use the computer for searches; set a time limit (if after X minutes you cannot find the word leave an underlined space, or type in the closest word and highlight it; on a "rainy" day, you can go on a quest for that word or fact).

Just as easy as it is to get distracted looking for the right word, it is easy to get trapped doing research. Set limits.

Some writers plot their stories then write. Some have an idea, then have a run at it. There is no right way. For me, I get see a character who comes to me with a conflict. I know, also, if not the actual words of the last sentence, the sense of it, which acts like a beacon towards which I hope my characters will go.

What do you do if your hero doesn't act heroically? Doesn't do what you want? You have two choices. First, like the biographer, you must stick to the plot or facts. Second, if your character surprises you, accept the surprise and follow it. There are pros and cons: these are as varied as there are writers.

I will walk you through the basics, and I will give you reference books to help along the way. But what made my first book hard was trying to figure out what to do next.

The next few pages will briefly talk about a few story-telling issues; but it isn't until Edit and Revise, page 28, that we get into grammatical issues. When I wrote my first book, I made a list of over two hundred things—grammar, techniques, tips—and thought I'd keep it handy as I wrote. Just a check list, and, after all, what better time than when I was writing? Don't do that—it was overwhelming. Absorb what you can. Develop good writing skills, but do not let the quest for perfect grammar or the perfect sentence permit you to stop. Walk away from this book or any book that threatens to overwhelm you—you can always come back.

Cook's tour: Thomas Cook & Son (now Thomas Cook Group) travel agency, in the mid to late 1800's; the name came to stand for a well organized and complete tour.

All you need to finish your book is seat time. At a minimum, try to write one page or one hour every day.

Research

Regardless of whether you are writing fiction or nonfiction, you will do research. For a nonfiction work you will probably do more, but it is surprising how much can go into a novel. A recent TV show took place in Cleveland, where I grew up. There was a reference to a "famous" murder that took place in a park—neither of which existed (memory being what it is, I did an Internet search and found nothing: no park or murder). Places, dates, and the names of things, what cities have airports and what cities don't.... Assume your reader is from where you're writing about and knows something of your subject. Keep in mind, "Who is buried in Grant's tomb?"

For basic facts see the reference book in Tools to Help, page 22**.** Here are some sites that have been helpful:

http://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia
http://www.islamfortoday.com/beliefs.htm
http://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/ —a very good resource
http://www.factcheck.org —discusses US political issues and political discourse
http://www.questia.com —a low cost online library of journals and books
http://en.wikipedia.org/wikiMain_Page —a huge online resource
http://www.loc.gov —the Library of Congress
http://www.bnf.fr —The Bibliothèque Nationale de France

Most of us aren't going to do basic research—conducting experiments, studying primary sources, etc. Rather, we rely on secondary sources. But how do you know a source is credible? Wikipedia, for example, is a somewhat volatile and quasi-anonymous source. Many articles have good references with links. If you get in the habit of following links, you can fairly quickly establish a good resource: each acting as a check on the other. Compare information from site to site and book to book. Look at the references: if you know your subject, you should recognize the names. If an author makes assertions that make no sense or are unsubstantiated, be wary. When you, in turn, make assertions, ask yourself if you could support them if you had to.

Make a folder for your project in your browser's bookmarks or favorites, and bookmark every website that is of interest.

When you keep notes of your source material, keep the URL and the date with it.

Research from books doesn't differ much. Keep good records of your work and sources. And just because it is in a book, do not consider it automatically true.

Set limits to your research. You need to have your facts right, and about some things you need to know more than your reader: but it is easy to get lost in research and lose sight of your book. If, for example, your writing is going well and quickly but you need to refer to a religious rite that you cannot find quickly, write something as a place holder, mark it clearly in your manuscript and move on. Later, on a day when you're doing lots of research, *a rainy day*, look for it.

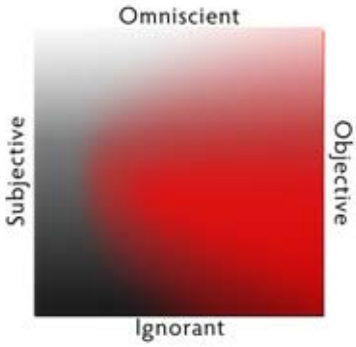
Narrative Modes: Point of View

Who is going to tell your story? A simple question with far ranging consequences.

If one of the characters tells it and refers to himself as *I—I saw her do that*—then it is in the first person. This character cannot know what others are thinking, or events that happen elsewhere out of view: but he knows his own thoughts, which he may relate or not, and he relates the events as he knows them. He talks in his own voice. This narrator may or may not be conscious of telling the story to a given audience. Compared to the other narrative modes, first person is the most remote from the author

Rarely, the narrator refers to the focal character or characters as *you—you did this then you did that*—this is in second person. The reader is intimate to this type of narration, and unavoidably *becomes* one of the characters. It is often told in the present tense. See page 16 for an example, where I was trying to show how you could pace a scene.

The most common narrative mode, and certainly the least limited, is third person. The narrator may be a character or the author. All of the characters in third person are referred to as *he* or *she*, never I, we, or you (except in dialogue). This narrator may be a character or the author, who may be transparent (as invisible as a narrator can be) or not (an author whose presence is never in doubt). This narrator may be located on a graph:



This graphic shows two authorial continua: objective ↔ subjective (knows no thoughts or feelings ↔ knows thoughts and feelings; and ignorant ↔ omniscient (knows nothing ↔ knows everything—all feelings, thoughts, and events). What the reader is told depends on where you position the narrator. This becomes a problem when the reader is given information the narrator could not have known: for example, when the narrator is objective and at some point says what someone is thinking; or when the narrator represents one character, but at some point has knowledge of someone else's thoughts or actions that happened outside of his actual awareness.

The omniscient third person narrator was the narrator of choice in the 19th to early 20th century. Whereas a limited third person narrator—associated with or one of the characters—has been popular for the last sixty years.

Other types of narrative modes include:

- stream of consciousness: where the narration tries to imitate the interior thoughts, feelings, and desires, usually of the narrative or focal character
- unreliable narrator: this narrator cannot be trusted to tell the truthful story. This may be because of bias, ignorance, instability, childishness, etc.
- multiple-person: here there are multiple characters who tell the story, obviously from different point of views.

Tone, Sentences, Paragraphs

As you think about organizing your work, whether fiction or nonfiction, consider your audience and the tone you need. Academic works require a precision regarding fact and citation, but are often nuanced, using longer, more complicated sentences than other forms would require. A children's book, on the other hand, requires simpler, less nuanced, language and sentence structure. Science books written for a popular market, need to have the feel—pacing and style—of a novel, but the rigor of the science they represent. I have tried to keep the tone of *Fallacies, Fables, and Fiction* informal, while most grammar and style books are formal and stuffy.

Sentences can be simple or complex:

> Jacob Krajczynski owned The Bookstall. The Bookstall's door always remained closed. It was glass with *The Bookstall* hand lettered across it in Baskerville; each letter was black with a thin, gold shadow. He usually sat at the table in the alcove, reading or polishing book. People who knew him called him Jake. He preferred that.
>
> The Bookstall did not do much walk-in business. The store's regular clientele usually came in only to pick up books that they had on order; the store was, however, a wonder place to browse. Sometimes The Bookstall was closed during regular business hours.

Nine sentences, ninety-eight words: that's ten words per sentence. Whereas:

> On the other hand, when I briefly speak to you of the Gothic school, with reference to delineation, I mean the entire and much more extensive range of schools extending from the earliest art in Central Asia and Egypt down to our own day in India and China:—schools which have been content to obtain beautiful harmonies of colour without any representation of light; and which have, many of them, rested in such imperfect expressions of form as could be so obtained; schools usually in some measure childish, or restricted in intellect, and similarly childish or restricted in their philosophies or faiths: but contented in the restriction; and in the more powerful races, capable of advance to nobler development than the Greek schools, though the consummate art of Europe has only been accomplished by the union of both. [John Ruskin, *Lectures on Art*]

is one sentence in 138 words. It is hard to find Ruskin's style easy—an entire book of it is an acquired taste—but sometimes a long sentence is necessary. Use sentence style, length, and structure to move the reader through your work. Cleaving to a sameness is deadly dull.

The same can be said of paragraphs. A paragraph can be one or a thousand words. Paragraphs represent a relatively complete thought—we learn to read for comprehension knowing and expecting this—opening with a topic sentence, followed by its development, ending with a conclusion that also acts as a transitional sentence, leading to the next paragraph. A solid, two-page, single paragraph will be harder to read than if it is broken into discrete, smaller, sentence groupings. To find the appropriate points where a new paragraph can start may take some rewriting—but if a paragraph must be long, then accept that and don't artificially break it up.

While you should resist changing your tone, varying the sentences and paragraphs makes your work more accessible and lively.

Pacing

Pacing is the manipulation of time. If you tell your story in short, declarative, sentences, it's over in a few pages. It could be an exciting tell, but it won't engage the reader. This might be how you describe a near traffic accident that happened on your way home: *I was on 240 driving home. I saw a truck in the oncoming lane throwing off sparks. Suddenly its rear wheel broke loose. It passed the truck and bounced across the median towards me. I slammed on the brakes. It passed in front of me by maybe twenty feet. Phew! That was close.* It's not a book. It's not even a short story. But it was exciting, at least to me. It could be a scene in your story, but it cannot be told like that. For example:

You would set it up: *Your day was one meeting after another, phone calls and problems. You might repeat a bit of dialogue from an endless meeting with the CEO, who had nothing to say. It was late when you left the office. All you could think of was getting home.*

You would describe the scene: *It was dusk, the lights of the oncoming cars flash across your windshield. The highway curved through the hilly landscape. Alternating patches of farmland and trees blurred past you. You might see the lights in the houses, and imagine being home, sitting with a drink, glad the day was over. NPR was reporting a story about North Korea.*

You tell the story: *You saw sparks flaring in the distance. More and more. Brighter. "What the hell is that?" you wonder. Perhaps a truck is on fire. "North Korea today launched a test…" You turn the volume down on the radio. The woods end on the far side, and in what's left of the orange glow of the setting sun, you see the truck. It's rear wheel seems to disengage from it. "It's the light," you think, rubbing your eyes. You know you're tired. Then the wheel passes the truck. You wonder if it will flip over and slide to stop. It doesn't. It bounces towards you in menacing twenty-foot leaps. It isn't going to stop! You slam on the brakes, as it passes a few feet in front of you.*

If you told it along those lines, you did several things that are what pacing is about. You controlled the time, creating distance between the beginning of the scene and the climax. You broke up the simple narrative with description and dialogue. There was a kind of reminiscence (being home, having a drink after work). The sentences were varied in length and construction.

The structure of a book is like that. You have five tools: narrative, character, description, dialogue, and style. You use these to tell your story, which usually has an inciting conflict. Alternate these elements (not literally in order and not over and over) to develop each scene, and scene by scene to finish your book. You need distance between the inciting moment and the climax. Keep your reader turning pages.

Most people tell their stories in the third person—*John did this, then he did that*—by the omniscient author—*John thought that the situation was peculiar*. Be sparing, let the character's words and actions show what John thought when it fits the story. You could also tell your story in the first person: *I woke up to find myself on the cold cement floor of the city jail.* This form can add immediacy and excitement, but remember the person telling the story cannot know what other characters are thinking or feeling, nor can things be described from someone else's point of view.

Most people read for character, story, or style. Character: I like Sherlock Holmes, and I want to see

more of him, no matter what happens. Story: Will Jason Bourne survive? Will Treadstone kill him? Will he discover who he is? Style: Nabokov, for example (from *Pnin*):

> The elderly passenger sitting on the north-window side of that inexorably moving railway coach, next to an empty seat and facing two empty ones, was none other than Professor Timofey Pnin.…His sloppy sock were of scarlet wool with lilac lozenges; his conservative black oxfords had cost him about as much as all the rest of his clothing (flamboyant goon tie included.…Now a secret must be imparted. Professor Pnin was on the wrong train. [From the first two pages of *Pnin*]…With the help of the janitor he screwed on to the side of his desk a pencil sharpener—that highly satisfying, highly philosophical implement that goes ticondaroga-ticondaroga, feeding on the yellow finish and sweet wood, and ends up on a kind of soundlessly ethereal void as we all must.…[Or the final paragraph of Chapter Five] The mosquitoes were getting bothersome. Time for tea. Time for a game of chess with Chateau. That strange spasm was over, one could breathe again On the distant crest of the knoll, at the exact spot where Gramineev's easel had stood a few hours before, two dark figures in profile were silhouetted against the ember-red sky. They stood there closely, facing each other. One could not make out from the road whether it was the Poroshin girl and her beau, or Nina Bolotov and young Poroshin, *or merely an emblematic couple placed with easy art on the last page of Pnin's fading day.* [Emphasis added. Note that Nabokov broke the fictive dream by calling attention to himself and telling you that he was ending the chapter that way—like a magician giving away the secret of the trick but dazzling you all the more with his grace and skill.]

I hope you read the excerpts and enjoyed them. There is no shortcut to quickly indicating what I meant by *style*. Character, story, and style: sometimes, if you're lucky, you find all three in one book.

I think it's worth striving for all three and finding the perfect pacing for your story. If this becomes a juggling act with a few too many balls, let it go, but keep it all in mind when you edit and revise your book.

You might think of pacing on several levels. Globally, your story has a beginning, middle and end (thank you Mr. Aristotle), you alternate scenes with more or less action, more or less description, to build towards the climax and dénouement. Strategically: you vary sections, slow and fast, peaceful and stormy. Tactically: you vary the elements and sentence styles within a scene.

The most important aspect of all of this is: if you don't write your book, none of this matters.

Therefore, think about these things while you're out for a walk with the dog, or thinking about what you'll do tomorrow. Think about them when you reread your work. Ask if moving a scene from chapter three to the beginning might not draw the reader in more quickly.

Paraphernalia: when dowries were common, a married woman's property was divided into the dowry (becoming the husband's) and the rest, the *paraphernalia*. From the Latin (org. Greek), *parapherna*: para-beside, pherna-dowery.

Dialogue

Dialogue is essential to a book. It lets the reader hear the characters, and it provides air—visual breaks—on a page. It should read naturally, but good, believable, dialogue is never a literal transcription. Most people speak with lots of *a*'s, *um*'s, repeated words, incomplete sentences, incomplete thoughts and jumps. (Tape record a dinner conversation, listen to it once, then erase it.) Fortunately, we don't hear them. When we listen to people, we tend to weave together what is being said, dropping the linguistic detritus. We can suggest some of it, but with discretion: a rare *huh* or *a*, an *"I was just—"* em dash to show an unfinished or interrupted statement; and the *"But I was thinking . . ."* ellipsis points to show an unspoken alternative, a non-enumerated sequence, a silence, or a trailing thought. Contractions are not only natural, but without them your characters will sound stiff.

Your characters should speak how they do, appropriately for each of them. Whereas, the author, whose grammar and word choice should be impeccable, may not—but he should avoid sounding stuffy and pedantic.

Dialect (or foreign speakers) is a trickier matter. Mark Twain handles most of his characters well. Jim in *Huckleberry Finn* is a different matter:

> Whar is you? Dog my cats ef I didn' hear sumf'n. Well, I know what I's gwyne to do: I's gwyne to set down here and listen tell I hears it agin.... What's de use er makin' up de camp fire to cook strawbries en sich truck? But you got a gun, hain't you? Den we kin git sumfn better den strawbries.

Setting aside whether this is insulting or degrading, this much authenticity is simply hard reading. Today's readers are likely to give up and some might send you threatening emails. Arguably, a few contractions and dialectal words would have sufficed (perhaps in 1885 those examples were considerably easier to read) to suggest the dialect: *"Where is you? Dog my cats if I didn' hear somethin'. Well, I know what I's goin' to do: I's goin' to set down here and listen 'til I hears it again...."*

Another difficulty with dialogue is character attributions: Bob said, Sally said. There is an approach today that puts an attribution after every line of dialogue. I think the better way is to establish who is talking and then to not use attributions except to keep the reader on track. A device, which helps with pacing, is to breakup the dialogue with description or action. This gives you a chance to reinforce who is speaking: *"I think it's important to be aware of pacing." Bob paused and looked out the window. A light rain was falling. "But everything should seem natural."* Now the reader knows where he is in the conversation, and has a little more detail.

If you prefer to give an attribution with each line, please do not follow the admonition of my tenth grade English, Miss Whitehouse, against repeating words. Repeating *said* draws far less attention to itself than what Fowlers calls *elegant variation*: he said, she opined, he articulated, she replied, he enunciated, she averred, he alleged: "Et cetera, et cetera, et cetera" exclaimed the King of Siam.

When you have your characters talk, make sure you have a reason and they have something to say.

Character

Many people get an idea—what if a bank is robbed and the police…. It could be good, but for as important as the plot is, it needs characters to bring it to life, to follow its trail, to take the reader with them. A good character has a beginning, middle, and now: that is, he is real and complete, with parents, a childhood, schooling—a full life—before we meet him in your book. Just as a good actor gives you that feeling that his character had a life before the curtain rose or the movie started, or when you hear a great singer, you feel there is another octave above and below his lowest and highest notes: your characters must be full and developed. At the opposite end are cardboard characters: two dimensional beings who have one purpose and have nothing that might deviate from that. Why should we avoid them? Because they are boring and not real.

Let's get two types of characters labeled and out of the way. There is the protagonist, the main character (sometimes characters) of your story; and the antagonist, the person (persons, institutions, things) who opposes the protagonist. Opposes? Because there has to be some conflict, two dogs fighting over a bone, for there to be a story.

There is an exception to the no-cardboard-characters rule. Sometimes you want a character to interact within the a scene—to move things forward—but you don't want to spend time developing someone who really isn't otherwise important. Your character has a flat tire and as he pulls off the road, he sees a murder take place in the park just past the road. You need something sharp to pierce the tire, a nail or a screw, but does it matter if it's a flat, round, or oval head, brass or galvanized 1½" wood screw? In the same way, if you need your character to leave work early, you could introduce a jerk of a boss who threatens your protagonist, who then leaves work early in a huff. We've all had bosses like that, and as long as he is not much more than a nail in your hero's tire, that's fine.

Remember that even if you see your character, your reader doesn't, not without your help. Ask yourself if your readers could pick out your character from a group of a hundred other people: they should be able to. Does your character have a quirk? Let the reader know. Make it interesting and bring it back again, and again.

There's a cheat, that I do not recommend, compare your character to someone the reader would know: *"Janet opened the door and walked in looking like Elizabeth Taylor."* Great, in just a few words, I can see Janet—black hair, skin like satin, emerald eyes. Or maybe I saw her as the puffy, older, alcoholic-looking, Photoshopped, Elizabeth Taylor on the cover of a grocery store tabloid. Perhaps you chose to compare the hero to a man we all recognize, only have him indicted for murdering his wife; Hertz made that mistake.

The remarkable thing about fully developed characters is that they are action and plot. They drive your story. They may also change it in ways you didn't anticipate. They may rebel. They may move in with you and make your life miserable. But if they're complete and full, your life will be richer for it, and your reader's too.

See page 121 for worksheets.

Description

Description can be long and rolling like a vast Western landscape. It can be short glimpses like a quick slide show, or the blur of passing countryside seen through a fast moving train window. You need to paint the scene for your reader—not so completely that he sees every blade of grass or knows the name of every book in your character's library. You need to show enough that your reader enters the dream and becomes part of the story unfolding before him. It is part of pacing. It inhabits your narrative, characters, and dialogue. Think of a beautiful drawing: it rarely shows everything, but it shows enough. Often, lines aren't complete, shading is suggested here and thick there.

You use description to show the characters, places, and things that make up your story. You have five senses: touch, taste, smell, hearing, and seeing. Most of us learn in school to add color: the *red* wagon. But good description includes more: *The wagon abandoned in the front yard, half buried by the fallen moldering leaves and the patches of snow that hadn't melted away yet, isn't just red. It has rough, rusty-brown scabs where the paint had chipped off when it was pulled carelessly past the jagged rocks in the back yard by the compost pile. It's wheels squeaked and sighed along with Mrs. Jackson when she pulled it about the garden last summer. The black metal handle curves awkwardly like a broken limb from when it was run over by the UPS truck.* It's not just red.

Taste and smell are evocative. We remember smells and tastes from our childhoods in ways that immediately transport us, more than by what we see, although sight is the most common descriptive element. At first glance, English might have more visual descriptors than for sight or smell, but I think that it is lazy thinking that keeps us trapped into thinking about the *red* wagon. One word separates our wagon from all those of different colors, and it does bring to mind the ubiquitous *red wagon*. That one word is effective and efficient, but is thin. Its description should be longer, assuming it has some significance in our story—if it has no significance, spending too much time on it, drawing too much attention to it, will create an expectation that will distract the reader. Later, if *Mrs. Jackson, walking slowly from the pain of her arthritis, trips over the handle that lays hidden beneath the leaves like her cat waiting to pounce on its prey*, you don't need to repeat the description, although you could add to it.

"Beneath the rule of men entirely great/ The pen is mightier than the sword," Edward Bulwar Lytton.

I make no claim to brilliant, original, writing, but I think you see more than if I had only said, *"Mrs. Jackson tripped over the handle of her red wagon."*

Use description to create distance between the beginning of a scene, the red wagon in the front yard, and the climatic action, Mrs. Jackson tripping over the handle. Use description to break up dialogue and identify who is speaking.

In my example above, I could have broken up the description, expanding the sensory information, and spreading it out over a longer scene. Don't try to get all five senses into every description; sometimes just one is just right.

Exposition (Narrative)

Narrative is telling your story. You will start with some sort of introduction; the action will rise towards a climax; there may be a falling action followed by resolution, or just the resolution. This arc includes the conflict, characterization, the setting, sequencing and transitions. In a broad sense it includes dialogue, description, and characters. I am using the word here narrowly to suggest that aspect of your book where you, the omniscient author or whoever is telling the story, is doing just that, telling the reader: *John went to the grocery store for cat food.*

Just as you can't show every blade of grass, you cannot tell everything that happens in your story. You should summarize those portions of the action or story that aren't as important, to move from scene to scene. You don't need to describe how John parked the car, opened the door, put his left foot on the pavement, then got out of the car. You don't need to show the order of his footsteps, right-left-right, or right-right-left if he skipped. But if it's important that the reader knows he went to the grocery store, say it. If something happens in the parking lot, then slow down, and flesh out the scene with details, description, action, dialogue—whatever you need.

There is a good reason for the author to sometimes state things in a straight forward, declarative manner. Wayne Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, gives the following example: In the Book of Job, we need to know that Job is a good man. In the style of the Bible there wasn't time to develop and show Job's goodness through a few fully fleshed out scenes—another twenty to thirty pages. We are told, "There was a man in the land of Uz; whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil." Without more, we believe it unquestioningly. And when he is tested, we are told "In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly." Admittedly, few authors come to mind with the omniscience and authority of the Bible, but this demonstrates how it is both possible and sometimes desirable to make a short, simple, and forceful, summary.

Ignorance is bliss; how much more significant is the actual quote from Thomas Gray: ***…where ignorance is bliss/Tis folly to be wise.***

What you want to avoid are long pages, one after the other summarizing the story, unless for example, much time has passed, and you need to fill the reader in quickly.

In grade school, our writing was just that, long summaries. In good writing, we try to spare the reader, and break things up, creating and feeding the dream.

See page 121 for worksheets.

Support

As you develop your book, there will be major themes, ideas, or positions. Regardless of whether you are writing fiction or nonfiction, you will need to support them.

For nonfiction you do this with examples, quotes, tables, images, and argument. Informal Logic, pages 101-113, lists and discusses the sort of errors in thinking or reasoning that you should be aware of. To be sound in your presentation, you need to present your material reasonably with concision, precision, and brevity. To be cogent, you have to consider ideas that might conflict with your premise.

As a kind of rule of thumb, if you find yourself writing, "although," "moreover," "however," or "either…or," "not only…but also,"—subordinating and correlative conjunctions—you are probably accustomed to some degree of cogency. Paragraphs, scenes, and chapters can be thought of this way, too: as narrative conjunctions that connect larger moments within the narrative.

In a thriller, do the love scenes follow one another? Are the action scenes bundled together? This idea could easily fit under a discussion of pacing, but here I intend to show that these scenes, like tables or quotes, are supportive. Just as you might put a table illustrating the carcinogenic effect various things to support a statement or refute an argument concerning pollution, you might include a scene that gives a different aspect to a character or the conflict. In Alan Dean Foster's novelization of *Alien*, he had a little scene—it's so minor, as to be almost a throwaway—the alien creature stops to look at the mechanism of a hatch lock. Curiosity. It's one thing to have a horrible, terrifying monster, a flat evil creature, but what if it learns and thinks? What if it is curious? In the creature's little glance, is a whole chapter in other books. To dwell on it would alter the story, but to just place it there, where it pauses, tilts its head, and looks at the mechanism, is to give the careful reader a little kick in the gut. It is there to give support and cogency to the alien.

Sometimes these things come to you as you write, sometimes they come as part of editing and revising. If you aren't aware that fiction and nonfiction each need support, you won't find the things that make the reader smile, or shiver.

Tools to Help

Although there are hundreds of books you could buy and keep handy, here are my recommendations. Many are expensive, but available used at stunning discounts. I have included books that are out of print, but that are available online used.

Books

Dictionary:

What makes a good dictionary can be a very personal thing. However, there are a few features to look for that unfortunately you might not notice standing in a book store. You want to find any word you are looking for. You want a definition that you understand without having to lookup more words; but you want the definition to be good enough to encourage browsing.

For a quick on-line "is this the right word" check, type it into Google. Usually you'll get a link to an online dictionary on the first page. Most word processor applications have dictionaries, and a free downloadable dictionary is WordWeb from http://www.wordweb.info/free/.

Random House Dictionary of the English Language, Second Edition. ISBN 0394500504 (a great dictionary, out of print, but available used from Amazon.com starting at about $12.00.

Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary, 2 Vols., ASIN B0012U0YQC out of print, available used from Amazon.com starting at $34.00.

New Oxford American Dictionary. Oxford University Press. ISBN 0195170776 .

Dr. Johnson's *Dictionary of the English Language, 1755*, took him 9 years to complete. The first edition of the OED, based on Johnson's, took 70 years to complete, with the efforts of hundreds of scholars. The Brothers Grimm started a dictionary, and got to *F* when Jacob died in 1863, the dictionary was completed in 1961.

Desk encyclopedia:

The New Columbia Encyclopedia. Columbia University Press: 1975. ISBN 0231035721. Starting at $0.39, used, it is hard to beat.

The Columbia Encyclopedia. The Gale Group: 2000. ISBN 0787650153.

Fact Books

The New York Public Library Desk Reference. Hyperion: ISBN 0786868465.

Visual dictionary:

The quest for the right word is eased considerably, at least for the visible world, with a visual dictionary. How do you find the name for the end of a shoelace (aglet or tag)? You need a picture of a shoe with its parts labeled. You may end up not using the word, after all how many readers will easily recognize what an aglet is?

Ultimate Visual Dictionary, by Dorling Kindersley, ISBN 0756626064.

What's What, by David Fischer and Reginald Bragonier, Jr. Smithmark ISBN 0831794690. Out of print but available on line.

Merriam Webster's Visual Dictionary, Merriam Webster, ISBN 0877790515

Rhyming the impossible:
The four engineers
Wore orange
Brassieres.
—Willard Espy

Rhyming dictionary:

While rhyming dictionaries would seem to be under the exclusive purview of song and birthday card writers, they are helpful, and when you need one, there's no substitute. Espy's book is easy to use, and fun to read (it's not all rhyming dictionary).

Words to Rhyme With: A Rhyming Dictionary, by Willard R. Espy. Checkmark Books. ISBN 0816063048.

Thesaurus & related:

Although most of us were introduced to a thesaurus as a way to find what Fowler called the elegant variation, which was not a positive thing, it is as helpful as the visual dictionary for finding the right word.

Roget's International Thesaurus, 6th edition. Collins. ISBN 0060935448.

The Oxford Reverse Dictionary, by David Edmonds. ISBN 0192801139

The Synonym Finder, by J.I. Rodale and Nancy LaRoche. Grand Central Publishing. ISBN 0446370290

Usage:

Usage books discuss frequent mistakes (affect/effect, will/shall), gender neutral language (he/she/they, chairperson, etc.), or lengthier discussions of grammatical matters.

Garner's Modern American Usage, by Byron A. Garner. Second edition: ISBN 0195161912; first edition ISBN 0195078535, from $13.25.

Dictionary of Modern English Usage, H. W. Fowler. Wordsworth Editions Ltd. ISBN 1853263184.

Grammar/punctuation Reference:

In the heat of writing, or the chill of editing, matters of simple grammar and punctuation can bring you to a halt. Although some style guides and dictionaries have rules, you need a quicker, easier, reference.

Rules for writers: A Concise Handbook. ISBN 0312003579 Out of print but available on line from $0.01.

Write Right! by Jan Venolia. Ten Speed Press. ISBN 1580083285

Style guide:

If you want to find out how I have failed to cite these books correctly, you need a style book. Style books cover things like punctuation, distinctive treatment of words, names and terms, numbers, notes, bibliographies, quotations…virtually everything from writing, typographic issues, to book making.

The Chicago Manual of Style, University of Chicago Press. ISBN 0226104036

The New York TImes Manual of style and Usage, by Allan M. Siegal and William G. Connolly. Three Rivers Press. ISBN 081296389X

Idioms:

Idioms are expressions, often clichés, that make up much of our speech and that just as often defy literal translation: to hit the nail on the head, not a hope in hell, ring a bell….Here is a source for finding an idiom to use, or to avoid.

The American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms, by Christine Ammer, American Heritage. ISBN 0618249532

Word and Phrase Origins, by Robert Hendrickson. Young Adult. ISBN 0816069662.

Formatting:

Formatting & Submitting Your Manuscript, by Cynthia Laufenber. Writer's Digest Books. ISBN 1582972907. Covers virtually every format from essays and articles to books, screenplay, and stage plays.

Formatting Your Screenplay, by Rick Reichman. Reichman Enterprises. ISBN 0979489318.

The Screenwriter's Bible: A Complete Guide to Writing, Formatting, and Selling Your Script, by David Trottier. Silman-James Press. ISBN 1879505843

Books for writers:

The Art of Fiction, by John Gardner. Vintage. ISBN 0679734031

Aspects of the Novel, by E.M. Forster. Harvest Books. ISBN 0156091800

Breathing Life into Your Characters, by Rachel Ballon. Writer's Digest Books. ISBN 1582971811

Characters Make Your Story, by Maren Elwood. Writer, Inc. ISBN 0871160196 (Out of print—available used.)

How to Grow a Novel, by Sol Stein. St. Martin's Griffin. ISBN 0312267495

On Writing Well, by William K. Zinsser. Collins. ISBN 0060891548

On Writing, by Stephen King. Pocket. ISBN 0743455961

Style, Lessons in Clarity and Grace, by Joseph M. Williams. Longman. ISBN 0321479351

Hardware

At the least, you need a typewriter. Not that you can't write your book by hand, but you'll need to type it if you want it published.

A computer is better than a word processor. See free software below.

I recommend using a laserjet (not an inkjet) printer. They print faster, and page for page, they cost a lot less.

An inexpensive scanner is always handy.

Free Software

Word processing:
OpenOffice is a free word processing program, very much like Microsoft's Office. It includes a word processor like Word; Calc, a spreadsheet application; Impress, a PowerPoint type of program; Draw, similar to MS Paint; Base, a database program; and much more. Go to http://www.openofice.org.

Dictionary & Thesaurus:
Although most word processors have dictionaries, it is often handy to have something a little better. From Wordweb, http://www.worldweb/info/free/, word web is a nice little application.

Photo Editing/Image Manipulation:
If you want a photo editing program that has features similar to Photoshop, but for free, there is Gimp, at http://www.gimp.org.

Vector Graphics:
Similar to Adobe's Illustrator, Inkscape gives you most of the features of high end vector graphics editor: http://www.inkscape.org.

Web Authoring:
If you are looking for a wsywig web authoring program consider Nvu. Perhaps not as stable as Dreamweaver, Nvu is a great program: http://www.net2.com/nvu/

FTP uploading:
Filezilla handles the task as easily and efficiently as you could wish: http://filezilla-project.org/

Free Computer Maintenance & Security

Without good maintenance, it is unavoidable that you're computer will get slower and slower, and unless you work offline, every minute online puts you at risk. Lots of free maintenance software teases you into buying their full version, some are well worth it, some not. I also think that some programs are very good for a while, then they fall behind. At the time of publishing this, here are a few recommendations. Please read all the information available at these sites. These have worked for me, but I cannot, and am not, asserting they will work for you.

Firewall:
Zone Alarm offers a popular, easy to use, software (if you have a router, you have a hardware firewall) firewall. http://www.zonealarm.com.

Norbert Wiener asked the group he was working with when they completed building one of the first computers, "How many do you think the world needs?" With all their imagination and brilliance they came up with an answer: four.

Defrag:

You probably have a defrag program as part of your operating system. Unfortunately, it only goes part way. Ultimate Defrag, from Disktrix, has several defrag programs. If there are too many options, take a look at their DefragExpress. http://distrix.com/index.htm.

Disc Cleaner:

Like defrag, you probably have a disk cleaner, but no disc cleaner finds everything. Where you should not run more than one antivirus program, most people recommend having more than one cleaner.

CCleaner removes junk files from your browser, third party applications, the operating system, and your registry: http://www.ccleaner.com/

Cleanup Assistant finds stuff the other don't: http://www.cleanupassistant.com/

Antivirus:

Be wary: there are a number of fake and dangerous antivirus programs floating around (Antivirus XP Pro, Antivirus Number 1, Antivirus 2009, etc.). These are exactly the sort of things you do not want in your computer. Do not download them; Antivirus 2009 will actually try to do a scan, then encourage you to update it. To reduce the likelihood of being redirected falsely, I do not give the links to the free programs but to the home pages. Do not operate more than one antivirus program on your system.

AVG: http://www.avg.com/
Avira: http://www.avira.com
Avast: http://www.avast.com
PC Tools: http://www.pctools.com
SuperantiSpyware: http://www.superantispyware.com/
A-squared: http://www. emsisoft.com/en/

Miscellaneous Technical

For information and applications from Admin Tools to Security, Major Geeks at http://www.majorgeeks.com

Step 2:
Edit and Revise

> "Sculpture is easy, all you do is take a piece of marble and knock off what you don't want." . . . The ways of statue making have altered since that misleading sentence was written, but the application of the sentence to writing has not. . . . You dip your hand into the reservoir of words, bring up the ones you want and shake the unwanted ones off your fingers. What you want is not to be determined until the knocking off and shaking off are all but completed. [*Story Writing*, by Edith Ronald Mirrielees]

> The *shalls* and the *wills*, the *whos* and the *whoms*, the split and the unsplit infinitives are the small choices that let us express a sense of our individual personae. [*Style: Ten Lessons in Clarity & Grace*, by Joseph M. Williams.]

It is probably safe to say that every manuscript needs to be edited before it can be a book. It is nearly impossible to write concisely, precisely, and correctly over the expanse of many thousands of words without error. Consider that the a book, unlike a painting, cannot be taken in, even superficially, with a moments glance. It is linear. It may take many hours of reading to traverse the landscape of your story: certainly it took hundreds of hours to write. Not only is it easy to misplace a character or alter physical characteristics, one's grammar, word choice, details, etc. are often marred in the white heat of getting your story down on paper.

If you have finished your book, now you must "knock off what you don't want."

"What is written without effort is in general read without pleasure," Dr. Johnson.

There are hundreds of rules to follow or break. One way or another they all boil down to this: do nothing that breaks the *fictive dream*. Huh? Every work of art—songs, movies, symphonies, books, plays—establishes *a bond of trust* between you and the work. This is also called the *willing suspension of disbelief*. P.G. Wodehouse was asked how he knew if a play was good. "If I find myself wondering if Monica wore her pearls, I know it isn't." The dream and bond had been broken: he could no longer willingly suspend his disbelief.

The author's job is to never break that dream: to never let the reader stumble, to never let the reader wonder what he just read.

Although the principles listed in this section should be part of your basic writing skills, writing the best book you can is what step two is about. You've finished your book, now you have to edit and revise it:

- Print out your book, and read it from paper. Studies show that most people read with better comprehension from paper than from a monitor.
- Read your book; read it again and again. Each time try to place yourself in your reader's posi-

tion, as if for the first time. Ask yourself, "Am I compelled to keep reading? Do I care about the characters? Do I care about the conflict and its resolution? Do I care about the style?"

- Read the manuscript out loud: not only will you hear mistakes, but if you have trouble reading it in places, take that as a cue and try rewriting the sentences that made you stumble.
- Listen to your manuscript being read. Your ear will catch things that your eye won't. Word and Acrobat have speech tools that include software that will read your work in your choice of monotones. It's painful but remarkably helpful. James Earl Jones could read the phone book and it would sound exciting. The monotone is bland and flat, so if it's still interesting, you're ahead of the game.

"Nothing you write, if you hope to be good, will ever come out as you first hoped," Lillian Hellman.

Tell a good story well.

To paraphrase Jean Renoir, don't try to change the world, just tell a good story well.

Use clear and correct language.

Your characters can say whatever is appropriate for them; but the author must write well: precision, clarity, spelling, grammar, punctuation.

You know and see ten times more than the reader.

It is easy to gloss over an awkward sentence because you know what you mean. In most fiction you know everything about your story and your characters; your reader knows nothing. It is easy to assume the reader will see what you see, and understand what you understand. Consider your reader, who, at best, sees what you do through smoked glass.

This is also about seeing more than your reader. Don't ignore the fives senses, touch, sight, smell, taste, and sound. Obviously you don't want to write like a catalog, listing all five at every instance. But you need to give your reader enough that the scene comes alive. Remember smell and taste. Smell for example is especially evocative—have you ever visited a place and said, "I remember that smell, it was how the cabin smelled when I was five and we were on vacation." The problem is to give enough but not so much that your reader gives up on you: for most people, showing too little is the problem.

Pacing.

I don't know how to state this as a rule, but pacing is the heart of storytelling, playing music, even visual art. You don't just play the notes, or read out loud in a monotone, you give it life —inflection, dynamics, pauses, accelerations, syncopation. What is the difference between a music school student cellist and Yo Yo Ma? For that matter, what is the difference between Yo Yo Ma, Janos Starker, and Pablo Casals? Nuance.

But how to do that for the eye with the written word? Vary the length, construction, and form of your sentences. Create suspense by breaking up the action with description, narrative, thoughts, reminiscences. Next time you read an exciting thriller, notice that sometimes between the aiming of a gun

and shooting it, there might be a page or more of something in between. That something has to be your best writing. Then… *bang*.

Do nothing to give the reader the chance to give up on your book.

By the time your book is ready, you could easily have spent ten hours on each page. Don't give the reader reason to close the book and walk away. Any time a reader stumbles—

- poor grammar
- inconsistencies and continuity problems
- redundant or unnecessary words
- unclear dialogue attributions
- irrelevant material
- miscues
- poorly crafted sentences

—you give the reader a reason to stop. If the reader can skip a word and not miss anything, he can skip a phrase, perhaps a sentence, a paragraph, then whole pages.

"Say all you have to say in the fewest words, or your reader will be sure to skip them; and in the plainest possible words or he will certainly misunderstand them," John Ruskin.

The rule of unravelment.

Readers can forgive a lot: a few typos, perhaps two male characters named Tom. But there is a subjective limit beyond which the reader will either slam you book down and give up, or look for and find every mistake, inconsistency, and ambiguity. This person will not buy your second book! The fewer mistakes, the less likely your book will unravel.

Do not cheat the reader.

- One assumption only: don't invent something especially at the end of a story to save the hero (deus ex machina).
- Don't make a point of something that the reader expects to be answered later but you don't.
- Get rid of first draft errors: If you don't know you have favorite colors, numbers, names, or words, you will when you start revising your book.

When you are editing and revising, don't say "no one will catch this":

They will! Fix it. (See Unravelment, page 114.)

Specific rules to ignore:

Before the rules, here are what Fowler calls *superstitions* or *fetishes*: superstitions are false rules and fetishes are "rules and conventions misapplied or unduly revered," *MEU*. Your software grammar check is not useless, but it will adhere to many of the following superstitions. If you break one of these rules, you should ask: Is this what I really want? Does it work? Is it clear and beyond confusion? Is it the best solution? If you can answer *yes*, keep going. If you aren't sure or answer no, then consider rewriting.

Do not end a sentence with a preposition—false

In Latin prepositions stand before (they pre-position) the words they control—that's in Latin, not English. Prepositions have been used correctly as terminal words for centuries. "Follow no arbitrary rule.... If the final preposition that has naturally presented itself sounds comfortable, keep it; if it does not sound comfortable, still keep it if it has compensating vigor, or when among awkward possibilities it is the least awkward", *MEU*. *The essence of this superstition depends on what word the sentence ends with.*

Do not split an infinitive—false*:*

"The English speaking world may be divided into (1) those who neither know nor care what a split infinitive is; (2) those who do not know, but care very much; (3) those who know and condemn; (4) those who know and approve; (5) those who know and distinguish," *MEU*. Splitting the infinitive *to go* with the adverb *boldly* is fine; although there are subtle differences between *to boldly go* and *to go boldly,* depending on whether the emphasis should be on *go* or *boldly*. "There is no point in rearranging a sentence just to avoid splitting an infinitive unless it is an awkward one," *WGI*.

Do not split a compound verb—false:

With compound verbs, such as *have seen* or *have been*, the adverb comes between the auxiliary and the participle. The only rationale for this superstition that I have found seems to be the presumption that given that it is wrong to split an infinitive, *have always been* or *have never seen* are split infinitives, which of course they are not, or they should be treated as such.

"I believe more in the scissors that I do in the pencil," Truman Capote.

Do not use sentence fragments—false:

Many grammarians and teachers define a sentence as "A combination of words making a complete grammatical structure....[having] at least one subject and one predicate," *MEU*. Aside from dialogue—where one word sentences may abound, and interruptions, hesitations, reminiscences, lost thoughts and the like create incomplete sentences—"The verbless sentence is a device for enlivening the written word by approximating it to the spoken," *MEU*. Your word processor's grammar check will flag sentence fragments almost as quickly as Miss Whitehouse, my tenth grade English teacher. You need to be aware of sentence fragments, and assess their risks or advantages.

Do not begin a sentence with And, But, *or* Because—false:

This appears to be a superstition without any rational, right or wrong. Avoid abusing it, which is true of most things in writing.

Do not write one sentence paragraphs—false:

Use one sentence paragraphs to: breakup long paragraphs that might tire the reader; to emphasize a point that might get lost otherwise; and to enliven a transition in a narrative or argument.

Do not refer to the reader as you—false:

Avoiding the word *you* often leads to the unnecessary use of the passive voice, which usually adds words. Arguably, the use of *you* is less formal than writing that avoids it. However, when you use *you*, be aware of your audience.

Do not use between *with more than two objects*—false:

Although Miss Whitehouse was a stickler for this, there is ample reason to ignore it. If there is a distinction, it is this: *Between* is particular and "expresses the relation of a thing to many surrounding things severally and individually": whereas, *among* "expresses a relation to them collectively and vaguely," *MEU*.

Do not use since *to mean* because—false:

Aside from the writer's choice, the only reason to choose *because* over *since* is when the other meaning of since, from a definite past time or before the present, might be a miscue.

Do not use contractions—false:

Perhaps contractions have no place in formal, academic, writing, but they add warmth and informality. They are a must in dialogue, and, without excess, in many other forms. In dialogue they can be quite varied—from *didn't* and *can't*, to more distant *should've*, or *shouldn't've*: just be aware that the closer you come to transcribing real dialect, as opposed to suggesting it, you run the risk of making your writing difficult (e.g. *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*)—whereas, in the rest of your writing, you should consider using *didn't* or *can't*; for example, when the formality of *did not* draws too much attention to itself and sounds stuffy.

Do not use clichés—false:

Once you begin to look for clichés, you'll find them in every nook and cranny. You should consider excising what Fowler calls:

Hackneyed Phrases ("The purpose with which these phrases are introduced is…of giving a fillip to a passage that might be humdrum without them…. But their true use when they come into the writer's mind is as danger-signals ; he should take warning that when they suggest themselves it is because what he is writing is bad stuff, or it would not need such help," *MEU*. E.g. acid test, explore every avenue, fair sex, strain every nerve…).

Battered Ornaments: *(*E.g. "alma mater, daughter of Eve, gentle sex, Emerald Isle, suffer a sea change…" MEU.)

Irrelevant Allusions ("We all know the people—for they are the majority, and probably include

our particular selves—who cannot carry on the ordinary business of everyday talk without the use of phrases containing a part that is appropriate and another that is pointless or worse…; they have a sort of pleasure in producing the combination that a child has in airing a newly acquired word. There is indeed a certain charm in the grown-up man's boyish ebullience, not to be restrained by thoughts of relevance.… And for that charm we put up with it when one draws our attention to the methodical by telling us there is method to the madness…the winter of his discontent…" *MEU*)

Metaphor Fowler quotes Churchill, "'How infinite…is the debt owed metaphors by politicians who want to speak strongly but are not sure what they are going to say,' Hardly less, as no one knows better than Sir Winston, is the debt owed to metaphors by those who, knowing what they are going to say, wish to illumine and vivify it" *MEU*.)

Siamese Twins: "…words, linked in pairs by *and* or *or*, but having a single meaning: *betwixt and between, bits and pieces, leaps and bounds, heart and soul*…" *MEU*).

Vogue Words: how else might one say, *The financial crisis is having an awesome impact on our bottom line. It's a no brainer to see that to find the upside we need a new paradigm*?

But as Garner says, "You'll sometimes need clichés. That is, they're occasionally just the ticket, but only when no other phrase fits the bill," *MAU*.

"There are three rules for writing the novel. Unfortunately, no one knows what they are," W. Summerset Maugham.

Do not repeat the same word twice—false:

"The fatal influence is the advice given to young writers never to use the same word twice in a sentence—or within 20 lines or other limit," *MEU*. From this we get dialogue in which the attributions move thusly: he said, she enunciated, he opined, she announced, he articulated, she averred. Certainly, *he said, she said, he said*…would be simpler and better.

What you should be wary of is repeating the unusual word. Nabokov opens *Pnin* saying: "The elderly passenger sitting on the north-window side of that inexorably moving railway coach…." *Inexorably* foreshadows Pnin's entire misadventures, and it is never seen again in the book.

Do not write what you don't know: write what you know—false:

This advice can be paralyzing. You should not invent matters of fact (you cannot say Los Angeles is the capital of California, unless your story is dystopian, speculative fiction); therefore there are things you should know. But you should not have to be a murderer to write about murder. You cannot know everything—just don't get things wrong that you should know.

Specific principles to consider:

As I said earlier, there are hundreds of rules for writing: most are right most of the time. As you edit, if you find, for example, that you've said something in passive voice, ask yourself if you have a good reason. If you do, keep it. Here are just a few:

Give the reader the Who-What-Where-When-Why-How.

Except for the occasional effect, such as opening a scene saying *He sat down in a huff*, and not saying who *he* is, you shouldn't leave your reader in the dark about the *five w's* of a scene. This is not to say you have to address them all in the first sentence, paragraph, or page.

Check your facts, and don't introduce errors trying to make something clearer.

You should check your facts: the internet makes life easier that way. Sometimes, however, when editing for clarity, it is easy to introduce errors.

"I try to leave out the part that people skip," Elmore Leonard.

As you work through your manuscript ask if you've been clear and concise.

This is hard, because you know what you are saying. Watch for miscues, misplaced modifiers, redundancies, unnecessary words.

Don't make changes just to make changes.

Sometimes what you've written is good: don't touch it.

Be wary of jargon.

There are two types of jargon, the popular word of the day, and the technical terms common to most professions. Treat both cautiously, but know your audience and the context. Always consider and reconsider popular words. They are the ones that you cannot image talking without. Talking is one thing, writing another. Try to find the correct word. If you are writing a story in which one character happens to be a stamp collector, you might include some technical terminology. Suppose, however, that you are writing a murder mystery, involving the theft of a rare block plate and the murder of the philatelist and collector who owned it: you should consider more jargon; although not quite as much as if you were writing an article for *Philately International*.

Prefer the active voice, but do not be afraid to use the passive voice, sometimes it is just what you need.

The active voice emphasizes the actor: *The car* hit Bob. The passive voice emphasizes the object: *Bob* was hit by the car. There are extra words in the passive voice: the verb is compound and *by* is used to introduce the actor. But if you care more about Bob than the car, (the actor is unimportant or unknown, or you want to hide the identity of actor), this could be just right.

Watch for unnecessary shifts of tense, voice, or point of view.

Tense: *When she heard her grades, she screams with joy.*

Voice: *If you want to write effectively, the passive voice must be avoided.*

Point of View: Some *authorities* insist on maintaining a consistent, single point of view throughout a book; e.g. from the protagonists viewpoint. Assuming you are not writing in the first per-

son, there is nothing wrong with multiple points of view provided you don't jump around too much and you are fully aware of making each shift. This one is too good not to quote, "When you look through the microscope, the cell divides to form two organisms" *WWP.*

Avoid double comparatives;

Although there might be an exception: do not use double comparatives: *more better*, *more slower, more quicker*....

Use strong words.

Prefer the concrete over the general: Concrete, *Where would Bond be without his* Walther PPK**?** [Or Beretta 418.] versus the general, *Where would Bond be without his* gun*?*

Avoid buried verbs: Sometimes converting a verb to a noun is effective (*presenting the play* is better than *the presentation of the play*); but sometimes it buries a good, active verb: *John arbitrated the case*; versus, *the arbitration of the case was handled by John.*

Prefer the familiar: sometimes the foreign, fancy, or formal word is the best word, but more often it is the familiar that works best. Remember your audience: some people don't like dictionaries.

Consider rewriting every long sentence; consider rewriting every short sentence: vary sentence length and construction.

Avoid repeating the same word over and over, but avoid the elegant variation.

Eliminate "invisible" redundancies and unnecessary words:

Most of us use them without thinking. Perhaps *totally unique*, *more unique*, or *most unique* reinforce and emphasize our ideas, perhaps they are popular formations, but they do not belong in the author's words (character's may use them). For example:

in the event that	=	if	assembled together	=	assembled
along the lines of	=	like	repeat again	=	repeat
in order to	=	to	totally unique	=	unique
absolutely complete	=	complete	prior to	=	before
advanced planning	=	planning	in a satisfactory manner	=	satisfactory
future forecast	=	forecast	regress back	=	regress
merge together	=	merge	free gift	=	gift

Locate and correct miscues:

Miscues are unintentional mistakes that mislead the reader. Usually the reader can figure out the meaning without much problem, if any. If not a stumble, the reader at least stubs his toe on them. These are often best found by reading out loud. If you trip up on a sentence, look for the problem, it is often a miscue.

Contractions: Contractions for *would* and *had*—I'd, we'd, she'd—are identical. Whether the meaning is *would* or *had* is often not clear until further on in the sentence. If the meaning isn't clear, consider removing the contraction.

Misleading meanings: For example, *biweekly* correctly means either twice a week or once every other week; *bimonthly* means twice a month or once every other month. Usually the meaning can be figured out by the context; but once you know this, the words should be off limits.

Pronoun: 1) confusion: *She told her student she had been wrong.* Who was wrong? The only solution is to rewrite the sentence. **2)** distance: sometimes the antecedent is so distant that the reader had little idea who is doing what.

Modifiers: Keep your modifiers close to what they modify. Quoted from *MAU*, "'Both died in an apartment Dr. Kevorkian was leasing after inhaling carbon monoxide.'" You should understand this easily, nonetheless it says that after Dr. Kevorkian inhaled carbon monoxide before he leased the apartment.

***Yes* or *no* after negatives**: "Don't you want seconds?" the hostess asked my Japanese friend. "Yes," he replied, thinking he meant *yes, I don't want seconds*. She served him seconds and thirds. This is so common a formation it doesn't give us much problem; but "You haven't more copies of this book, have you?" can still catch us. Answer completely.

"I'm not a very good writer, but I'm an excellent rewriter," James Michener.

Look for examples, analogies, and illustrations.

Instead of just summarizing, look for examples, analogies, or illustrations. Show your reader the nuances of your subject.

Keep related words together.

Consider keeping near each other: modifiers and what they modify; the relative pronoun and its antecedent; the subject of a sentence and the principal verb. Bates shows the problem of *only*: "Only John mourned the death of his brother. . . . John only mourned the death of his brother . . . . John mourned only the death of his brother . . . . John mourned the death of his only brother . . . . John mourned the death of his brother only" *WWP*.

Remove the little qualifiers:

We often add little qualifiers—*kind of, quite, sort of, a bit, very*—to our speech. In writing, this has the effect of diluting or weakening our intent. "Don't say you were a bit confused and sort of tired and a little depressed, and somewhat annoyed. Be tired. Be confused. Be depressed. Be annoyed . . . . Good writing is lean and confident" *OWW*.

Prefer the familiar word to the unfamiliar. Prefer the simpler word to the difficult or ornate. Prefer the right word to the almost right.

Prefer the positive form of a statement over the negative.

Place emphatic words at the end of a sentence.

If your writing isn't about style, write naturally.

The stylist—for example,Vladimir Nabokov, John Gardner, Cormac McCarthy, or Charles Baxter—writes with style and confidence. The rest of us should exercise care: write naturally, and appropriately, if you are not a stylist.

Do not exaggerate.

It is easy to find yourself writing that your antagonist is a villain of the first order, that the protagonists is the nicest guy in the company, that the expert hired by your attorney is the foremost expert in his field, that the murderer was the worst man in the world.... It is lazy writing. Of course your expert could be the world's authority, but everyone can't be the best, the most, or the worst.

"Be obscure clearly," E.B. White.

Things are seldom all, always, nothing *or* never.

All, always, nothing, or *never* are usually exaggerations. In logic they are dangerous territory, and should be considered such in prose.

Don't explain, show.

I've mentioned this before, but here's another variation: *he said sadly*; *she responded spiritedly*. The common advice (see EOS) is to try to show *sadly* or *spiritedly,* as opposed to giving these character cues. But if the scene requires just a quick reaction—amidst Pnin's travails resulting from being on the wrong train, he transfers to a bus, and there's a brief "the initial employee was back. 'Here's your bag,' *he said cheerfully*. 'Sorry you missed the Cremona bus.'" [emphasis added]—that quick adverb is right.

Be suspicious of cleverness.

Being clever, in the sense of ingenuity, wit, quickness of thought, is admirable, but the risk is that only the author thinks so. I have referred to Nabokov. He was often clever—see the quote on page 17—but he took pains to insure that if the reader didn't get the joke, or word play, that did not spoil the read. To exaggerate what it is you are being warned against, imagine if at the end of a whodunit: the Chinese detective discloses the name of the murder in Chinese because it forms a clever pun—in Chinese.

Do not mix metaphors.

Two examples: "The following classic example comes from a speech by Boyle Roche in the Irish Parliment... 'Mr. Speaker, I smell a rat. I see him floating in the air. But mark me, sir, I will nip him in the bud.'" *MAU*. "'The avon and Dorset river board should not act like King Canute, bury its head in the sands, and ride rough-shot over the interests of those who live by the land and enjoy their fishing'" *MEU*.

Find your story's logical progression.

The logic of your story flows from the beginning to the middle and the end: a to b to c. This does not mean that you cannot have flashbacks, move a scene from the chronological middle to the beginning, or even open with the ending. It means that you should only use such deviations when they serve the story you are telling: Does it make the story more exciting? Does it draw the reader in?

Sources

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Step 3
Edit and Revise

Suppose Mrs. Jackson's wagon intrigues you as you read over your 357 page manuscript. What if it wasn't a UPS truck that ran over the handle, but her son, who suffers from schizophrenia? Where she was a lesser character, now she and her son, with his illness, could be an interesting balance to the story you told. To make this work, you'll have to go back and look for those scenes where the Jackson's appear and do some rewriting. In bringing them more to the foreground, you realize that Mr. Leferty, the retired police captain, whose wife committed suicide a year earlier, is too prominent. Of course, he was necessary to the story, but you had been bothered by how much he seemed to lurk about from scene to scene. You look for places where you can lessen his appearance. What if the young Jackson boy had been befriended by Mrs. Laferty, and....

Sometimes editing is fairly straight forward, as in Step 2. Sometimes, if you see the possibilities, it takes on a wholly different cast. Once you finish your first draft and begin editing, you have a difficult decision to make. You can limit your edits to cleaning up the manuscript, or you can begin to tweak it. Either way, you will find that when you try to edit for spelling, grammar, and punctuation, you have some continuity problems; or, you will be reading for substantive affect of the book and you will drift off rewriting sentences that need to be recast. The process is not pure. The problem with picking at the edges of what you have written is that it is about balances and rhymes. Imagine a Calder mobile with its long arms and colorful, organically shaped, weights floating like planets around an invisible sun. Change the shape of one weight and you must change the distance to the arm's fulcrum. Change begets change. This is, in part, what Lillian Hellman meant when she said that "Nothing you write, if you hope to be good, will ever come out as you first hoped."

John Gardner would suggest that this is an essential part of writing. I don't disagree, but I don't want you to think that you have to follow this. If you find after you have cleaned up your manuscript that it is what you wanted, then quit there. But if you have a feeling that something wants to be explored or changed, you will find yourself committed to a fascinating ride.

At this level, not only will your story change, but you will find yourself struggling for the better word and the more effective simile or metaphor: "The road was deserted, hot and dusty under the scorching sun. As he walked, he would stop and adjust the tape around his foot through the hole in the sole of his shoe. Through the dust he saw a pickup truck approach and then speed by." Or:

> For some time now the road had been deserted, white and scorching yet, though the sun was already reddening the western sky. He walked along slowly in the dust, stopping from time to time and bobbling on one foot like some squat ungainly bird while he examined the wad of tape coming through his shoe-sole. He turned again. Far down the blazing strip of concrete a small shapeless mass had emerged and was struggling toward him. It loomed steadily, weaving and grotesque like something seen through bad glass, gained briefly the form and solidity of a pickup truck, whipped past and receded into the same liquid shape by which it came. [Cormic McCarthy, *The Orchard Keeper*.]

This is hard to do, and the example I wrote is probably the best I can do; whereas McCarthy manages it throughout the entire book, book after book. Of course not everyone likes McCarthy—Gardner or Nabokov—but this is what the step three is about.

What an Editor Does

Every writer needs an editor. This may be the one at the publishing house, or it could be an honest and gifted friend. Both, unfortunately, are hard to come by. There are a number of tasks that come under the general heading "editor." In the sense that you need an editor at this point, I mean it as someone who can do the tasks in bold:

Copy: correct spelling, grammar, and if the publisher has a house style (Chicago, MLA, etc.) matters of house style (see mechanical style). These are often freelance copy editors even for large publishers. Sometimes called line editing because the editor goes through the manuscript line by line.

Fact: checking facts

Integrity or continuity: internal consistency of the document regarding tables, references, part numbers, etc.

Language: how ideas are expressed—sentence complexity, conciseness, logical development, jargon.

Substantive: looks at the work as a whole, is it coherent? Does the style work? Is all the necessary information included?

Acquisitions: acquire new works or authors for a publisher.

Coordination or production: manuscript handling, planning, estimating, working with designers, printers, monitoring a project.

Format: that the design of the book, typography, layout, conform to company policy.

Mechanical style (house style): capitalization, spelling, symbols, reference style, etc.

Permissions editors: locate any place where an author quote another author, lyric, poem, etc., and obtain permission to use the material.

Policy: making sure that the manuscript conforms to company policy, e.g. presentation, legal, content, etc.

Project: follows the manuscript through the complete editing process.

Screening: illustrations and table are correctly inserted, specialized typesetting such as mathematical formula or foreign words are correct.

Technical: this has several meanings. Technical editing may involve someone with specialized expertise; the example often given is someone who edits a how-to book, making sure the instructions work. A another meaning is someone who determines the levels of editing a particular manuscript requires, and oversees the editing process.

Although you can see several of these areas overlap, what goes into preparing a manuscript for publication can involve many people.

The rule of unravelment applies here. If your prospective agent or publisher receives a manuscript that is poorly edited, you will have a huge hurdle. Yes, "all" publishers, agents, and editors claim they

will read anything within their fields of interest and they will give everything a fair chance. They won't. Do not give them the excuse to reject your book because of poor preparation.

The more you can think about all these various tasks when you enter the revision or proofreading stages the better.

If you haven't worked with an editor, the full meaning of "pride of authorship" has probably eluded you. Let's forget spelling, grammar, consistency and continuity for a moment, if your novel of post World War II family life says: "It was the summer of 1851 . . . . Jane have blondo hair . . . her red hair blew in the wind," you won't mind if the editor suggests that "It was the summer of 1951 . . . . Jane has blonde . . . . her blonde hair blew in the wind." But if he says chapter nine is rubbish, you may quickly find out where your hackles are.

Once you start looking at each word and make a change, more changes must follow. If all of your writing from sentence to sentence is competent, and you make one sentence very good, it changes the relationships between words and sentences and you, or your editor, will have reasons to change more, then more still . . . .

I believe that the gods created single malt just for writers and editors at the end of the day. The battles are over and now you must be, if not friends, friendly.

Images

Images and Color

Full color printing—that is, printing that attempts to represent the full spectrum of visible color—is typically done with four colors (CMYK: cyan, magenta, yellow, black). On offset lithographic presses this means separations (one each for each color), four sets of film, four sets of printing plates and four colors of ink that must be in register, and the ink flow must be adjusted for proper coverage; finally, the paper must pass through four separate printing presses (usually they are built into one big press). Inkjet printing, even when your software is RGB (red, green, blue) usually prints in some form of CMYK; for example, in Photoshop I work in RGB, but my fine art printer has two each C, M, and K inks, and one Y. In inkjet printing the paper passes through one unit which applies all of the color as the paper moves through.

Quality color printing is typically done on coated paper, which, in the context of printing books, costs more than uncoated paper. Therefore, some books put all their color images in one section (signature) to keep the costs done. In addition to color inks, color images are often given a clear varnish coat, which adds yet more cost.

Obviously, if your work is being printed on an offset lithographic press, the less colors the less expense. A second or third color can add a lot to a project without costing as much as full color. On inkjets, the paper needn't be as expensive, and the pages are not given a varnish coating (except in fine art prints); but it's all (color) or nothing (black & white or grayscale). Most inkjet printing companies charge as much for duotones as they do full color images. (See page 43.)

Digital cameras and scanners tend to soften images. Both have built in sharpening programs. The danger, however, is in over sharpening. Most printers can sharpen images, but removing the effects of over sharpening can mean many hours of hand work. Unless you are providing prints that will be shot or scanned by the printer, it is better to err on the slightly soft side.

No sharpening

Correct sharpening

Over sharpened

Today, most images in the publishing world are digital. You can get a digital image by using a

digital camera, scanning something, or creating an image in a digital image software application (such as Photoshop, Illustrator, Paintshop Pro, Painter, etc.). Images on the internet and viewed on your monitor are normally something like: 72dpi, from 36 px X 216px (for a small 1/2" x 3" logo), to 288px X 360px (4" X 5") or 432px X 576 (6"X 8") pictures. Two standard formats for these images is JPEG (jpg file extension), or PNG (png file extension). These are called lossee compression formats. They can be quite small as compressed files, and yet look great on the monitor. However, these are not appropriate for printing. Images printed from them will be pixilated and unusable.

300dpi image *72dpi image—maximum quality* *72dpi image—minimum quality*

For most printing, a 300dpi image at the finished size is the minimum size required. More visual information (300dpi versus 72dpi) means a bigger file:

Image Resolution	Image Size	Open File Size	Closed File Size
72 dpi	5 x 8	645KB	364KB (JPG)
"	"	"	32 KB (JPG)*
"	"	"	222KB (PNG)
300 dpi	"	10,900KB	1,640KB (JPG)
"	"	"	4,300KB (TFF)§
"	"	"	11,200KB (TFF)

* highest compression available in JPG § compressed TIFF file (lossless) as opposed to uncompressed

The two 72 dpi have far less detail and what detail there is is jagged. On your monitor the defects might not show up, and the smaller file sizes make using 72 dpi image the obvious choice for web-sites, emailing pictures, etc.

Many publishers and printers will accept JPG files, but if you have an option regarding the amount of compression (the greater the compression the poorer the image and the smaller the file), always select maximum quality and minimum compression. Most image files for publication are in TIFF (tff); print-on-demand printers use PDFs. Printers can work with most common file formats, including Photoshop (psd), and InDesign (idd).

A note to digital camera users: many cameras offer camera raw images. These are image files that have the maximum image information for your camera with no sharpening, color adjustments, or compression. While photographers often prefer these, camera raw files are in proprietary file formats and other software such as Acrobat, Quark, or InDesign, might not be able to open these files.

Color, Black & White, Duotones and Tritones

Color images can be altered for aesthetic reasons or to reduce the expense of printing. With photo editing software, images can enhanced or ruined in a million ways. The most common, useful, and realistic alterations are to black and white, duotones (e.g. sepia tone) and tritones.

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

A) Original full color. B) Grayscale using desaturation. C) B&W (grayscale) using various adjustments to enhance the conversion. D) Duotone: 2 colors. E) Tritone: 3 colors. For POD printers, b and c would costs the same, and a, d, and e would cost the same.

Proof Reader's Marks

Marginal Mark	Explanation	Example	Corrected
	Delete: take out	Once upoon a time	Once upon a time
	Insert: letter or word	One upon a time	Once upon a time
	Italicize	Once upon a time	*Once upon a time*
	Insert space	Once upona time	Once upon a time
	Close up space	Once upo n a time	Once upon a time
	Insert a comma	Once upon a time	Once, upon a time
	Insert period	Once upon a time	Once upon a time.
	Replace with capital	once upon a time	Once upon a time
	Replace with lowercase	ONce upon a time	Once upon a time
	Replace with roman	*Once* upon a time	Once upon a time
	Replace with bold	Once upon a time	**Once** upon a time
	Replace with bold italic	Once upon a time	***Once*** upon a time
	Move to the left	[Once upon a time	Once upon a time
	Move to the right	Once upon a time]	Once upon a time
	Transpose	Once a upon time	Once upon a time
	Let Stand	Once ~~upon~~ a time	Once upon a time
	Replace with small caps	Once upon a time	Once upon a time
	Run in	Once upon a time	Once upon a time
	Center	]Once[	Once
	Move Down	Once upon a time	Once upon a time
	Move Up	Once upon a time	Once upon a time
	Insert quotation marks	Once upon a time	"Once upon a time"
	Insert a colon	Once upon a time	Once upon a time:
	Insert a semicolon	Once upon a time	Once upon a time;
	Insert an apostrophe	Once pon a time	Once 'pon a time
	Insert a hypen	Once upon a time	Once upon a time-
	Insert an em dash	Once upon a time	Once upon a time—

Copyright

The first thing you'll notice in the following format guides is that none have a copyright notice. This is the custom and practice. While some submission policies are permissive on this matter, others are absolute: putting a copyright notice on your work is the sign of an amateur.

- Your work is automatically copyrighted (but unregistered) at the time it was created: publication and registration are not required.
- Use of copyright notice is no longer required under U.S. law.
- It is illegal for anyone to violate any of the rights provided by copyright law to the owner of the copyright: these rights are enumerated in the law.
- If you include notice, it should contain: the symbol © (or the word "copyright" or the abbreviation "copr."), the year of publication (i.e. the year you completed your manuscript), and the name of the owner, if your work is not a work for hire, that is your name: © *2008 John Doe*

(The keyboard shortcut for the copyright notice (©) is: hold down the <Alt> key and enter: 0169, release <Alt>)

The U.S. Copyright Office website address is: http://www.copyright.gov. The Copyright Office has many brochures in PDF format available. They are encouraging electronic filings (eCO), see http://www.copyright.gov/eco/index.html; the fee for a basic, online, filing is $35, as of May, 2009. Registering provides proof of registration with a date when the work was received and when it is registered.

Although the copyright notice puts the reader on notice, as a non-lawyer, I assume that given the custom and practice of manuscript preparation that excludes notice, such notice presumed. However, only the actual registration can establish when the registered work was received and registered by the Copyright Office.

Quoted from *Copyright Basics* <April, 2009: http://www.copyright.gov/circs/circ1.pdf>:

> Copyright is a form of protection provided by the laws of the United States (title 17, U. S. Code) to the authors of "original works of authorship," including literary, dramatic, musical, artistic, and certain other intellectual works. This protection is available to both published and unpublished works. Section 106 of the 1976 Copyright Act generally gives the owner of copyright the exclusive right[s] to do and to authorize others to do…
>
> It is illegal for anyone to violate any of the rights provided by the copyright law to the owner of copyright. These rights, however, are not unlimited in scope.…
>
> Copyright protection subsists from the time the work is created in fixed form. The copyright in the work of authorship immediately becomes the property of the author who created the work. Only the author or those deriving their rights through the author can rightfully claim copyright.… In the case of works made for hire, the employer and not the employee is considered to be the author.…

Copyright protection is available for all unpublished works, regardless of the nationality or domicile of the author. . . .

Copyright protects "original works of authorship" that are fixed in a tangible form of expression. . . .

Several categories of material are generally not eligible for federal copyright protection. These include among others:

• Works that have not been fixed in a tangible form of expression (for example, choreographic works that have not been notated or recorded, or improvisational speeches or performances that have not been written or recorded)

• Titles, names, short phrases, and slogans; familiar symbols or designs; mere variations of typographic ornamentation, lettering, or coloring; mere listings of ingredients or contents

• Ideas, procedures, methods, systems, processes, concepts, principles, discoveries, or devices, as distinguished from a description, explanation, or illustration

• Works consisting entirely of information that is common property and containing no original authorship (for example: standard calendars, height and weight charts, tape measures and rulers, and lists or tables taken from public documents or other common sources). . . .

Copyright Secured Automatically upon Creation

The way in which copyright protection is secured is frequently misunderstood. No publication or registration or other action in the Copyright Office is required to secure copyright. (See following note.) There are, however, certain definite advantages to registration. . . .

Copyright is secured automatically when the work is created, and a work is "created" when it is fixed in a copy or phonorecord for the first time. "Copies" are material objects from which a work can be read or visually perceived either directly or with the aid of a machine or device, such as books, manuscripts, sheet music, film, videotape, or microfilm. . . .

The use of a copyright notice is no longer required under U. S. law, although it is often beneficial. Because prior law did contain such a requirement, however, the use of notice is still relevant to the copyright status of older works. . . .

Use of the notice may be important because it informs the public that the work is protected by copyright, identifies the copyright owner, and shows the year of first publication. Furthermore, in the event that a work is infringed, if a proper notice of copyright appears on the published copy or copies to which a defendant in a copyright infringement suit had access, then no weight shall be given to such a defendant's interposition of a defense based on innocent infringement in mitigation of actual or statutory damages, except as provided in section 504(c)(2) of the copyright law. Innocent infringement occurs when the infringer did not realize that the work was protected. . . .

The use of the copyright notice is the responsibility of the copyright owner and does not require advance permission from, or registration with, the Copyright Office. . . .

The notice for visually perceptible copies should contain all the following three elements:

1 The symbol © (the letter C in a circle), or the word "Copyright," or the abbreviation "Copr."; and

2 The year of first publication of the work. In the case of compilations or derivative

works incorporating previously published material, the year date of first publication of the compilation or derivative work is sufficient. The year date may be omitted where a pictorial, graphic, or sculptural work, with accompanying textual matter, if any, is reproduced in or on greeting cards, postcards, stationery, jewelry, dolls, toys, or any useful article; and

3 The name of the owner of copyright in the work, or an abbreviation by which the name can be recognized, or a generally known alternative designation of the owner.

Example: © *2008 John Doe*

I would suggest that if you are nervous about omitting the copyright notice from your manuscript, go on-line and register it with the U.S. Copyright Office, before submitting it.

Formatting

If you are going to self publish, doing everything from start to finish, this section is not for you. It's your manuscript and your formatting. But if you're going to submit your manuscript to an agent or publisher, or as a self publisher to someone who will reformat it into a book, the next few pages are important.

Most types of writing—novels, plays and screenplays—have very specific requirements for manuscripts. Learn them and use them. If you intend to submit your work to an agent or publisher check to see if they have a preferred manuscript format: follow it if they do. If they do not, consider these guidelines. They may seem fussy and irrelevant, given that you can do pretty good digital typesetting in most word processing programs, and that very few people use typewriters any more. Here are some reasons to bite the bullet and do it:

- Proper formatting shows that you are willing to play by the rules.
- Proper formatting shows that you have invested extra time in preparing your manuscript and are more likely to have invested extra time editing.
- A properly formatted manuscript is easier to read, proofread, edit, and prepare for publication.
- Publishers and agencies have been downsizing since the mid-eighties. They don't have the time to consider anything that looks like it won't be worth their time. Don't give them the easy excuse to reject your work.

Personally, I like an attractive presentation: nice type, real italics, drop cap initials, big borders. The problem, which I will readily concede, is that not everyone gets their own formatting right, and this can cause problems down the road. To be safe, follow these guidelines; and if you get guidelines from an agent or publisher absolutely follow them.

As for things like tables, diagrams, and pictures. The goal is to make editing and typesetting as easy as possible. If there are lots of them, I like having them inserted in place: not to be used like that, but as place holders. The file names, presumably jpg's, tiff's or document files, should be clearly named (probably renamed) so that anyone can pick out what goes where.

The Book

1"

1¼"

John Doe
555 My Street
My Town, AZ 88888
(555) 555-5555
johndoe@mydomain.com

60,000 words

1"

Word count in upper right corner, usually rounded to the nearest 100 words

In the upper left corner: name, address, phone number, and email address, single spaced.

Centered & just above the center of the page:

Title in caps — MY BOOK
1 single line space
"by" — by
1 single line space
Name — John Doe

Your manuscript should look like it was typed on a typewriter:

- Courier (new, standard) 12pt (pica typewriter type)
- Double or single space as shown (12/12 or 12/24)
- 8 ½" X 11" opaque white paper
- Black type
- Print one side only
- Do not staple, paperclip, or bind your book manuscript
- Flush left, ragged right—do not justify

Dissertations and other academic papers use different formatting standards.

Last name/title/page no.

1"

Chapter Titles & sub-heads: Do not underline. For titles capitalize first letters except prepositions, articles, and coordinating conjunctions.

4 single (2 double spaces)

Chapter 1

3 single spaces

Paragraph Indentation ½" (5 space) indent →

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Vestibulum nec metus quis lacus eleifend sagittis ac nec urna. Vivamus scelerisque nunc vitae libero hendrerit ut laoreet turpis placerat.

← 1" →

← 1¼" →

Praesent eget convallis magna. Ut scelerisque nunc sed orci feugiat sed fringilla lectus commodo. Nullam porta viverra odio, et vulputate purus elementum eu:

Block Quote

Indent a few spaces.

Skip a line before and after the quote

> Proin dignissim dui quis est sodales a suscipit lacus pulvinar. Praesent augue sem, blandit et blandit in, gravida non tortor. Curabitur id est elit, eget lobortis justo. Morbi scelerisque venenatis turpis, sit amet viverra odio suscipit non. Ut viverra egestas felis vel elementum. In non sapien non sapien cursus fringilla a at sem. Duis eget libero vel turpis pharetra non tincidunt.[1]

← Footnote: 12pt and up one space, no parentheses, periods, or slashes. Notes go on separate sheets.

In hac habitasse platea dictumst. Sed aliquam libero ut risus ultricies luctus porta nulla pulvinar. Suspendisse felis magna, venenatis non eleifend in, ornare at erat. Sed in mattis eros. Integer a laoreet sapien. Donec ac mi nunc,

1¼"

1"

hendrerit hendrerit justo. Vestibulum facilisis arcu eget nibh porta vulputate. In hac habitasse platea dictumst. Sed consequat rutrum augue, non aliquam felis gravida sit amet. Ut ornare rhoncus orci ac dictum. Mauris nec erat nibh. Praesent sed congue risus. Nullam vulputate nibh eu mi sollicitudin quis aliquam urna consectetur.

Section Break

Skip a line

asterisks or dashes—centered

Skip a line

* * *

Nullam vel nisl sed odio molestie gravida eget a nisi. Phasellus pulvinar posuere neque vel convallis. Pellentesque vehicula ipsum turpis, convallis facilisis metus.

Poetry Extract
Centered on page keeping the original indentations and spaces. Omitted line(s) are indicated by a row of spaced periods

Quisque porttitor enim ac orci
scelerisque feugiat.
Mauris posuere molestie odio
. . . . . .
Eget congue. Donec tempus
euismod tincidunt.

Ut nec ligula non magna pharetra facilisis sit amet non arcu. Nam in mauris eros. Donec lectus orci, accumsan ut rhoncus nec, vulputate quis nisi. Aenean consequat, nisl eget hendrerit consectetur, odio risus imperdiet lacus, id vulputate augue tortor id turpis.[2]

Footnotes are numbered consecutively

Aliquam aliquet, diam id viverra feugiat, mauris mi ultrices nibh, eu sollicitudin dolor diam sed sem. Class aptent taciti sociosqu ad litora torquent per conubia nostra, per inceptos himenaeos. Vivamus bibendum odio nec magna aliquet quis luctus elit tempor. Pellentesque habitant morbi tristique senectus et netus et malesuada fames ac turpis egestas. Pellentesque in rutrum risus.

Tables, pictures, and diagrams are noted "Table #," "Picture #", "Diagram #" with the title.

Tables, pictures, and diagrams go on separate sheets.*

Table 1

Integer Consectetur et Liqula

Aenean consequat nunc et magna vulputate ac posuere diam malesuada. Maecenas sit amet porta ipsum. Duis eu justo sem, sed ultrices nisl. Donec sem libero, vehicula sed varius quis, pulvinar at purus. Nulla vitae laoreet arcu. Duis in dui quam, id sollicitudin risus.

Ut turpis enim, vehicula eget dignissim ac, suscipit vitae turpis: Nam at ultricies justo. Nulla viverra ligula sit amet urna iaculis fringilla. Maecenas porttitor est in nulla fringilla volutpat. Fusce venenatis dictum erat, eu malesuada nisi faucibus auctor. Ut fermentum tristique augue, in semper mauris lacinia et.

Italics: underline

Four blank lines after the last sentence, "The End"

The End

* This has been the standard form; however, with most word processing applications, adding pictures, tables, and diagrams, is easy. The problem for editing and designing a book is keeping everything in its place. If you have lots of pictures etc. consider putting them in place. You will have to provide separate files for them, and everything needs to be carefully labeled and named.

Notes

1. Aenean bibendum, neque nec adipiscing tincidunt, massa nisl ultricies nulla, a rutrum tellus libero ac ligula. Integer sit amet nisi nulla, ut molestie risus. Class aptent taciti sociosqu ad litora torquent per conubia nostra, per inceptos himenaeos. Duis adipiscing sagittis sem eu interdum. Nam facilisis blandit quam, ac cursus enim scelerisque vel. Integer egestas erat eget lectus commodo faucibus. Vestibulum nec velit eget nulla congue convallis mollis in dui. ad litora.

2. John Smith, Dreams Lost and Found (New York: Giles & Giles), pp. 22-47.

3. Ibid., p. 97

4. ibid.

5. Quisque mi quam, vestibulum et ultrices venenatis, ultricies eget nisi. Duis pulvinar ultricies mi, eget convallis ipsum ultrices eu. Pellentesque a rhoncus justo. Aenean in velit velit, ut fermentum lorem.

In general, a citation takes a different form than a bibliographic entry. "Ibid" is used to indicate "in the same place" as the previous: here, same book, pg 97, and same book & page

Consult a style book such as *A Manual of Style*, University of Chicago Press for details on citations.

The Screenplay

Elements of a Screenplay

Slugs: All caps, single-line, used to begin every shot or scene. It tells: interior or exterior shot, location, and time of day. There are also secondary slugs that indicate something that adjusts the focus of the shot. Do not use camera angles—that's the director's prerogative.

Directions: Use present tense and follow normal rules of capitalization. They describe the action, characters, settings, and object in a scene. Do not over describe. Remember there is a difference between direction and directing (the writer does not direct). Keep the description to about four lines or less per paragraph. There is another type of directions: a parenthetical. It is an instruction to the actor, placed in parentheses and beneath the character cue.

Dialogue: Begin all dialogue with a character cue in all caps. Never end a page with just a character cue.

Fades and cuts: There are two fades. "FADE IN:" opens the screenplay. 'FADE OUT:" ends the screenplay. "CUT TO:" is used to indicate a major change of place, time, and/or action.

Marginals: Things found at the margins; the title on page 1, "THE END" at the end, "CONTINUED" at the top of a page and "(CONTINUED)" at the bottom of page.

Screenplays should be between 90 and 120 pages long. Each page is 1 minute of movie time, and movies are 90-120 minutes long.

Starting about 4" from the top and centered:

"TITLE" "MARKET SHARE"

2 blank lines

"Written by" Written by

1 blank line

Your name John Doe & Jane Doe

Your manuscript should look like it was typed on a typewriter.

- Courier (new or standard) 12 pt.
- Double or single space as shown (12/12 or 12/24)
- 8½" x 11" opaque, white paper
- Black ink
- Print one side only
- 1½" margin on the left
- 3 hole punched and fastened (use two No. 7 brass, round headed fasteners)
- Screenplays have a front and back card stock cover with no writing on them.

Contact:

John Doe
555 My Street
My Town, AZ 88888
(555) 555-5555
johndoe@mydomain.com

Contact information, about ¾ of the way down.

1"

"MARKET SHARE"

The title goes at the top, centered, in caps, and in quotation marks.

The screenplay opens with "FADE IN:"

FADE IN:

Slug

INT. PHIL'S HOUSE, MAIN ROOM, PRESCOTT, AZ -- LATE AFTERNOON

Introduce characters in directions

MAN 1 -- 20's, muscular, in a dark blue suit, white shirt, regimental tie, and short cropped hair -- searches the papers and folders on the desk, scattered around a manual typewriter.

Slug

EXT. ONE LANE DIRT ROAD, BY PHIL'S HOUSE --CONTINUOUS

PHIL LEVITT -- late 30's, longish brown hair, short beard, blue jeans and tee shirt -- playfully walks KINGSTON -- his large dog.

← 1½" →

INT. PHIL'S HOUSE, MAIN ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

← 1" →

Directions

Man 1 reads through a dark green binder. The phone rings. He waits for the answering machine to take the call. CARL LINDER -- distinguished Maricopa County Medical examiner.

Dialogue

LINDR (V.O.)
Phil, this is Carl Linder. I know who's behind the drug. We've got to talk. Call me.

← 2 7/8" →

Use "(V.O.)" to indicate voice over.

Man 1 smiles and removes the tape from the answering machine.

EXT. ONE LANE DIRT ROAD, BY PHIL'S HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Character cue

Phil and Kingston walk by a black Lincoln that blocks most of the narrow street.

← 4 1/8" →

PHIL
Asshole.

They walk past Phil's gray Cherokee, toward the front of his green cottage -- the door is open.

INT. PHIL'S HOUSE, MAIN ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Man 1 stands to the side of the door, holding th binder; his right hand is hidden by it. Phil and Kingston walk it.

PHIL
Who the hell?

If a scene or shot continues to the next page, end with "(CONTINUED)"

(CONTINUED)

All pages start with either a slug for a new scene, or "CONTINUED:"

The first numbered page is page 2.

CONTINUED:

MAN 1
Found it.

Man 1 grins and shakes the binder.

PHIL
That's mine! Give it--

Man 1 lowers the binder. He aims a .45 automatic at Phil.

Kingston growls and leaps at Man 1.

Man 1 swings the gun from Phil to Kingston. GUNSHOT. Kingston is shot, but his momentum propels him forward. Kingston's massive jaws grab the man's throat.

Surprised by the attack, he drops the gun and tries to push Kingston off. They fall over, Man 1's throat torn open. Phil pulls at Kingston.

If a character's dialogue is interrupted use "(CONT'D)"

PHIL (CONT'D)
Oh god!

Phil slumps to the floor, and cradles Kingston's massive head. Kingston whimpers, licks Phil's hand, and dies.

CUT TO: used to indicate a major change of place, time, or action

"CUT TO:," "(CONTINUED)," and "FADE OUT" 6 1/8"

CUT TO:

INT. PHIL'S HOUSE, BATHROOM -- NIGHT

The room is dark. Phil MOANS. The light comes on with a CLICK. There's blood on the floor by the toilet. Phil runs water in the sink and cleans the gash in his forehead. He shuffles out.

INT. PHIL'S HOUSE, MAIN ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Phil turns on the light. On the floor, dead, are Man 1 and Kingston. He lifts the man, pulls the binder out from under him, and replaces it with another binder. The answering machine is open. Phil finds the tape in Man 1's pocket. He dials 911.

PHIL
I'd like to report a break-in.

Because you must skip 2 lines after "CUT TO" and you may not have an orphan slug, some pages will be short.

CUT TO:

INT. JANE'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM -- LATER

Phil's girlfriend JANE ATWATER -- mid-30's, attractive, in a white bathrobe -- is sitting on the sofa.

Phil paces. His hair is messed, and the gash in his forehead is puffy and red. His clothes are bloodied. The room is open to the cluttered kitchen with a dividing counter.

JANE
What did the police say?

PHIL
Nothing. I didn't stay.

JANE
You can't just leave the scene of a crime.

PHIL
You remember the article I did on police corruption?

Jane reluctantly nods.

PHIL (CONT'D)
So do they. They'd have kept me all night. Anyway, it's obvious what happened.

JANE
Except you took your notes.

PHIL
Linder said not to trust anyone.

JANE
Maybe there's no connection between Linder

She point to the binder, not wanting to touch it.

JANE (CONT'D)
this, and the man.

PHIL
It's the only thing that makes any sense.

FADE OUT:

THE END

End the screenplay with "FADE OUT:" followed by 2 blank lines then "THE END"

The Stage Play

Elements of a Stage Play

After the title page, plays have a character page and a setting page.

The play itself consists of:

Directions: There are three types of directions. Scene Directions start the play, act, and sometimes scene. They tell where and when the scene is set, and what is happening. They may also tell what has happened between scenes as it applies to the new scene. Stage Directions explain what is happening on stage during a scene: entrances, exits, major character movements, etc. Finally, there are Character Directions, which are used to explain a character's line, but they should be used sparingly because they are directorial.

Dialogue: All dialogue starts with a Character Tag, which shows the character's name in caps.

Headers: The page number, starting with page 1 for each act, appears at the upper right corner, with the act number preceding it.

Footers: Your name and the name of you play go in one line in the lower right corner of each page of the play.

Title Page

Centered starting just above the middle of the page.

Title in caps, skip 2 lines, "by", skip a line, you name

SIR JOHN'S PLAY

by

John Doe

Your manuscript should look like it was typed on a typewriter.

- Courier (new or standard) 12 pt.
- Double or single space as shown (12/12 or 12/24)
- 8½" x 11" opaque, white paper
- Black ink
- Print one side only
- 1½" margin on the left
- 3 hole punched and fastened (use two No. 7 brass, round headed fasteners)
- No covers

Contact information in the lower right corner

John Doe
555 My Street
My Town, AZ 88888
(555) 555-5555
johndoe@mydomain.com

↑
1¼"
↓

1"

Character Page—center heading

CHARACTERS

Left margin 1½"

Right margin 1"

JOHN AUBRY: late sixties, gentleman, biographer

KING OF PERSIA: played by JOHN AUBRY

SIR JOHN SUCKLING: early thirties, courtier, poet, dramatist

THERSAMES, PRINCE OF PERSIA, played by SIR JOHN SUCKLING,

THOMAS TYNDALE: late fifties,

AGLAURA: mid-twenties, she is a captive of the KING OF PERSIA.

ORBELLA: Middle aged, Queen of Persia.

ARIASPES: middle aged, brother of the KING OF PERSIA

IOLAS: a courtier in the Persian court

IOLINA: a young woman, the AGLAURA's maid

ZIRIFF: thirties, captain of the guard, AGLAURA's brother

HAMLET: played by ZIRIFF, a character from Shakespeare's Hamlet.

MESSENGER: a young man

COURTIER: a courtier in the Persian court, played by MESSENGER

CAVALIER: mid-thirties

All character names are in caps. The only time a character name is not in caps is when it is used in the dialogue by a character.

Setting Page—center the headings SETTING

This is s brief description of the general setting of the play. It can give a sense of the style and physical space of the stage. For example:

This is a play within a play; one, the English play, the other the Persian play. One set will accommodate both plays, since neither is particularized. The English play takes place in the theater in which it is performed. The Persian play takes place in and around the fictitious Persian court of a fictitious King of Persia.

TIME

This section sets the time of the play. For example:

Although the characters in the English play are Englishmen of the Seventeenth Century, it takes place in the timeless present. The Persian play takes place in the timeless past.

Acts (with roman numerals) and Scenes (with arabic numerals) are in caps and they are centered:

Each act starts on its own page 1, followed by, , e.g., I-2, I-3, or for ACT

ACT I

SCENE 1

(All directions go inside parentheses. This is a scene direction. The play, acts, and often scenes open with scene directions. These give the where and when of a scene. For example:)

Scene Direction
← 3½" →

(The stage is empty except for a table and a chair, where JOHN AUBREY sits, writing. The table is covered with
papers. A small mirror sits by the edge. SIR JOHN SUCKLING enters and comes up behind JOHN AUBREY.)

SIR JOHN SUCKLING
John, what are you doing? Perhaps you are revising your biography of me. I should hope.

Character Direction, also called a parenthetical
← 3" →

JOHN AUBREY
(surprised by SIR JOHN SUCKLING'S appearance)
I thought, no offense intended, you died.

SIR JOHN SUCKLING
That is perhaps true. As I look about it seems we both are in another time. For, although I preceded you, you died too.

Stage Direction
← 2" →

(SIR JOHN SUCKLING takes a handful of papers and walks away from the table. JOHN AUBREY puts his pen down, and removes his glasses. He straightens up the remaining papers on the table. Then turns to look at SIR JOHN SUCKLING.)

Dialogue
← 1½" →

JOHN AUBREY
This is not quite the news I would have expected. I feel quite fine.

Character Tag
← 4" →

SIR JOHN SUCKLING
(thumbing through the papers)
I think it is a play you are about. And if this light isn't playing tricks on me, you have cast me amongst the players.

JOHN AUBREY
I have written so much about you, as you know, but 'tis a play that I fancy now. You wrote "Aglaura," which was

(Continued)

If the dialogue does continues beyond the page break, mark it "(Continued)"

Name of play/your name

When the dialogue continues from the previous page, start with the character tag, and add "(Continued)"

JOHN AUBREY (Continued)
not your best, but it had possibilities. I thought I could resurrect it, with a few corrections.

SIR JOHN SUCKLING
You are right, it was not the best. But, I have no false modesty, such that I would find fault with you. No, Please, if you can make it better, I would say, have at it.

JOHN AUBREY
Then as the author, I shall end this scene here. I will meet with you anon.

When the scene or act ends, the remainder of the page is blank. Some people put a blank page between acts.

Scene 2

(Just like the opening of an Act, each scene opens on a new page. It has a scene description.)

JOHN AUBREY
I know this hasn't been much of a drama. But perhaps we have given you an idea of how the playwright should present his art.

(Blackout.)

You may end your play this way, with "Black-out."

Literary Terms

I do not offer the following glossary of literary terms with the idea that you will remember the terms, nor is it for literary students for whom these summary definitions would be woefully inadequate.

By the book, you must write the correct sentence, but, for example, the figures of speech are often intentional errors, and each has a name. What is important is that you generally understand and perhaps even recognize some of these literary terms and fallacies. What I am offering, then, is the rationale to violate the rules; and if Miss Whitehouse catches you, how much better to say, "I surely thought you, of all people, would have appreciated the *scesis onamaton*"; rather than "I'm sorry. I forgot, 'No sentence fragments.'"

It is not important that you know what a *dénouement* is, but it is important that you know whether your story has one. The name of a thing often makes the meaning stick better.

For the most part, to make these selections I asked this question of each word: could knowing this help my writing? If yes, I included it. I have omitted most terms related to prosody because they are often remote from prose writing. As you glance over the list, stop and ask yourself if a particular word applies to your writing, yes or no, and why?

Many of these words have meanings that have nothing to do with literature. Instead of saying, *In literature*, I have simply given the more narrow meaning.

abstract : 1) A summary of a book. 2) A sentence or idea may be abstract if it makes a general rather than specific statement: *Man is amoral*, versus, *John lied about taking the car.*

action: An event—what characters think, say, and do. Together these events make up the plot. If you ask, "What happened?", the answer is the action. See **plot**.

adage: See aphorism

affective fallacy: Coined by the New Critics in the refers to what they saw as the error of judging a text based on its emotional effects on the reader. In impressionistic criticism, contrary to the New Critics, the reader's response to a text indicates the text's value.

"There is much pleasure to be gained from useless information," Bertrand Russell.

allegory: A narrative that carries a second meaning. Typically, the symbolism is consistent and follows the ideas and events of the story. This can also be called an extended metaphor. It differs from a narrative that is rich with symbolism or allusion, but which is varied or ambiguous, i.e. open to multiple interpretations. Many allegories—think of the Aesop's Fables—are intended to entertain at the narrative level and instruct at the allegorical. See **fables** and **parables**.

alliteration: A stylistic devise in which the same initial consonant sounds are repeated: *His sloppy socks were of scarlet wool*, from *Pnin;* or *Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers*. Early Anglo-Saxon verse use alliteration, i.e. alliterative verse, rather than rhyme. "The measure is the English heroic verse without rhyme," John Milton wrote, rejecting rhyme as "the jingling sound of like endings." See **assonance** and **consonance**.

allusion: A reference to a person, place, event, or thing. Usually these are brief, and they depend on a common body of knowledge between author and reader: e.g. allusions to biblical or mythical figures.

ambiguity: Unclearness because more than one meaning or interpretation is possible. As an error, for example, this can be caused by pronouns whose antecedents are uncertain, modifiers that are distant from what they modify, or a misused word. Ambiguity can also be intentional: for example, metaphors, puns and other figures of speech can create ambiguity; or an ending to a story that permits alternate conclusions.

"He can compress the most words into the smallest ideas of any man I ever met," Abraham Lincoln.

anachronism: An error in time. Most often it is the use of a person, event, object, word, technology, etc. associated with a particular period of time but used in another.

anagnorisis: Discovery. The hero's sudden awareness of the situation or insight into the antagonist.

analogy: A comparison between two different things usually with the intention of explaining one by showing the other. See **metaphor** and **simile**.

antagonist: The major character, characters, or force, against the hero.

anthropomorphism: Giving human traits to non-human creatures, objects, concepts, etc.

anti-hero: A hero who does not possess heroic qualities (courage, fortitude, etc.). See **hero**, **reluctant hero**, comic hero.

anticlimax: An effect that weakens the climax. In narrative, it is where the complexity and seriousness of a problem is resolved through some trivial action. (Imagine a group of people finding themselves captive in a room with the walls closing in. They struggle to stop the walls or climb them, when someone just opens a door.). In conversation, it is where something seems to build towards a high-point, but ends in something less (A joke that ends in a weak punch line. See: **shaggy-dog story**.)

antihero: The protagonist who lacks heroic qualities. If we think of the stereotypical hero as brave, persistent, competent, then an antihero would be fearful, feckless, and incompetent. Although the antihero has a place in serious literature, he is often the protagonist in comic adventures. See **reluctant hero**.

antithesis: A counter proposition or an opposite. It is also a figure of speech where there is a negative repetition: e.g. *Many are called, but few are chosen.*

antonym: Words that mean the opposite. For example: hot/cold, male/female, light/dark. There are different types of antonyms: gradable (quantifiable), long/short; non-gradable, male/female; directional, up/down; auto-antonyms, (a word that can have opposite meanings) *fast* as in stay or cleave.

aphorism: A concise or terse statement of truth or doctrine that is often witty or memorable: *Always forgive your enemies; nothing annoys them so much*, Oscar Wilde. *Be careful when you fight the monsters, lest you become one*, Friedrich Nietzche.

archaism: A word, phrase, or thing that is no longer common.

archetype: The original model or prototype of a person (priest, villain, leader/king, mother, father, etc.), or situation (farce, tragedy, comedy).

assonance: The repetition of vowel sounds.

"A man begins cutting his wisdom teeth the first time he bites off more than he can chew," Herb Caen.

attitude : See **tone**.

barbarism: A non-standard word or pronunciation. *Probly* for *probably*; *should of* for *should've*.

bathos: A sudden fall from the exalted. As used in English, it means: the juxtaposition of the incongruously high and low (he was wanted by the police for murder and jaywalking) for comic effect; the use of elevated language to describe something quite trivial; the excessive attempt at evoking pity (see **purple patch**) that misses.

braggadocio: A braggart, full of empty boasting, empty of courage, usually a stock character.

burlesque: Comic imitation of attitudes, style, or content either by trivializing an elevated subject or elevating a trivial subject.

cadence: The rhythmic flow of sounds in language.

caesura: A pause or break in a line caused by the natural rhythm of the words. It can be indicated by punctuation, but not necessarily.

caricature: An exaggerated representation of a character, typified by deliberate oversimplification and distortion of characteristics.

catastasis: 1) The dramatic complication immediately before the climax; 2) The climax. See **tragedy.**

catastrophe: The final resolution of a narrative. There are two basic types: In the simple, the narrative moves from painful, anxious, or agitated to relative comfort, quiet, and peacefulness. In the complex, the character(s) usually changes: fortunes change, and there may be discovery, **anagnorisis.** See **dénouement.**

catharsis: Refers to a sudden emotional climax; also the cleansing—the purgation of pent-up emotions held by the reader/audience.

character: A person in a story. In some narratives, such Aesop's *Fables* where the characters were often animals, the character need not be human. Some authorities say that characters are plot. See **antagonist**, **hero**, **antihero**, **reluctant hero**, **protagonist**, **flat and round characters**.

chorus: In Greek drama, a group of characters who describe and comment on the main action of the play. In a narrative, there might be a character or the omniscient author who acts something like a chorus.

"Cleverness is not wisdom," Euripides.

chronicle: A record of events in chronological order.

cliché: An overused expression or idea; a hackneyed theme, plot, or situation.

climax: The moment in a narrative at which a crisis reaches its highest point: the main turning point or decisive moment. See **Fichte's curve** and **Freytag's pyramid**.

close read: Describes a sustained interpretation of a brief passage. It is done with great attention to detail, diction, repeat words, figures of speech, etc. It looks for patterns and connotations, for contextual, intra- and intertextual meanings. The theory is that even when the close read is done on only a portion of a work, it discloses ways to interpret or assess the rest.

closet drama: A play meant to be read not performed.

comedy: 1) Any humorous work intended to amuse or cause laughter. 2) In Greek and Roman usage, a work with a happy ending.

comic relief: A comic moment or scene introduced into a tragic or serious work, usually to relieve tension or or to heighten by contrast the tragic situation or emotion.

conceit: A elaborate, fanciful image or metaphor.

concordance: An alphabetical list of words used in a text.

confession: A type of autobiography, real or fictitious, in which events, feelings, and hidden details of the author's life are revealed.

confidant: A trusted friend in whom the protagonist confides feelings or intentions.

conflict: The opposition of characters or forces. Conflict can be internal or external. Narrative has conflict: two dogs fighting over a bone. The inciting conflict (inciting moment) is the specific conflict or act that starts the plot, although it might not be the first conflict in the telling of the story.

connotation: The implicit, subjective, meaning of a word, as opposed to the denotative meaning. It is often an emotional association, which may be cultural or idiosyncratic. See **denotation**

consistency: The internal coherence of a work. A character's speech and actions should be consistent, which does not mean necessarily predictable. A story may have a consistency or inner truth that demands that a character do something, such that when the author moves things in a different direction, it feels wrong. See **continuity**

consonance: The close repetition of consonant sounds.

continuity: Consistency of characteristics, objects, places, events, etc. throughout a work. Continuity is much more about the physical than is **consistency**. There are classic continuity errors in movies where the hero starts a scene wearing a blue tie and the scene ends with his wearing a red one. These can be difficult to catch as a writer, but readers come to books with radar: they will find them. Continuity errors break the dream.

contrast: The juxtaposition of images or ideas, or of compositional elements such as description, dialogue, and summary to heighten or clarify a situation or control pacing.

convention: An accepted literary form or device.

"If my doctor told me I had only six minutes to live, I wouldn't brood. I'd type a little faster," Isaac Asimov.

counterplot: See **subplot**.

courtly love: A common theme in Medieval and Renaissance art (music, literature, painting). Courtly love was extramarital and therefore secret. The lover languished until, if accepted by the lady, he vowed his eternal faithfulness.

crisis: The place in a story where the conflict reaches such an intensity that a resolution must follow. There may be several or more crises that precede the climax.

deductive: A form of reasoning based on a series of statements or arguments: the inference or conclusion follows from to related premises. It is true if and only if the premises and the corresponding conditional are true. For example: *All men are mortal. Socrates is a man. Therefore, Socrates is mortal.* This form is called a syllogism. Sherlock Holmes' methods exemplify the deductive in literature. See **inductive**.

denotation: The explicit meaning of a word—the dictionary meaning.

dénouement: The events following the climax; the final outcome of the main dramatic conflict.

description: A type of writing that assists the reader in *seeing* the particulars of a story.

detective dénouement: the part of a detective or murder mystery where the hero (for example, Sherlock Holmes or Hercule Poirot), solves the mystery and explains the clues.

detective story: A mystery, usually involving murder, in which a detective unravels things and solves the case. The detective usually solves the case deductively—possessing the same clues as the reader, he deduces from them the solution.

deus ex machina: in Greek drama the *machina* was a crane that would raise and lower a god or goddess to the stage. Today, the phrase, *god from a machine*, means a character or thing that is introduced unexpectedly to provide the solution—meant pejoratively because it is artificial and contrived. See **plant**.

dialogue: Speech by characters in a narrative or play.

diction: The choice and arrangement of words. Diction varies according to the literary form, the author's intent, and the nature of the audience.

didactic: Where the aim of a work is to expound a moral, political, religious or other teaching.

dissonance: Juxtaposition of harsh or jarring sounds or rhythmic patterns.

domestic tragedy: A drama in which the protagonists are ordinary people.

dystopia: A negative utopia—totalitarian and repressive.

elegy: Similar to **lament,** a work, usually poetic, that is serious, often on death or the death of an individual. It sometimes ends in peaceful or even transcendent joy.

ellipsis: The omission of one or more words. It also refers to a mark that indicates an intentional omission: three periods in a row […], sometimes an em dash [—]. The ellipsis points […] can indicate an omitted word(s), a trailing thought, a pause, an unstated alternative, an unstated series.

epic: A long narrative poem, usually in an elevated tone, celebrating a heroic achievement.

epilogue: 1) The final portion of a speech. 2) The conclusion of a fable. 3) A speech at the end of a play that addresses the audience. 4) The conclusion of a literary work where odds and ends are rounded out, also called an afterward.

epiphany: A sudden perception or realization of the essence or meaning of something.

episode: An incident within a longer narrative.

episodic: A literary work that is made up of a series of episodes. Usually, this is meant disparagingly as if lacking in continuity.

essay: A critical, analytic, or interpretive composition, shorter and less formal than thesis or dissertation.

ethos: In rhetoric, these are the emotions of the writer or speaker that are used to persuade the audience. See **rhetoric**.

euphemism: The substitution of a pleasant or inoffensive word or expression for a offensive word or phrase.

exposition: One of four rhetorical modes; it is where you inform your readers about plot, character, setting, theme. In that sense it is also the first part of a drama. It is also a summary of the action or story, where the author simply tells the reader what has happened. It is useful for changing a location, time, or characters, or moving the story forward. See **scene**.

expository writing: a type of writing that informs, explains, and describes the author's subject.

expressionism: Rejects realism, preferring to show things not a representations of themselves, but to use them to give the impressions and feelings the author wants.

fable: A brief work in verse or prose that illustrates a moral truth, and which often uses the supernatural or marvelous.

fallacy: 1) A poorly reasoned argument; e.g. after this therefore because of this (post hoc ergo propter hoc), just because B follows A, does not mean that A is the cause of B. Fallacies differ from simply bad arguments because people often find them persuasive. 2) Advocates of a particular theory in art and aesthetics may often describe what they see as a fault, as a *fallacy*, e.g. the affective fallacy or the pathetic fallacy.

falling action: The action after the climax and before the dénouement.

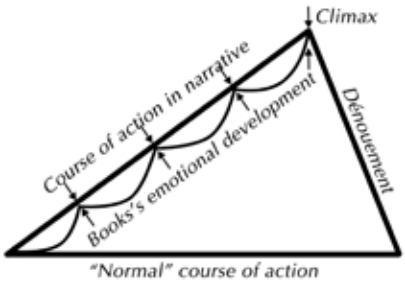
"If I had to give young writers advice, I would say don't listen to writers talking about writing or themselves, " Lillian Hellman.

fancy: Often synonymous with imagination, it can be a work that is highly imaginative with the real and the unreal recombined.

fantastic realism: see **magical realism**.

farce: Light dramatic form, comic in nature, typically improbable, using physical comedy, ridiculous situations, and rough wit.

Fichtean Curve: As described by John Gardner in the *Art of Fiction*, this graph shows the effect of the internal and external forces, ↑↓, that move the protagonist forward. The base, the "normal" course, is the character's course of action if he plays it safe and avoids the conflict of the story; whereas the course of action in the narrative rises towards the climax, and the book's emotional development represents the reader's emotional responses.



figures of speech: The use of various devices to convey meaning or to heighten effect by:

1) resemblance or relationship (metaphor, simile, etc.)
2) emphasis or understatement (hyperbole, litotes, paradox, irony, etc.)
3) sound (alliteration, repetition, etc.)
4) verbal games (puns, word order, etc.)
5) error (malapropism, spoonerism, etc.)

accumulatio—repetition of previous points in different words: *He is a thief, a burglar, a scoundrel, a liar, a cheat, in short he is unfit for office.*

alliteration—see **alliteration**.

anadiplosis—repetition of an end at the beginning of the next: *Frederick Douglass was a slave, a slave who became free, free to become great.*

anaphora—repetition of the beginning: *It is you who are weak. It is you who fails his people. It is you who should not be king.*

anapodoton—the omission of a clause: *If youth knew, if age could,* Estienne.

anastrophe—inverting the ordinary order of words: *Take it, I will, Arsène Lupin said.*

antanaclasis—repetition in a different sense: *He moved fast, sitting fast astride his horse.*

anthimeria—the substitution of one part of speech for another: *He sang his didn't he danced his did,* e.e. cummings.

anticlimax—see **anticlimax**

antimetabole—repetition of words but transposed: *I eat to live, and I live to eat.*

"Fiction is the truth inside the lie," Stephen King.

antiptosis—the substitution of a prepositional phrase for an adjective: *The King's name is a tower of strength,* Shakespeare *FoS.*

antisthecon—the substitution of one letter or syllable for another: *A pun is its own reword. SR*

antithesis—see **antithesis**

aphorismus—calling into question the proper use or meaning of a word: *You call yourself a man?*

aphaersis—omission of letters at the beginning of a word: *Ok? 'nough said.*

apocope—omission of letters at the end of a word: *Wha's up?*

aporia—talking about not being able to talk about: *I can't tell you any more about this.*

aposiopesis—breaking off or pausing for dramatic effect: *I will give more examples—no, this is enough.*

apostrophe—an exclamatory device where the speaker directs his words to an imaginary or absent person, abstract idea, which in poetry is often preceded with *O,* not *oh*, and not

when the author directly addresses the reader: *I say to you Mr. President,* Nancy Pelosi said in a press conference, *you must*….

apposition—two side-by-side elements, normally noun phrases, where the second modifies the first, similar to a parenthetical: *My wife Jane* is *a fair cook.*

assonance—see **assonance**

asteismus—a facetious or playful retort that plays on a word: tourist in NYC, *How do I get to Carnegie Hall? Practice,* the cabby said.

asyndeton—omitting conjunctions in a series: Caesar's *I came, I saw, I conquered.*

asterismos—adding a word to emphasize what follows: from the ordinary *Hey* to the biblical *Behold*, or *Lo*.

auxesis—1) Arranging elements in a series in ascending order of importance. 2) Referring to something with a word that exaggerates its importance. Both types: *To me it was but a scratch, to my wife a cut, my doctor a laceration, my lawyer a grievous wound.*

brachylogia—omitting conjunctions (see asyndeton)

catachresis—the *inappropriate* use of one word for another, often a mixed metaphor: *This glossary is a sea of confusion in a continent of words.*

chiasmus—a criss-cross word pattern, in which the second half balances the first, but with a reversal of words or phrases: *Your manuscript is both good and original; but the part that is good is not original, and the part that is original is not good,* Samuel Johnson.

consonance—see **consonance**

diacope—the repetition of a word with one or more words in between: *Glossaries are dull, unrelentingly dull.*

ellipsis—see **ellipsis**

enallage—the substitution of one grammatical form for another: *We was robbed!* Or, *We are not amused,* Queen Victoria.

enthymene—an omitted but implied logical assumption. A syllogism has three parts: All humans are mortal (major premise); Socrates is human (minor premise); therefore Socrates is mortal (conclusion). Restated as an enthymene: *Socrates is mortal because he is human.* The major premise is assumed.

epanados—a repetition in the opposite order: *Necessity is not the mother of invention, rather Mother is the necessity of invention.*

epanalepsis—repetition of the initial word or words at the end: *The king is dead, long live the king.*

epanorthosis—correcting or amending a first thought to make it stronger: *This list is long, no, it is too long.*

epenthesis—1) The addition of a sound (e.g. *fence* pronounced with a *ts* at the end; this is not a figure of speech), letter. 2) Letters to the middle of a word: *bassackwards*, *fanf---ingtastic.*

epiplexis—a type of rhetorical question, which does not seek an answer in terms of information, but rather may seek to provoke: *Why are you such a jerk?*

epistrophe—repetition of the ends: *… that government of the people, by the people, for the people…* Abraham Lincoln.

epizeuxis—the immediate repetition of words: *Girls. Girls. Girls.*

gradatio—the repetition of an anadiplosis (repetition of the end at the beginning): *Fear leads to anger; anger leads to hatred; hatred leads to conflict; conflict leads to suffering,* Star Wars.

hendiadys—the addition of a conjunction between a word and its modifier. In English it is most often the use of two nouns created from a noun and its adjective: *weather and storm*, from stormy weather.

hendiatris—the use of three words to express one idea: *wine, women and song*.

homophone—a word that is pronounced the same as another word but differs in meaning: art *seers* or art *sears.*

hypallage—a reversal that seems to result in a change of meaning: *weary way* the way is not weary, but Thomas Gray's plowman; a *careless error*, the person committing the error was careless. (Both both are clichés.)

hyperbaton—the reordering or separating of words from their normal order: *It is hard, these examples are.*

hyperbole—the use of exaggeration: *Hyperbole is* never *used in serious literature.*

hysteron-proteron—a reversal of chronological order: *Put on your shoes and socks*, *SR*

inclusio—the repetition of the beginning of a passage at the end: see epanalepsis.

internal rhyme—two or more words within a sentence or line of poetry that rhyme: *Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,* Edgar Allan Poe.

isocolon—repetition of grammatical where the parallelism is reinforced by maintaining the: *Go to Heaven for the climate and Hell for the company,* Mark Twain.

litotes—a form of understatement by which the a statement is made by denying its opposite: *not bad* for good; *not unattractive* for attractive; *not too smart* for stupid.

malapropism—the substitution of an incorrect word for a word with a similar sound: *She washed the wall with pneumonia.* Or, *Let's Symonize our watches, we're at the pineapple of our careers,* the Eastside Kids/the Bowery Boys.

merism—referring to a single thing by a phrase that is made up of several of its parts: *heavens and earth* for the universe, or *high and low* for everywhere.

metalepsis—something that is referenced or modifies another but which is only remotely related: Edward becomes *Ted*, or having a *lead foot*.

metaplasmus—misspelling to create an effect: *dawg* for dog, *vat* for what;

metonymy—something that is referenced by another which is intimately related: *White House* for the President, *Detroit* for the automotive industry, or *Wall Street* for the financial industry.

non sequitur—a comment or phrase that no apparent relation to what it follows. If it is intentional, it is usually for humorous effect.

paradiastole—has two forms: 1) Something akin to a euphemism, that is a figure that mitigates something to flatter or for effect: *He is rather quaint,* or *He is quite impolite* for someone who is rude depending on whether you want to flatter or insult. 2) It is the addition of a disjunctive conjunctions (not, neither, nor): *No time, nor effort, nor pain will make this clear.*

parallelism—the use of similar patterns of structure and length: *He writes with a clear, concise and precise style;* whereas, He writes with a clear style, marked by a precision that is concise as well, is not parallel.

paraprosdokian—a device where the last part of a sentence or phrase is unexpected, usually humorous: *I've had a perfectly wonderful evening, but this wasn't it. . . . I once shot an elephant in my pajamas. How he got in my pajamas I don't know,* Groucho Marx.

paronomasia—word play, punning (see **pun**): *Champagne for my real friends and real pain for my sham friends,* attributed to Tom Waits, even if he never wrote a song in his life, let alone hundreds of great ones, this should give him immortality.

periphrasis—using more words for less: from the correct future tense as in *will go* to the less correct *a device for crisping bread* for a toaster.

personification—applying human traits to animals, ideas, or quality: *My horse thinks it's funny to buck me off*. . . . *Nature, she*. . . . *He embodies genius.* See **pathetic fallacy**.

pleonasm—a redundant word, sometime idiomatic: *With these eye I saw*, *null and void,* or *safe haven.* However, I might say someone was *kind and avuncular* if I thought that person might not know what *avuncular* meant.

ploce—the repetition of a word for effect: *blacker than black.*

polyptoton—the repetition of a word in a different grammatical form: *"Working hard or hardly working?"*

polysyndeton—the use of several conjunctions: *I saw him fishing and the lake was gray and choppy and rough.*

praecisio—[just simply fun] the absence of everything.

praeieritio—the inclusion of something by pretending to omit it: Think of a hundred political statements, *It is unseemly to address my opponent's drinking problem so I will not mention about it.*

proparalepsis—adding a letter(s) to the end of a word: *climature* for climate, or *slacken* for slack.

prothesis—adding letter(s) to the beginning of a word: *beweep, adown, enlard.*

pun—see **pun**

scesis onomaton— 1) A series of synonymous expressions. 2) The omission of the verb, that is a sentence made up of nouns, adjectives, prepositions, etc. but no verbs. Both types: *Glossaries void of life, empty of wit, full of dust.* [Quinn spells it *onamaton*.]

spoonerism—a play on words in which corresponding sounds are switched between words, literally as in *queer old dean* for dear old queen, or loosely, where the sounds changed, but not exactly, as in *spits and farts* for fits and starts.

syllepsis—when one word modifies two or more others (an omission), but with different meanings, often a pun: *You held your breath and the door for me,* Alanis Monissette *SR.*

symploce—the repetition of both the beginning word or words and the ending word or words in a series of clauses or sentences: "Against yourself you are calling him, against the laws you are calling him, against the democratic constitution you are calling him," Aeschines, *SR.*

synaloepha—the omission of one of two adjacent vowels to from a contraction: *th'other* for the other.

syncope—the omission of a letter or syllable from inside an word: *o'er* for over

synecdoche—using the part to stand for the whole: set of *wheels* for car, feel my *steel* for sword, man of the *cloth* for clergy.

timesis—splitting one word into two, usually with another word: *He shall be punished, what man soever offendeth, SR.*

zeugma—when one part of speech governs two or more parts of a sentence, typically, the omission of a verb from a clause: *To err is human; to forgive, divine.*

"History will be kind to me for I intend to write it," Winston Churchill.

zoomorphism—applying animal characteristics to man, gods, ideas, or things: animal gods, *roar of the ocean, whisper of the wind.*

see: <http://rhetoric.byu.edu/>, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Figure_of_speech>
Figures of Speech: 60 ways to turn a phrase, by Arthur Quinn. Lawrence Erlbaum, ISBN 1880393026.
Most of the examples are mine or quotes I found. Some I found at Silva Rhetoricae [*SR*], Wikipedia [*W*], Figures of Speech [*FoS*]. About.com [*AC*]

first person: 1) The first person pronoun: *I, we*. 2) A narrative style in which the story is told by one person, from that persons point of view, and in which the narrator refers to himself as *I*.

flash fiction: Another name for the short-short story, approximately 500 to 750 words in length.

flashback: A scene that interrupts the chronology of the narrative, showing the events or scenes of an earlier time.

flat and round characters: A flat character is a simple, two-dimensional character—a caricature. A flat character may be a mistake or used with careful intent to move the action forward. Round characters a full and complete. They have a background, and we see them with all their faults and virtues. Of the two, round characters are most interesting.

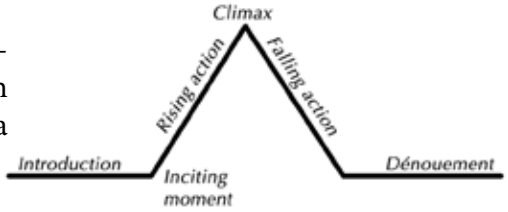
folk tale: A traditional story that covers a variety of material, myths, fairy tales, fables.

foreshadowing: The placement of events or scenes that so that the reader is prepared for what will occur later. This can range from a general atmosphere to a specific scene that gives clue to a later plot development. It can even be a single word that foreshadows the events of the story (Pnin's "inexorably moving railway coach".) Foreshadowing can also be a kind of rhyming scene, that is a smaller scene that mirrors a larger more important scene later in the the book.

form: The arrangement of material of a narrative. For example, the frame or story within a story, the use of flashbacks, etc.

frame: 1) An event or events that form the background of a story. 2) A device, such as having the narrator relate the events of the story. 3) A story within a story.

Freytag's pyramid: From Gustav Freytag, 1863: the diagrammatic structure of a typical five-act play. Although not all narrative works follow this sequence, it is a convenient way to envision *the* ideal structure.



genre: Generally, a type of literary work: novel, poem, drama tragedy, comedy, etc. It is used more commonly to mean specific types of novels—romance, mystery, suspense, science fiction—as opposed to *literary* novels. It has a somewhat pejorative context in the literary word.

Gothic: 1) Refers to 18th-19th century fiction set in medieval times, dark atmosphere, horror, macabre, or mysterious incidents. 2) Fiction that is characterized by the grotesque, macabre, or fantastic situations, or by an atmosphere of violence, decay, or desolation.

grammar: The structural rules for the composition of sentences, phrases, and words.

adjective—a word that modifies a noun: the **red** wagon. There are three forms:

Positive	**Comparative**	**Superlative**
dark	darker/more dark	darkest/most dark

Ideally, adjectives are placed as close as possible to the nouns they modify. Phrases may be adjectives: The man ***with the book in his hand*** is John.

adverb—a word that modifies verbs, adjectives, clauses, sentences, other adverbs, except nouns and determiners: to **boldly** go. Most adverbs end in ***-ly***. Words like *almost*, *quite*, and *very* do not have an adverbial form. There are adverbs that can be used with the adverbial suffix or without; for example:

bad/badly	even/evenly	loud/loudly
cheap/cheaply	fair/fairly	near/nearly
deep/deeply	hard/hardly	tight/tightly

Although the choice is one of style, the use of the adverbial *-ly* is preferred in formal writing. Adverbs can: 1) modify a single word or sentence element, 2) modify entire sentences, 3) connect and modify clauses, and 4) introduce questions. The location of adverbs and adverbial phrases within a sentence is variable.

"The difference between fiction and reality? Fiction has to make sense," Tom Clancy.

antecedent—a noun or noun phrase to which a pronoun refers. ***Tom*** *went to the party in the afternoon;* ***he*** *got home in the early evening.* The antecedent may be located before or after the pronoun.

antonym—two words that have opposite meanings. ***Slow/fast, light/dark.***

accusative—the case of a noun or pronoun showing it is the direct object

agreement—certain parts of speech which vary for gender, person or number should agree with what they stand for:

- Subject and verb agree in number: ***He plays*** *music.* ***They play*** *music.*
- Pronoun and antecedent: 1) Gender (and number): ***John*** *drove* ***his*** *car home.* 2) Number: ***She*** *closed* ***her*** *book. The* ***musicians*** *took* ***their*** *instruments out.*
- Demonstrative adjectives: ***That*** *book* ***belongs*** *to John.* ***Those*** *books* ***belong*** *to the library.*

appositive—two elements (usually nouns and/or noun phrases) placed in sequence, with one element modifying the other.

article—is a noun marker or *determiner*. There are two articles in English. The definite article is **the**, which refer to a particular thing or member of a group. The indefinite article, **a** or **an**, which refer to any member of a group (***a*** before consonant sounds; an before vowel sounds, including words starting with a silent ***h***: ***an*** *apple,* ***an*** *hour,* ***an*** *F,* ***an*** *hour*).

be—is a verb that expresses being (*I am.*), links the subject to additional information (*The book is green*), or is an auxiliary verb (He *was* talking.) It is an irregular verb:

- Present: I ***am***, you ***are***, he ***is***; we, you, they ***are***
- Present subjunctive: I, you, he, we, you, they ***be***
- Past: I ***was***, you ***were***, he ***was***, we, you they ***were***
- Past subjective: I, you, he, we, you, they ***were***
- Infinitive: ***be***
- Present participle: ***being***
- Past participle: ***been***

"A classic is something everybody wants to have read and nobody wants to read," Mark Twain.

case—is the form of a noun or pronoun that indicates its grammatical function. Cases are not used much in English, but they are common in personal and relative pronouns:

CASE

	Nominative	Accusative	Genitive determiner	Genitive independent	Reflexive/ Intensive
1st person	I	me	my	mine	myself
	we	us	our	ours	ourselves
2nd person	you	you	your	yours	yourself
3rd person	he	him	his	his	himself
	she	her	her	hers	herself
	one	one	one's	one's	oneself
	it	it	its	its	itself
	they	them	their	theirs	themselves
relative	who	whom	whose	whose	
	that	that	of that	of that	
	which	which/whom	of which, whose	of which, whose	

Nouns show the genitive case with the additions of the clitic **-'s**—the girl**'s** cat; or the girl next door**'s** cat; or, by composition as in the house **of** my friend.

clause—an element of a compound or complex sentence that typically has a subject and predicate; with a conjunction or an implied conjunction, it is related to the rest of the sentence.

- dependent: does not express a complete thought. 1) Noun clause is a subject or object. 2) Adjective clause modifies a noun. 3) Adverbial clause shows time, place, cause, effect, etc.
- independent: expresses a complete thought.
- restrictive: is necessary to define or limit a word. It is not set off by commas.
- nonrestrictive: modifies a word, it is not necessary. It is set off by commas.

complement—1) A noun or adjective that completes the meaning of a linking verb and modifies the subject. 2) The direct or indirect object of a verb.

compound word—two or more words that function as one word—*bookcase* or *hardware* (not related to context), or *credit-card* or *used-furniture* (as in *credit-card fraud* or *used-furniture store*, which are context related).

conjunctions—A word that joins words, phrases, clauses, and sentences.

- coordinating: join elements of equal rank—*and, but, or, nor, for, yet, so*.
- correlative: use in pairs—*both . . . and, either . . . or, neither . . . nor, not . . . as, not only . . . but also, whether . . . or*.
- subordinating: connects elements that are not equally ranked—a*fter, because, unless, as, although, while, if,* etc.

dangling modifier—a modifier that being misplaced modifies the wrong word. Most commonly, these are unattached participles (ending in *-ing*)—*Having swelled in the monsoons, I was unable to close the door*—and are therefore grammatically incorrect.

determiner—a noun modifier that references a noun or noun phrase showing specificity and number: **a**, **an**, **the** (articles); **all**, **few**, **many**, **some**, etc. (quantifiers); **one**, **ten**, **twenty**, etc., (cardinal numbers); etc.

"Easy reading is damned hard writing," Nathaniel Hawthorne.

interjection—an element that has no grammatical connection to the rest of the sentence. For example: *Goodbye, Hello, Ouch!, Sorry!*

misplaced modifier—these are modifiers that are not close to the word(s) they modify.

noun: the subject or object of a verb, or the object of a preposition. It is the name of a person, place, or thing. It may be a phrase

parallel construction—the use of the same grammatical forms to express two or more linked items in a sentence: *John likes reading, writing, and watching TV*; not *John likes reading, writing, and to watch TV.*

parts of speech—the major types of words used to convey ideas in language. See chart on next page.

phrase—two or more grammatically linked words without a subject and predicate. *He saw the dog* ***on the beach.***

predicate—a complete sentence has a subject and a predicate. The predicate is the verb with its modifiers (object, complement, etc.).

prefix—sound or syllable placed at the beginning of a word to alter the word's meaning:

preposition—links nouns, pronouns, and phrases to other words in a sentence, usually showing a temporal, spatial or logical relationship. ***Before*** *he left school . . . . He parked the car* ***in*** *the garage.* A prepositional phrase is made up of a preposition and its object; they can act as a noun, an adjective, or an adverb.

pronoun—a word that replaces a noun.

- personal: *I, he/she, it*
- relative: *who, that, which*
- reflexive: *myself, himself/herself/itself*
- reciprocal: *each other, one another*
- numerical: *one, two, three, first, second, third*
- demonstrative: *this, that*
- indefinite: *all, another, nothing, few, several, both, neither, nobody, no one*

"Every book has an intrinsic impossibility, which its writer discovers as soon as his first excitement dwindles," Anne Dillard.

PARTS OF SPEECH

Part of Speech	Primary Function	Secondary Function	Position	Derivational endings
Nouns	The name of a person place, thing, idea. The subject or object of a verb or prepositions.	Modifier of another noun; adverbial modifier.	Before and after verb; after articles	*-ance, -ee, -er, -or, -ism, -ment, -th*
Pronoun	A word used in place of a noun. The subject or object of a verb.	As a possessive, a modifier of a noun	Before or after a verb, after a preposition	none
Verb	A word indicating action, state, or being. Predicate.	As a gerund or infinitive as a subject or object; as an infinitive or participle a modifier of a noun	Following subject in statements; sometimes first in commands and questions	*-ate, -ize, -en, -fy*
Adjective	A word that modifies a noun.	Subject or object when preceded by a/an, the	Between a/an, the, etc., and a noun; after a linking verb	*-able, -al, -ant, -ary, -ic, -ish, -ous*
Adverb	A word that modifies a verb, adjective, or another adverb	A connective	variable	*-ly, -wise*
Preposition	A word that relates a noun to another word	Joining phrase to a word or sentence	Before a noun or noun and its modifiers; sometimes at an end of a construction	none
Conjunctions	A word joining two words, phrases, clauses, or sentences: coordinating and subordinating		At the beginning of a clause or sentence; between nouns, nouns with their modifiers, phrases	none
Interjection	A word added to a sentence to show emotion. Often followed by an exclamation or question mark/		Variable, but typically at the beginning or the end of a sentence.	

based on *Writer's Guide and Index to English*, by Porter G. Perrin

punctuation—symbols that indicate the structure and often meaning of written language. They are neither sounds nor words:

- apostrophe: ' with an ***s*** to show possession; for contractions
- asterisk: * used for footnotes; to show a long omission
- brace: { } used to group two or more lines; or technical
- bracket: [ ] indicates a comment not part of quoted text
- carat: ^ to indicate an insertion point

- colon: : a stop used to indicate that which follows
- comma: , used to separate elements within a sentence
- dash: — can be used like a colon, ellipsis or a set of parenthesis
- ellipsis: ... indicates an omission or trailing thoughts or words
- exclamation mark: ! replaces a period indicating intense emotion
- hyphen: - used to join words or separate syllables
- leader: . . . . guide the reader's eye across a page
- parentheses: ( ) qualifying word(s) not necessarily related grammatically
- period: . ends a sentence; used with some abbreviations and titles
- question mark: ? indicates a question within or ending a sentence
- quotation mark: " " used to set off a direct quote
- semicolon: ; less than a full stop; used to connect clauses
- underlining (italic): ___ used to indicate italics

sentence—a word or set of words that expresses a complete and distinct idea, statement, question, request, answer, etc.

- complete: a sentence with a subject and a predicate.
- complex: a sentence with an independent clause and at least one dependent clauses
- compound: a sentence with two or more independent clauses, with our without a connective.
- declarative: a sentence that states a fact, argument, or thought; ends with a period
- exclamatory: a simple, forceful, declarative sentence; ends with an exclamation mark
- fragment: an incomplete sentence, particularly one that does not express a complete idea.
- fused: two or more sentences put together in one sentence with no mark separating them; also called run-on.
- interrogative: a sentence that asks a question; ends with a question mark
- imperative: a sentence that commands someone to do something
- rhetorical question: a question that is asked for rhetorical purposes and that is not intended to be answered
- simple: a complete sentence with one independent clause and no dependent clause

shifts—two or more sentence elements, having the same relationship, should be expressed in the same grammatical manner: e.i. parallel construction. Rewrite making both elements the same type.

"Four basic premises of writing: clarity, brevity, simplicity, and humanity," William Zinsser.

- number: ***Everyone*** *should give* ***his*** *fair share.*
- tense: *When she* ***heard*** *the sirens she* ***screams*** *in fear.*
- subject: *The* ***orchestra*** *plays the classics, but the* ***pops*** *are a summer favorite.*
- voice: *If you want* ***to write*** *effectively, the passive voice* ***must be avoided****.*

Additional and more subtle shifts: adjective-noun, personal-impersonal, adverb-adjective, noun-adverb, noun-adjective, participle-clause.

suffix—a sound or syllable added to the end of a word giving grammatical information: 1) Inflectional, showing number, tense, possession, etc. 2) Derivational, showing shifts from verb to noun, adjective to adverb, or noun to adjective (virtue/virtu*ous*, quick/quick*ly*)

verb—a word that asserts something about the subject; it expresses actions, events, or states of being.

- gerund: a verbal noun; ending in ***-ing***, it functions as a noun—*running, singing*
- infinitive: a form of a verb without person or number; preceded by ***to***—*to run*
- linking: a verb that does not express action but connect the subject to additional information—often *be*, *She **is** tall*. There are other linking verbs, e.g. *The weather **turned** cold*.
- mood: a form of a verb to show if is indicative (making a statement), imperative (making a command), or subjunctive (if clauses contrary to fact, supposition, wishes).
- participle: a verb form used in compound tenses or used as a modifier. The present participle ends in *-ing (running)*. The past participle typically ends in *-ed* or *-en (talked,* or *eaten);* examples of exception are *borne, blown, dreamt, dived, lit, shrunk*.
- regular/irregular: there are regular patters of conjugation (talk, talking, talked); verbs that do not conjugate regularly are called irregular (I am, you are, he was)
- tense: a form of the verb that expresses time, past, present, and future. See chart on next page.
- transitive/intransitive: a transitive verb requires a subject (expressed or understood) and an object—*John **sees** the bird.* A verb that does take an object is intransitive—*My cat **hid** in the grass*. Verbs can often be both transitive and intransitive—*John cannot write* (intransitive); *I wrote this book* (transitive).
- voice: most verb can be used in the active or passive voice. In the active voice, the subject does, acts, or is. In the passive voice the subject is acted on. *John **wrote** the book* (active): *The book **was written** by John* (passive).

hamartia: While usually used synonymously to mean *tragic flaw*, it is the antagonist's mistaken judgment or error that leads to his misfortune. See **misadventure**.

hero: Originally not just the protagonist but one who was courageous, ideal, quick of wit. Now, he is more or less simply protagonist, and maybe the **anti-hero**.

heterotopia: A term borrowed by Michel Foucault: there are utopias, "sites with no real place," and there are places that exist—in between is the heterotopia. Foucault uses the mirror as an example. Standing before the mirror he is real, but his reflection is not real. Thus a garden is real, but it is also a heterotopia because it is meant to be a representation of the world of plants. Charles Baxter describes the room in which the narrator sits telling his story, in describing the room, the author creates a subtext, which would be a heterotopia, to use Foucault's word. *Subtext* is Baxter's word. Baxter suggests that whenever an author begins to describe something in detail, be prepared for subtext. See **subtext**.

historic novel: A novel that uses a historical event or setting, to frame either a fictional account of a person or event, or a loose reconstruction of a real person or event.

historic present: The use of the present tense for past events.

VERB TENSES

		Active	Passive
Present Tense		he asks he is asking he does ask	he is asked he is being asked
Past Tenses	***Past Perfect*** past of some time in the past	he had asked he had been asking	he had been asked
	Past a time in the past not extending to the present	he asked he was asking he did ask	he was asked he was being asked
	Perfect past, extending to the present	he has asked he has been asking	he has been asked
Future Tenses	***Future*** future extending from the present	he will ask he will be asking he is going to ask	he will be asked
	Future Perfect past from some future time	he will have asked he will have been asking	he will have been asked

based on *Writer's Guide and Index to English*, by Porter G. Perrin

"Manuscript: something submitted in haste and returned at leisure," Oliver Herford.

hubris: Arrogance or excessive pride, which in classic tragedy often led to the protagonists to act in error hence bringing down upon himself calamitous results.

humor: A style that is intended to evoke some kind of laughter.

hyperbole: Conscious exaggeration intended to heighten an effect or persuasion.

ideal spectator: 1) The reader or viewer to whom the author speaks. 2) A character who represents the author.

idyll: A viewpoint of the civilized and artificial looking out at a romanticized natural setting. It is also the name given to a poetic genre that has pastoral qualities.

illusion: The sense evoked by a work that it is real.

imagery: Language that descriptively represents things, actions or ideas.

imitation: Suggests work that is derivative or copies another work. It is used today as pejorative;

however, in earlier times, it was both a valued way of perfecting one's craft, and an acceptable practice in general.

inductive: A type of reasoning where the facts or conclusions result from repeated observations. Its strength is that it is base on observable fact (as opposed to **deductive**).

informal logic: Attempts to provide logic to analyze and asses ordinary language—conversation, articles, essays, etc. It makes use of tools taken from formal logic, cognitive psychology, rhetoric, among others, to develop a system for what has also been called critical thinking. See Informal Logic, page 101.

In medias res: starting a narrative in the middle of the action.

inscape: The inherent qualities of objects or events in nature or human experience.

intentional fallacy: The fallacy of judging a work by the intentions of the author—as formulated by the New Critics. They felt that relying on external information, the domain of the biography, was not relevant to understanding (to literary criticism); and that once the work is created, it has a life independent of the author. They argued that the author has no more lock on assessing the meaning than the careful reader.

interlude: A short play or sketch usually performed between part of larger dramas. In narrative, it is a break within a larger story that gives the reader a break.

intrigue: Most commonly applies to an elaborate plot in which the scheming of one or more characters is motivating.

invective: Harsh language directed at a person or cause.

invention: Writing that is original in form or material.

invocation: A plea to a deity for assistance.

"I love being a writer, what I can't stand is the paperwork," Peter De Vries

irony: To express an idea contradictory to the stated: for example, we might say "Oh, good!" when the car radiator begins to steam 20 miles west of Needles, California. In writing there are three ways in which a writer may be ironic, by:
1) making it clear that the intended meaning is opposite what is said;
2) creating a discrepancy between an expectation and its fulfillment;
3) playing between the appearance of a situation and the reality that underlies it.

The most common form of irony is verbal irony, in our "Oh, good!" In literary works, dramatic or tragic irony uses the structure of the work more than the words to show the irony. Noel Coward's *This Happy Breed* is set in England just before the Second World War. A large family celebrates the present and future peace and prosperity. They toast the older men who

had fought in the *war to end all wars*. But the audience knows that they are celebrating on the virtual eve of the Second World War. That's irony.

jargon: 1) Terminology associated with a profession or specific activity. 2) Pejorative for popular words. 3) Pejorative for either ugly sounding or meaningless writing.

lament: A work that expresses grief or mourning, usually poetic. See **elegy**.

lampoon: a satirical attack against a person. It is often gratuitous and sometimes unjust.

legend: 1) A popular myth. 2) A story handed down from the past. 3) The subject of a legend.

literary criticism: Is broadly concerned with what literature is, what it does, what it is worth. Within it, are schemes for assessing a work's value work: The impressionistic criticism felt that the reader's response indicates the work's value. The New Critics said that was a fallacy (the affective fallacy) because it confused what work itself and its results. Others said that a works meaning could be assess through close reading. Literary criticism has also developed a wide variety a cultural contexts: feminist, colonialist, historicism, deconstructionist. While a fixed ideology may be an encumbrance, a general idea of how a literary work might be read and interpreted can enrich how one reads and how one writes.

"Style and structure are the essence of a book, great ideas are hogwash," Vladimir Nabokov.

local color: Is a style of writing that uses regional detail and regional character types to a narrative.

logic: A tool for determining truth or falsity of a statement(s). It can be divided into four types: informal logic, formal logic, symbolic logic, and mathematical logic. Colloquially, a story has a logic.

loose and periodic sentences: A loose sentence in which the main clause come first, *The man let go of Martin, as the door slammed open.* A periodic sentence puts the main clause at the end of the sentence: As the door slammed open, *the man let go of Martin.*

magical realism: A term loosely applied to many South American writers in particular—for example Jorge Borges, Gabriel Marquez, Isabel Allende—about works that contain the fantastical, fabulous, or magical, but which is handled as if it quite ordinary. Sometimes fantastical realism.

malapropism: The substitution of an incorrect word that sounds close to the correct word: *I washed the walls with pneumonia*.

maxim: See **aphorism**.

meaning: For individual words, for example meaning could be 1) the emotive, connotative, meaning, or 2) the cognitive, denotative, dictionary meaning. In addition to the explicit narrative, there may be many *meanings*: moral, allegorical, cultural, etc.

melodrama: A story characterized by extravagant theatricality and a concern for plot over characterization. The plots are often improbable.

memoir: A biographical narrative, true or fictitious, composited mostly of personal experiences.

metaphor: A figure of speech that compares two dissimilar things by identification or substitution. For example, *the moon was a ghostly galleon*. Some metaphors can become idioms or clichés: the *eye* of a needle, or the *arm* of chair, which are called dead metaphors because their usage is so common. Metaphors can also be longer, sometimes, as in an extended metaphor, and entire book can be a metaphor: e.g. it stands for something bigger or quite different.

metaphysical: Dealing with the spiritual or philosophical.

mimesis: Imitation, as in the theoretical principle in the creation of art.

misadventure: Similar to tragedy, except the troubles that befall the protagonist are external, not due to a character flaw or error in judgment. See **comedy** and **tragedy**

mise-en-scene: "Putting on stage," the visual arrangement within the scenes; although it is usually applied to drama and cinema, it can be applied to literature in terms of the imagery, description, style, etc.

mock epic or **mock heroic**: A form of satire in which an elevated style is applied to a trivial subject.

monologue: An extended speech by one character.

mood: 1) A state of mind. 2) The emotional and intellectual attitude of the author towards the subject or theme.

"Drawing on my fine command of the English language, I said nothing," Robert Benchley.

motif: An element, situation, character or device that recurs in a work. Its repetition is used to help propel or anchor the narrative.

motivation: The reasons or explanation for a character's actions. The circumstances and the character's temperament, moral nature, and experiences combine to make up the motivation.

mystery: As applied to novels, it is a work in which mystery or terror control it.

myth: Stories usually rooted in the distant past, usually supernatural, that deal with creation, the cosmos, the relationship between man and the world.

narrative structure: The order and manner of presenting a story. As a story moves from point a to point c, point b might be shown first. For example, the chronology of a story may place the murder of a character in the middle, whereas, it might open the book.

"A good book has no ending," R.D. Cumming.

narrative: 1) Is a story. 2) Synonymous with expository, as in narrative writing.

narrator: The one who tells the story. The narrator determines the viewpoint. See **point of view** and **persona**.

naturalism: A theory that literature (and art) should conform to nature, emphasizing the role of heredity and environment—super-realism. It tries to give an unselective view of reality without moral judgment; emphasizing the accidental and physiological over the moral and rational qualities of their characters. (Writers include Zola, Stephen Crane, Jack London, Frank Norris.)

negative capability: A coinage by John Keats describing a writer's ability to accept "uncertainties, doubts"; therefore, a writer with negative capability is objective and not given to didacticism.

neologism: A word, usage, or expression that is newly coined.

noble savage: An idealized concept of the uncivilized individual as innately good—uncontaminated by the corruption of civilization.

novel: A fictional prose narrative form, usually in excess of 40,000 words. Typically, it has more characters, covers more time, and has a more complicated plot than shorter forms.

novelette: A fictional prose narrative from midway in length between the short story and the novel —7,500 to 17,500 words.

novella: A fictional prose narrative, approximately 17,500 to 40,000 words.

objective: A work in which the author seems—because, arguably, it is impossible to be truly objective—to present his characters in an impersonal, non-judgmental manner.

omniscient author: The least restricted voice for telling a story. The omniscient author can have multiple view points, knows his characters thoughts, and is often referred to as godlike. See **point of view**.

onomatopoeia: The name of a thing or action that imitates the sound associated with it

oxymoron: A figure of speech consisting of two contradictory terms, such as *sweet sorrow*, or *bittersweet*.

parable: A short story that illustrates a moral or lesson. See **fable**.

paradox: A statement, idea, or position that seems impossible or absurd, but which in some way is true. For example, *less is more*.

parallelism: A structural arrangement of phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs or scenes that have equal weight and are developed in a similar way.

paraphrase: Restating the idea by changing the diction and structure while maintaining the meaning.

pastiche : A parody or literary imitation.

pastoral : Having to do with the rustic in an idealized manner.

pathetic fallacy: Originating with John Ruskin, it is the use of personification, by which phrase he ascribed the use of personification as a hallmark of lesser poets and artists. (*Pathetic* relates to empathy, not to inferiority or inadequacy, or worthy of pity.) The term continues to be used, but without being disparaging. In the natural sciences, if taken literally, the pathetic fallacy is an error of reasoning.

pathos: Appeals to the audience's emotions.

peripeteia: The reversal of fortune of the protagonist, a fall in tragedy, and success in comedy.

persona: The person who is understood to be telling the work—distinct from the author—it is the voice chosen by the author. See **narrator**.

personification: Giving human traits to non-living things.

picaresque novel: An episodic novel, usually told in the person, that follows the adventures of a roguish character.

plant: In mysteries, the introduction of a character or thing early in the story, so that when it is discovered or appears in the resolution of the mystery it is not a **deus ex machina**.

platitude: A stale or trite statement made as though it were original and striking.

pleonasm: The use of more words than necessary to express an idea.

plot: The plan or main story. Typically, it as a beginning, middle, and end, and it includes a conflict, rising action, climax, falling action, dénouement. There is some confusion between plot and story. While E.M. Forster makes a distinction between *story* (the events of a work in sequence) and *plot* (the events of a work with an emphasis on causality), which is to say that plot involves an intelligent overview of the action, it is easier to be aware that for there to be more than a series of loosely connected episodes, there must be a sense of relationship, a causation between the characters and events.

plotting: Converts the story into a sequence of incidents that best shows the causality of the story.

Some author's do this prior to writing, some let the story unfold as they write. Either way, at some point the author must be aware of the plot and of the best sequence of the story's actions with regard to narrative interest.

poetic diction: The idea that poetry should use an elevated diction—above the commonplace.

poetic justice: The idea that good is rewarded and evil punished, further, that the writer should reward the good and punish the wicked as models for his readers. Colloquially, we use it to mean more an ironic twist of fate.

poetic license: Although usually reserved for verse, it is the liberty taken regarding word order, rhyme, and figures of speech. "Not all practices, however, may be condoned as poetic license, for a poet may discover that as a result of ineptitude, his license has been revoked," Beckson and Ganz, *Literary Terms*, 1960.

point of view: 1) The narrative mode from which a story is told, corresponding to person (see Grammar/Case): first, second, or third person. In first person, *I saw John do this…*, it is usually one of the characters telling the story. First person is the most distant from the actual author. The second person, *You saw John…*, is the least common point of view (see page 16). Second person is difficult to handle convincingly. Third person, *He did that…*, is the most versatile. The third person narrator can range from objective to subjective, limited to omniscient, or reliable to unreliable (see page 14, Narrative Mode). 2) Within a scene, what is seen or shown exists within a point of view. Regardless of which mode you chose, unless you are the omniscient author, there will be things that cannot be said or shown.

polemic: An argumentative and aggressive work that expresses the writer's viewpoint on either a controversial issue or an attack or refutation of the opinions of another.

portmanteau word: A word made up of parts of two words, such as *motel*, from *motor hotel*.

précis: A brief summary of a book.

preface: The author's introduction to a a work, usually offering some sort of explanation or discussion of what is to follow.

prologue: The preface or introduction to a literary work.

prose poem: A composition that has the qualities of poetry—rhyme, rhythm, alliteration, figures of speech, diction—but which is printed as prose.

"Did you ever stop to think, and forget to start again?" Winnie the Pooh.

prose: Composition that is distinct from poetry. It is looser, more varied, and does not place emphasis on the line.

prosody: Versification—rhyme, meter, structure.

protagonist: The character, characters, society, or forces, that oppose the antagonist.

psychological novel: A novel that is concerned with why things happen from an interior view. This emphasis on interior motives, thoughts, and feelings, demands more of characterization than other styles.

pun: The humorous use of a word to suggest a different meaning, usage, etc. One of my favorites I heard on NPR several years ago (it is also in *Eat, Shoots, and Leaves*, by Lynne Truss): What is the difference between a cat and a comma? One has a pause at the end of its clause, the other has claws at the ends of its paws. Garner suggests making a pun of the final word of a cliché: "Bankruptcy is sometimes *a fate worse than debt,*" *MAU*.

purple patch: A heavily ornate, extravagant, passage that stands out from otherwise dull writing (also purple passage or purple prose). It is meant in the pejorative. Purple prose could also be an entire work that is excessively flowery.

raconteur: A person who is skilled at telling stories, usually with wit and style. This can be the narrator of a story.

raisonneur: A character who speaks for the author and observes the other characters.

realism: The faithful representation of the real. In the 19th century many artists and writers strove for realism or naturalism in their work. See **verisimilitude**.

refrain: The repetition (exact or close) of phrase or a sentence that marks the end or opening of a section. A novel could have a repetitive event, in some sense, that could be used as a refrain.

reluctant hero: Although the reluctant hero can be an antihero, he is more often a ordinary person who finds himself in a situation requiring extraordinary action, or he is a person with extraordinary skills but who is reluctant to get involved in a particular situation. See **antihero.**

reminiscence: The recollection of a forgotten event or fact, usually shorter than a **flashback**.

repetition: A rhetorical device, if intentional, of reiterating a word, phrase, or idea for emphasis. It is, however, a frequent fault if done through carelessness. The fear of the fault often prevents an often marvelous effect.

rhetoric: The principles of effective speaking and writing: the art of persuasion. There are four rhetorical modes of discourse: description (describes the scene or setting), exposition (explaining a situation, object, theme, idea), argumentation (to convince by showing the truth or falsity of something), and narration (recounts events). These are often used in combination: narration may contain description, exposition may contain argumentation, etc. Additionally, there are three modes of persuasion, ethos (persuasion through moral competence) logos (persuasion through the words and the reasoning), and pathos (persuasion by emotional appeal).

rhetorical question: A question asked for its effect, not for an answer. It can also be a question asked, knowing that the answer will emphasize the speaker's point.

rhyme: 1) The repetition of similar or duplicate sounds. Most commonly it is the last sound of a word at the end of a line of verse. 2) A scene that is similar or parallel to another. Often a small scene rhymes with and prepares the reader for a larger more significant scene.

rhythm: A pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables.

roman à clef: A novel in which real people appear as thinly disguised fictional characters.

romance novel: Originally, an exotic adventure, as distinct from a realistic depiction of characters and scenes. Today, it is a genre that focuses on the romantic relationships between two people and typified by an optimistic ending.

romanticism: Generally, an idealistic view in the inherent goodness of man, as in the noble savage.

A metaphor is like a simile—anonymous.

saga: 1) A prose narrative dealing with prominent or legendary characters in 12th-13th century Norway or Iceland. 2) An extended narrative of heroic proportions.

sarcasm: A derisive or dismissive, ironic expression, where the opposite of what is said is meant.

satire: A work that ridicules virtually any subject; typically, however, it holds up human folly, vice, or shortcomings to derision.

scenario: Originally, a plot outline used by actors. Loosely used to mean a description of a scene.

scene: A place within which something happens—a segment of the story. Typically, it is unified, having a beginning, middle and end. Originally a subdivision of a dramatic act. It is separate from a narrative summary. It is slower than a summary, using dialogue, description, conflict, etc. Use a scene to show the reader the characters. See **summary** and **exposition**.

science fiction: A genre that depends on or deals with the effect of science, real or imagined, on society or on individuals. Often it only loosely relates to any science: simply a story set on a space ship that could just as easily have been set in Chicago. See **speculative fiction**.

sentimentality: 1) A overindulgent in the emotional. 2) An excessive view of the inherent goodness of man.

setting: The place and time of narrative.

shaggy-dog story: Originally a long-winded story, usually filled with irrelevant details or incidents

and ending a pointless or absurd with a conclusion. They are often a type of joke that plays off the listener's anticipation of the joke's punch-line, but ending with a pun or an unexpected maxim or conclusion.

short short story: A story of a few hundred words, also called a micro story, or flash story.

short story: A story of about 1000 to 10,000 words. Typically, a short story has fewer characters than a novel, focuses on one incident, and rarely has more than a single plot line.

simile: A figure of speech that compares two dissimilar things, but unlike a metaphor, it explicitly uses words such as *like* or *as*: e.g. *her hair was like seaweed*.

sketch: A short composition that somewhat resembles a short story, but which is light and informal.

slice of life: A work that attempts to represent life realistically, that is, naturalistic. It has come to mean a realistic representation of everyday, ordinary, life.

solecism: A grammatical mistake.

speculative fiction: Genres that explores worlds that are unlike the real world. These genre may include science fiction, fantasy, horror, utopian or dystopian fiction. The term was attributed to Robert Heinlein, and suggested a dissatisfaction with what was popular science fiction.

spoonerism: An intentional or unintentional reversal of sounds in one or more words. For example: *spits and farts* or fits and starts.

stock characters: A familiar character, such as the tough private-eye, the silent hero of westerns, or the reluctant hero. The fault with using them is that like a borrowed metaphor, they may appear clichéd. See **flat and round characters**.

"A writer is somebody for whom writing is more difficult that it is for other people," Thomas Mann

stock situation: As with stock characters, a common, cliché, incident.

story within a story: A narrative that contains a separate narrative.

stream of consciousness: The depiction of one's inner thoughts and feelings that flow with no apparent logic. Although it did not originate with Joyce, *Ulysses* popularized the technique.

structure: see **form**.

style: 1) Applies to those qualities of one's writing—i.e. it is evaluative. 2) It can also mean the classification, genre, of a work.

subjectivity: As opposed to objectivity, it gives expression to personal feelings, experiences, and

inner thoughts of the characters. A subjective point of view or narrative is one that emphasizes the responses to events or actions within the narrative.

sublime: A quality of a work that, because of its thought, emotion, and spirit transports the reader.

subplot: A secondary action that may or may not relate to the main one. Although sometimes called a counterplot, a counterplot can also mean a plot intended to subvert or oppose another plot.

subtext: a meaning that is implicit or implied as a narrative unfolds. Subtext can be used to imply controversial subjects. Subtext can be intentional or unintentional. See **heterotopia**.

summary: 1) an outline of the event of a story. 2) In the sense telling a story, the author moves the story forward by summary (exposition), and scenes (show, with dialogue, description, conflict, etc.). In expository writing, the author tells the story with description. Rarely is a novel written in just a summary style or scene by scene. The summary is useful when the story must change location, time, or characters, or when it moves to a subplot.

surprise ending: An ending or conclusion that is unexpected. It often is ironic. Devices for surprise endings:

- discovery (anagnorisis)—the protagonist's sudden discovery of the situation or insight into the antagonist.
- starting in the middle (in medias res)—the narrative starts in the middle
- flashback—not unlike the discovery, the flashback can reveal things that were unknown before it.
- unreliable narrator—the narrator manipulates the story and particularly the ending.
- nonlinear narrative—more severe than starting in the middle, the nonlinear narrative jumps around out of chronological order
- reverse narrative—the story unfolds from the end, the final event, towards the initial event.
- sudden reversal (peripeteia)—the sudden reversal of the situation, not deus ex machina because it is consistent and logical within the narrative.
- irony—the reader understands something other than what is explicitly told. Or, the actions of the characters are ironic in relation to each other. Sometimes this involves poetic justice, where the villain get caught in his own trap.
- red herring—the reader has assumed a particular circumstance that is false.
- deus ex machina—the unexpected and artificial introduction of something that resolves the situation.

suspense: "Expectant uncertainty concerning the outcome of the plot," Beckson and Ganz.

syllogism: A logical argument in which the conclusion if inferred from two premises. It is the core of deductive reasoning. For example: *All men are mortal. Socrates is a man. Therefore, Socrates is mortal.* The quantifier, all, could also be no, some . . . is, some . . . is not.

symbol: Is something that represents something else. Most symbols in daily life are fairly simple,

and have a common understanding: the word *pencil*, a stop light, a cross atop a steeple are all symbols and without too much quibbling we generally understand what they mean. In literature there are symbols of this sort, and symbols that are conscious or unconscious inventions of the author or the reader.

synonym: A word or phrase that have the same or nearly the same meaning.

synopsis: A brief outline or condensation of a narrative or book.

syntax: 1) The way words are put together to form phrases or clauses, part of grammar. 2) A system, such as the syntax of Romantic paintings.

tale: A narrative. It is usually applied to short stories.

tautology: saying the same thing twice.

tense: 1) In narrative the story may be told in present tense or the past tense. 2) In grammar a verb may be in present simple, present continuous, present perfect, past, imperfect, past continuous, conditional, past perfect, future, future perfect. See chart on page 88.

third person: 1) Personal pronouns: he, she, it, and they. 2) The viewpoint from which the story is told: either a character in the story or the author speak in the third person.

tone: How the author presents his material to his reader (narrative structure, writing style, diction, etc.), also referred to as attitude.

tragedy: A serious and dignified narrative based on the suffering that befalls the hero. The conflict usually pits the protagonist against an overwhelming force, the antagonist (destiny, circumstance, society), and which ends sorrowfully.

In classic tragedy, the hero's ultimate tragic end comes about because **hamartia**, that is, an error in judgment. There are systemic points:
protasis—the first part of a play where the characters and setting are introduced.
epitasis—the second part of a play where the action begins.
catastasis—the third part of the play where the the action is heightened.
catastrophe—the dramatic event that leads to the resolution.

tragic flaw: The defect in the protagonist that leads to his downfall. Today, this is usually a psychological problem. See **hamartia**.

tragic irony: See **irony**

tragicomedy: A work that contains both tragic and comic elements. In traditional forms, a tragic work that seems to lead towards a catastrophe, but which has a happy ending.

travesty: See **burlesque**

universality: A work is universal if its significance is not limited to a particular time and place.

utopia: An imaginary world, usually it is an ideal world. See **dystopia**

verisimilitude: The quality of appearing real and truthful. This means different things: it may be a transparent author, who doesn't let his style intrude on the story, so he remains invisible; or it could be a very stylistic author (Cormac McCarthy or Nabokov), whose descriptions, action, and dialogue feel real. How this is achieved and how much is necessary is particular to the work.

vignette: A small, brief work, a small scene, usually about a character, an incident, or a setting. Often a vignette is part of a bigger work.

villain: An evil antagonist—not everyone who opposes the protagonist need be evil or bad.

voice: 1) Described the relationship between the action, the subject, and the object of a verb. If the subject is the agent or actor (*I* shot the gun), the verb is active; if the subject is that which was acted on (The *gun* was shot by me) the verb is passive. 2) Refers to overall style—diction, pacing, ordering, type of writing, etc.—of a narration. See **persona** and **tone.**

wit: originally meaning *intelligence* or *wisdom*, it now used to mean humorous retorts and puns.

"Too often we… enjoy the comfort of opinion without the discomfort of thought," John F. Kennedy.

Additional Sources

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Informal Logic

Within the last thirty or so years, there has been an attempt to develop a system of rules or understandings, taken from a variety of disciplines, for understanding, analyzing and assessing things stated in ordinary language—conversation, interviews, speeches, news stories, articles, essays, and books. This is roughly synonymous with *critical thinking*.

- Fact: a statement or assertion about concepts, circumstances, events, or things that is or can be verified.
- Reader: as a reader, listener, researcher, it is important that you can assess and analyze information. No one can check the accuracy of everything that is represented as true. We need a way to assess the relative credibility of sources.
- Writer: as a writer, if you are preaching to the choir, you may not need to be as careful about your facts and reasoning; but if you are trying to reach an audience beyond the choir, if you are trying to persuade people who are not predisposed to agree with you, you need to be more careful about your facts and reasoning.

There are academic group who declare the validity of appeals to emotion and even lying, that is, whatever it takes to win—*Don't the ends justify the means? They do in nature,* as one college polemicist told me to explain this position. I don't agree.

- We cannot know or verify everything that is said as fact.
- We must critically assess the credibility of sources:
  Facts—consider known facts and how they are stated, then asses new facts.
  Informal Logic—consider the soundness and cogency (reasoning) of the source.
  Errors—consider, if there are errors, as in newspapers, how are such errors treated.
- If the ends justify the means, if fallacies, misrepresentations, and lies are permissible:

There is no way to know anything except what is inside our heads, or anything we are to know and act upon is given us by the power of authority, that is, authoritarianism.

But then, the same polemicist said, *Scholarship has no place in education*.

"Logical errors are, I think, of greater practical importance than many people believe; they enable their perpetrators to hold the comfortable opinion on every subject in turn," Bertrand Russell

Be Proactive

If your goal is to persuade the reader of something, organize your exposition by knowing:

- Purpose—Think about the purpose, goal, and objective. What are you trying to accomplish? Why?

- Question at issue—What is the problem (question, issue)? Is there a hidden question?
- Information—What information (data, facts, experiences) do you need? Do you need more information? How do you verify that it is true?
- Interpretation & Inferences—What conclusions (solutions, inference) is the information pointing to? Are they logical? Are these conclusions consistent with the question and what you thought before?
- Concepts—What concepts (principles, models) are controlling the conclusions?
- Assumptions—What are the assumptions? Are the assumptions (presuppositions) sound? Are they consistent with theory, history?
- Implications & Consequences—The interpretation, inferences, concepts, and assumptions, if taken as a whole, have implications, what are they? Are they consistent with your purpose and the question?
- Point of View—Is your viewpoint (frame of reference, perspective) consistent? Is it reasonable? Is there another point of view?

As a writer, these are your tools:

- Clarity—Is your writing clear? Is the meaning clear?
- Accuracy—Is your information error and distortion free?
- Precision—Given your audience, do you have the necessary level of detail. Could you give more? Should you take some away? Remove unnecessary words.
- Relevance—Is what you've written relevant to the problem or question?
- Depth—If there are complexities or complications to your issue, you need to go deeper to address them.
- Breadth—If there are other possible points of view, you need to encompass them.
- Logic—Do your examples and arguments make sense? Does each sentence flow one from another?
- Significance—Have you chosen examples and arguments that are important?
- Fairness—Have you represented the breadth of the issue or are you being one-sided or self-serving?
- Consistency—Have you been consistent? If the reader draws a logical conclusion, will it be consistent with your goal?

"Assume that your opponent is wrong, and the world will be at your feet. Attempt to prove that he is wrong or (worse still) try to find out whether he is wrong or right, and the national dynamism of our age will thrust you to the wall," CS Lewis

Sound and Cogent

A sound argument is one that is grounded in fact, evidence, and logic. It is free from error. A cogent argument is one that conclusive. As a practical matter, sound and cogent suggests that an argument is supported by fact and evidence, that it is presented logically, and that as it is cogent, it anticipates the arguments against it and it addresses them persuasively.

Facts

Under editing, I said check your facts. But how far do you go? Primary sources include: original documents (interviews, film footage, records, etc., translations are conditionally acceptable—not all translations are accurate), contemporaneous creative works and artifacts. Primary sources are not necessarily reliable or unbiased. Secondary sources interpret and analyze the primary sources. At best, secondary sources are a second hand accounts: for example, books, newspapers, and encyclopedias. In preparing the section on figures of speech, I found three sources that spelled *onomaton* differently from Arthur Quinn, *Figures of Speech*, as well as several definitions that were, if not wrong, at least misleading. Does this discredit his book? No, I would recommend it to anyone who is not a rhetorician, for whom it was not written, but I checked each word with three other sources.

Is the Internet reliable? Yes and no. Wikipedia, for example, is very popular, but popularity does not mean it's reliable. For example, I used Quinn and Wikipedia (apparently written in part or whole by Geoff Sauer <June, 2009, http://rhetoric.eserver.org/reference> as a source for information on figures of speech, but I checked each entry with Silvia Rhetoricae, Univ. Kentucky Division of Classics web page, American Rhetoric, Virtual Salt: A Handbook of Rhetorical Devices, usage books, and dictionaries.

Are peer reviewed academic articles reliable? Again, yes and no. Peer review should guarantee that frivolous and unsubstantiated articles do not get published. But most fields are susceptible to faddish beliefs and power centers, which can corrupt the process.

Facts and statements about facts aren't always what they appear. In the next section, "Analysis of Unravelment," page 114, I show how *facts* aren't always true. Does it matter that I can unravel an article? Yes. This is what can happen to anyone's writing if they make biased, unclear, ambiguous, or make misleading or false statements of fact.

How far should you check facts? The answer is to develop the habit of questioning material facts, and if you are uncertain, check again. If you are reasonably certain, keep going.

Figures of Speech

While figures of speech and literary style are considered hallmarks of great literature, they should be avoided or used only with great care in expository writing. Many figures of speech are types of fallacies. Know your audience.

"There's a mighty big difference between good, sound reasons and reasons that sound good." Burton Hillis.

Arguments

If the facts are true, then the next thing where things can go wrong is in the argument. The following errors are important: a sound and cogent exposition should avoid them, and if you are doing research such errors should make you cautious of the source. They are important because they are commonly used and are often quite persuasive—listen to political debate. However, these errors do not mean that the premises or conclusions are invalid or false, only that the argument(s) or reasoning is.

There are many ways to group these fallacies, e.g. some people put *red herring* under Fallacies of Relevance; some make it a category itself under which they put fallacies such as Straw Man or Bandwagon; some keep it separate from other categories. The grouping that follows is intended to help showing patterns between them. Many of the fallacies have subtle variations, which may or may not be significant; and a many of the fallacies can be analyzed in different ways, and therefore can be categorized differently.

One problem with categorizing and defining fallacies is intentionality: from the benign, accidental inclusion of a fallacy to outright lying. Misrepresentation might result from innocent misunderstanding or the outright perpetration of a fraud, which would change how *misrepresentation* is categorized.

The following taxonomy of fallacies is idiosyncratic.

RELEVANCE

Fallacies that attempt to prove or disprove a conclusion, evidence or arguments but that do not bear on the truth because they are irrelevant

ad hominem: (to the man) attacking the person rather than addressing the issues, evidence, or conclusions. Y*ou can't believe Professor Neuhouse's book because he was in the Hitler Youth*.

appeal to motive: challenging a thesis by putting into question the motives of proposer. *You say that Intel makes the best computer chips, but you work for Intel.*

Bulverism: from C.S. Lewis, (ad hominem circumstantial) rather than addressing an argument, a person assumes it is wrong and then explains why the other person held that position. *In asserting "Art is about beauty," I reply, "Of course you would say that, you are a white European male."*

guilt by association: discrediting a position because of an association with someone else, who is held in contempt. *That is the same thing Professor Neuhouse says, and he was a Nazi; so what does that make you?*

honor by association: crediting a position because of an association with someone else, who is held in esteem. *That's what Professor Neuhouse says, and his family hid Jews during the war; therefore I agree.*

poisoning the well: saying something pre-emptively (positive or negative) to bias the results. Negative: *Before Professor Neuhouse speaks, let me remind you that he was in the Hitler Youth.* Positive: *Wait until you hear Professor Neuhouse, he is electrifying.*

scapegoating: blaming a group of people for a problem, similar to guilt by association. *You can't trust anything Professor Neuhouse says, he's German.*

tu quoque: (you too) ascribes hypocrisy to the other person, i.e. who doesn't act in accord with the arguments he is making. *The local district attorney is corrupt so he is a hypocrite to prosecute people*—regardless of the D.A.'s behavior, that does not change the evidence against people he prosecutes.

"A mind all logic is like a knife all blade. It makes the hand bleed that uses it." Rabindranath Tagore

big lie: The reiteration of a lie. The lie is usually complex and has some elements of truth. Its repetition implants it as true; urban legends, for example.

limited depth: a theory that assumes something is true because of membership in a category, while failing to see an underlying cause(s).

limited scope: an explanation for something that is extremely limited and narrow.

noble lie: an untruth told by an elite to maintain social harmony. However, where a white lie usually does not cause problems when found out, the noble lie usually does.

non sequitur: (it does not follow) a comment that has no relation to what preceded it or to the ongoing discussion. *If I serve Johnsonville sausage, everyone will like me.*

avoiding the question/avoiding the issue: When asked about North Korea, the President replies, *"I'm in contact with the EU and there will be an economic summit next month."*

clouding the issue/smokescreen: offering too many details to obscure the point or cover-up a lack of counter evidence: *When asked about most anything, the President replies, "I'm in contact with the EU. We are looking at House Bill 793, and I have a panel working with the Senate Banking Committee, where Senator…."*

far fetched hypothesis: offering a bizarre or far fetched hypothesis without looking at or ruling out more likely explanation. *Three cars stalled out on Route 93, due to UFO fly overs.*

irrelevant conclusion: an argument that attempts to prove one thing but proves something else. *You show me the empty gas tank to prove why the car stalled out and I say, "That proves aliens drained the tank."*

Slothful induction: the correct conclusion is denied despite the evidence. *Although, you show me the car that stopped on Route 93 last night, and it is out of gas; I insist UFO's caused it to stall out.*

subverted support: an explanation for something when that something doesn't exist or there is no evidence for it. *I say the three cars that stalled out on Route 93 last night did so when driving through dense fog…when in fact no cars stalled out on Route 93 last night.*

perfectionist: dismissing a proposal because it doesn't solve a problem perfectly, particularly where perfection isn't required or possible.

"As scarce as truth is, the supply has always been in excess of the demand," Josh Billings

red herring: an argument that does not address the issue by the deliberate attempt to change the subject or divert the argument.

special pleading: the introduction of favorable details or the exclusion of unfavorable details because of an exemption to principles that should apply and would prevent such introductions or exclusions: but such exemption is to be accepted uncritically. For example, the "expert" witness in a news report about a crisis in a distant country whose only "expertise" is his ethnicity, and who says things that go unchallenged because of his ethnicity or victimhood.

untestability: (unfalsifiablity) an explanation that cannot be tested or falsifiable because there is no way to check it. *The aliens made the cars stall using forces so subtle they cannot be measured.*

EMOTION
Fallacies that take advantage of emotions

appeal to authority: asserting the truth of something based on the authority, knowledge, expertise of someone. It is a fallacy when that someone does not have the authority, knowledge or expertise (*If Eric Clapton says the new BMW is a great car, it is.*), or when it is only because a person of authority said something that is proof of correctness (*Of course she killed her husband, the police arrested her.*).

anonymous authority: when the authority is not named it is impossible to confirm if the authority is an expert. *A government official said that….*
appeal to rumor: the source of a statement is a rumor. *Rumor has it that the Senator….*
bare assertion: a premise that is assumed to be true because it says it is true. *The cars stalled out because of aliens. That's true, they did it.*
genetic fallacy: the origin of the thing/the source of the information in and of itself does not have relevance to its merit. *The NY Times said the Senator was corrupt, and the NY Times is always credible*. Or, *Aristotle was Greek, and Greeks lie.*
I'm entitled to my opinion: whether one has or does not have a right to an opinion has nothing to do with the merits of an argument. *After having a point shown to be false (aliens cased the car to stall… but not only were there no UPF sightings, but there is no evidence of alien)… "But I'm entitled to my opinion."*
ipse dixitism: (he himself said it) an unsupported or dogmatic statement. *"Trust me…."*

appeal to belief: most people believe something, therefore it is true. *Most people believe the earth is round, therefore it is round.* (The argument is false because belief doesn't prove a proposition; but a false argument does not necessarily mean the conclusion is false.)

appeal to consequences: appeals to good or bad results regarding the validity or falsity of a premise.

appeal to fear: appeals to existing fears. *If you don't support the bond issue, the hospital will close.*
*appeal to flattery***:** appeals to a person's vanity. *Surely a man as honest and moral as you would never make an argument like that.*
appeal to force: threatening the other person that if they do not agree something bad will happen: *if you don't support this bill, Senator, you will lose your chairmanship.*

appeal to novelty: arguing that a thing or position is correct because it is modern or new. *Upgrading to the newest operating system will make your computer run better.*

appeal to pity: an appeal to a sense of pity or guilt in the other person. *Believe us, we have been dedicated to serving the community and working hard for ten years.*

appeal to popularity (bandwagon)—*Everybody believes in aliens, therefore it must be true*.

appeal to ridicule: representing your opponent's position in ridiculous way. *He cannot be right, after all he is just a student.*

appeal to spite: exploiting existing feelings of animus. *Support my position and you'll be able to get back at your boss.*

appeal to wealth: an appeal based on the wealth of the person. Positive: B*ill gates is right, after all he is one of the richest men in the world.* Negative: *If you're so smart, why aren't you rich?*

appeals to tradition: (appeal to common practice) a proposition or conclusion is true because it has always been accepted as true. *We should teach Latin because we have always taught Latin.*

furtive fallacy: the belief that history is truly secret, dark, and insidious—beyond mere conspiracy theories. *That's what you've read, but the books are wrong, the world is controlled by five families.*

wishful thinking: making or arguing for decisions or positions that are pleasing to imagine. *British Prime Minister Chamberlain, assured the world that the Munich Agreement would guarantee peace in our time.*

FIGURES OF SPEECH/AMBIGUITY/EQUIVOCATION/VAGUENESS

Fallacies that appear to support a conclusion due to their imprecise use of language, ill-defined or confusing definitions.

"During times of universal deceit, telling the truth becomes a revolutionary act," George Orwell.

Accent: in rhetoric, it is the ambiguity resulting from the emphasis or accent of a particular word. More generally, it is a devise to overemphasize a position.

every/all, none, nothing: the misuse of words that are explicitly categorical or universal in how they describe the members of a group. The problem with using them is that a single exception disproves them: all swans are white, which was disproved when black swans were discovered in Perth, Australia.

exaggeration: overstating or overemphasizing a position.

false precision: presenting numerical data in a way that implies greater precision, accuracy, and soundness than is the case.

lack of proportion: exaggerating or down playing a position.

loaded language: language that is emotive, that expresses a value judgment, but is used as if it were objective.

vividness: the use of vivid language to place undue emphasis on a position.

argumentum ad nauseum: the prolonged reiteration of a position. In practice, each reiteration could be made by someone else, or with slight variations in the wording—as if were you to say something enough it becomes true.

Contextonmy: quoting a passage out of context. Generally, it takes one of two forms. In the straw man argument, a passage is taken out of context to misrepresent the issue and make it easier to refute. In an appeal to authority, it quotes something out of context to make the position appear stronger.

Continuum: (heap, line drawing, the bald man, sorites) a paradoxical problem of vagueness. A large number of grains of sand make a heap of sand. If we take one grain of sand away it is still a heap. Repeat this and it is still a heap…repeat it enough times and one *must* admit that the last remaining grain of sand is a heap.

Definist fallacy: unfairly defining a term so that it is easier to defend.

circular definition: a definition that includes the term being defined as part of the definition.
conflicting conditions: a definition that is self-contradictory.
failure to elucidate: a definition that is more difficult to understand than the term itself either by being overly complex or extremely vague.
too broad: a definition that includes irrelevant items.
too narrow: a definition that does not include relevant items.

equivocation fallacy: the misleading use of a word or term with more than one meaning

"Nothing is as frustrating as arguing with someone who knows what he's talking about," Sam Ewig

if by whiskey: (from a 1952 speech by Noah Sweat. When asked whether Mississippi should prohibit or legalize alcohol he replied: "…If by whiskey you mean the devil's brew, the poison scourge, the bloody monster…then certainly I am against it.…But if when you say whisky you mean the oil of conversation, the philosophic wine the tail that is consumed when good fellows get together…then certainly I am for it.") This is the ultimate equivocation, fully supporting both sides of an argument.
relativist fallacy (subjectivist fallacy): arguing that something is true for one person but not for someone else.
Loki's wager: Loki, the Norse trickster god, wagers his own head in a bet with some dwarves. Loki lost, he agrees to the payment, but he insists that they cannot take his neck. Not knowing exactly where the neck stops and the head starts, Loki kept his head. In logic, it is the insistence that a thing cannot be discussed if it cannot be clearly defined.

false attribution: appealing to an unqualified, unidentified, biased, irrelevant or fabricated source in support of an argument. Attributing a quote to someone more famous than the actual author of the quote.

Hooded man: presuming that a position is false because the reasoner doesn't know it under its various names or descriptions: *You claim to know Socrates, but you are lying because you admitted you do not know the hooded man, but the hooded man is Socrates.*

Masked man: mistakenly reasoning from the various names to a larger conclusion: *If I do know the masked man* (in the example above, the hooded man) *I do not know that he is the masked man.* Or, *I know who Socrates is, but I do not know who is corrupting the youth of Athens: therefore Socrates is not the corruptor.*

many questions: (double, loaded, or trick question) a question that presupposes something else: *Are you still on drugs* presupposes you had been on drugs.

flattering: asks two questions, one that the listener wants to answer affirmatively, "Will you be nice, and read my book?"

misleading/suggestive: suggests something that may or may not be true. For example, "Senator, don't you have a brother in jail?" Here the suggestion has been made, the listener makes the assumption, but the questioner didn't actually make an accusation.

slippery slope: an argument that says a small step will lead inexorably to some significant, usually calamitous, event.

straw man: misrepresenting an opponent's position, usually by taking a portion of his argument out of context, then attacking it.

style over substance: emphasizing the way in which an argument is presented while ignoring the content.

UNREASONABLENESS/PRESUMPTIONS

Fallacies that start with a false assumption, or use bad reasoning or evidence

appeal to probability: assumes that because something could happen, it will happen. *Murphy's law: anything that can go wrong will go wrong.*

argument from silence: (argument from ignorance) a conclusion based on a lack of contrary evidence. *Because there is no evidence the X is false, it must be true.* Or, *because there is no evidence that X is true, it must be false.*

argument from ignorance: (negative evidence/negative proof/argument from personal belief) drawing a conclusion from the lack of evidence—that is, not knowing something is true is taken as proof it is false; or, not know something is false is taken as proof it is true. *Because you can't prove that aliens did not make the cars stall, they must have.*

argument from repetition: (argumentum ad nauseum) a false proof based on the repetition of a statement, sometimes by different people, and sometimes with only slight variations. A political speech: *Bill 273 will end poverty . . . my bill will end poverty . . . my bill will lift the poor up . . . my bill will end pernicious want in this country . . . say no to poverty.*

begging the question: although commonly used to mean "raises the question," in logic it means

including the conclusion in a premise (circular argument). *Women shouldn't serve on the city council because councilmen are and should be men.*

biased sample: (unrepresentative sample) a sample from the population that is not representative of that population, but from which a conclusion or generalization is made.

cherry picking/suppressed evidence: intentionally not using information that is contrary to one's position.

conjunction fallacy: specific conditions are presumed more likely than general ones.

> "The most important tactic in an argument, next to being right, is to leave an escape hatch for your opponent, so that he can gracefully swing over to your side without an embarrassing loss of face," Sydney J. Harris

ecological fallacy: (ecological inference fallacy, division) deducing conclusions about individuals on the basis of data collected about the whole; or, more generally, "thinking that relationships observed for groups necessarily hold for individuals," David a. Freedman, UoC, Berkley.

fallacy fallacy: (argument from fallacy) assuming that because an argument is false the conclusion must therefore be false. *Because Dr. Orr's arguments are easily repudiated his conclusion concerning the US Constitution is wrong.*

fallacy of exclusion: (cherry picking) important counter-evidence is excluded from consideration.

false dichotomy: saying solution A precludes solution B, when there is no relation between A and B.

false dilemma: where two alternatives are held to be the only possible options, when there are several more. *You're either for me or against me.*

file drawer: the lack of evidence for something may be related to a lack of interest in publication. There is a greater interest in publishing research that shows a positive correlation between between things—high tension electric lines cause cancer—than research that finds no correlation. Often the lack of evidence seems wanting until someone's research showing just such a strong positive correlation, then publishing the other studies, which have been tucked away in file drawers, becomes possible.

gambler's fallacy: the assumption that a series of outcomes will affect future outcomes The classic example is a series of coin tosses. Each toss is an individual event, therefore having a probability of 50/50. However see: **the personal**>Ludic's fallacy)

Generalizations:

accident: ignoring an exception to a generalization.
converse of accident: arguing from an exception
composition: assuming a quality of the whole from some of its parts
division: assuming a quality of an individual based on a quality of the whole.
hasty generalization: a generalization made from insufficient evidence.
Jumping to conclusions: drawing a conclusion without considering the evidence.
Package deal: the assumption that because certain things often are grouped together they must be grouped together; or, failing to discriminate crucial differences between things.
sweeping generalization: a conclusion that far exceeds the supporting evidence.

Misrepresentations:

"Dictionaries are like watches, the worst is better than none and the best cannot be expected to go quite true," Samuel Johnson

fraud: an intentional deception (expression, omission, concealment) made for personal gain or to damage another.
lying: intentionally saying something that is known to be false to support a position.
on-sidedness: intentionally failing to consider relevant information that would counter one's argument.
false analogy: an analogy that suggests a similarity between two things, but which are not similar, or when such similarity is trivial.
weak analogy: an analogy between two things that is weaker than suggested.

moralistic: arguing that what should be therefore is.

naturalistic/is-ought: arguing that what is therefore should be.

no true Scotsman: *All Scotsmen are brave and loyal… McDonnel is a Scottish soldier who deserted… If he deserted, that shows McDonnel wasn't a true Scotsman; and, therefore, you cannot cite him to disprove my assertion.*

ad hoc rescue: (ad hoc hypothesis) when a position is shown to be false, the evidence against it is systematically dismissed. *In talking about the efficacy and beneficence of communism in Cuba, Castro was asked about the living conditions in Cuba, which should have given the lie to the Castro's grand experiment: It shows that the Cuban people weren't ready for it.*

non causa pro causa: falsely concluding one thing is the cause of another

cum hoc: (common cause, (correlation does not imply causation; cum hoc ergo propter hoc—with this, therefore because of this)) when a causal relationship is claimed between two events when they are each the effect of a common cause. *Windshield wipers cause auto accidents because the rate of accidents rises and falls with windshield wiper usage… but both are the effect of rain.*

complex cause: where an effect is caused by a number of things, but only a part of the causes is identified.

false cause: (superstitious thinking) attributing a cause that is due to unreasonable fear of the unknown, magic or an obviously false idea.

insignificant cause: identifying a cause, albeit genuine, when more significant causes exist.

post hoc: (post hoc ergo propter hoc—after this, therefore because of this) *I got a chain letter and did not send it on, a few days later I got a cold.*

retrospective determinism: because something happened it was bound to happen.

single cause: (over simplification) assuming a single cause when there may be cause by more causes.

Texas sharpshooter: taking information that has no meaning and manipulating it until it appears to have meaning. *A Texan fired several shots at the side of his barn, then he painted a target around them—thereby claiming to be a sharpshooter*

wrong direction: (fallacy of causation) when the cause is said to be the effect. *The increase of sexually transmitted diseases was caused by an increase in sex education.*

overwhelming exception: a generalization that is accurate but which comes with exception(s) that substantially weakens the generalization. *All right, but apart from the sanitation, the medicine, education, wine, public order, irrigation, roads, a fresh water system, and public health, what have the Romans ever done for us?*—Monty Python's Life of Brian.

standards:

double standard: applying a standard to one's opponent that is different from what is applied to the arguer.

Nirvana fallacy: (Perfect solution) comparing actual things with idealized alternatives. *Opposing a flu vaccine program because it won't eliminate all flu.*

perfect solution: an argument that assumes there is a perfect solution, or one which rejects a solution because it is not perfect. See Nirvana fallacy.

raising the bar: (moving the goal posts) when evidence is presented for an issue, but it is dismissed and other, often greater, evidence is demanded.

shifting the burden of proof: 1) Because the burden of proof is on the person making an assertion, shifting the burden is to put the burden on the person who denies the assertion. This person is thus expected to prove a negative. 2) Raising the burden of proof: in law, for example, from preponderance of evidence to clear and convincing.

subjectivist fallacy: (relativist fallacy) when something is claimed to be true for one person but not for another.

the personal—fallacies and errors in judgment based on cognitive factors. These and more are the fodder of Cognitive Bias

chronocentrism: presuming that the age or time one lives in is harder, easier, more dangerous, etc.

déformation professionelle: considering things from the point of view of one's professional training.

law of the instrument: "Give a small boy a hammer, and he will find that everything he encounters needs pounding," Abraham Kaplan.

Maslow's hammer: "When the only tool you have is a hammer, it is tempting to treat everything as if it were a nail," Abraham Maslow.

Hindsight fallacy: seeing events as having been more predictable than they were when they took place.

Historian's fallacy: assuming that decision makers in the past shared the historian's viewpoints a coin and and had the same information as the historian.

Ludic fallacy: mistaking the map or model for reality. For example: the odds of flipping a coin and getting heads is 50/50. In statistics, each toss is figured as an individual event. So if heads came up 99 times in a row, the odds for the next toss being heads is 50/50; but the odds for the sequence of 99 heads in a row is 1 in billions of billions.

psychologists fallacy: when an observer assumes his own objectivity when analyzing an event.

wisdom of repugnance: (yuck fallacy) the belief that a strong negative reaction to something is in itself evidence that that something is inherently bad or evil. *Same sex marriage makes my skin crawl because it is evil.*

three men make a tiger: a Chinese proverb that refers to how an unfounded premise, such as an Urban myth, becomes accepted if many people repeat it (appeal to the many). Pang Cong asked the King of Wei if he were to hear that a tiger was reported roaming through the market, would he believe it? The King said no. If he heard it from two men? The King said maybe. What if three men said it? The King said he would believe it.

two wrongs: two wrongs make a right. *What the administration did was wrong, so I was justified to do what I did.* See tu quoque.

Unfalsifiable: a premise that cannot be tested for its validity or falsity. For example, "All men are immortal" can be tested and falsified, if one or men are found to be mortal. Whereas "all men are mortal" cannot be falsified because no one can demonstrate that one or more men are immortal.

"It is useless to attempt to reason a man out of a thing he was never reasoned into," Jonathan Swift.

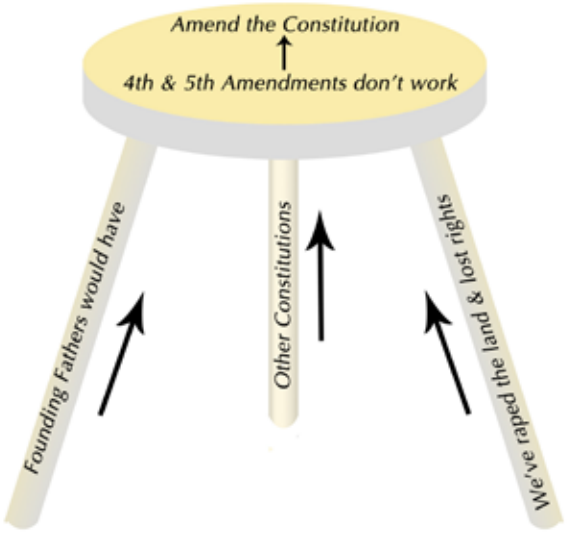
Anatomy of Unravelment

Although any genre of writing can unravel—Rosamunde Pilcher's *September,* from people of most any weight "heaving" themselves up and out of chairs, and characters with similar first names, to ten maids of honor, ten years married, ten miles from Edinburgh and a three-day transatlantic jet flight; turn-of-the-century view cameras did not have dials as in Jody Shields' *The Fig Eater*—it is especially risky in non-fiction, expository, writing where fact and reasoning lay claim over the author.

The credibility of a well written—great style, well organized, apparently well supported—can unravel when logic and fact are manipulated to make a point.

David Orr wrote an article, "Law of the Land," [LotL] *Orion*, January/February 2004: 19-25. The same article formed the core of a second article, "The Constitution of Nature," **Conservation Biology** 17 (2003): 1478-1484. (Orr was and is a member of the *Conservation Biology* Editorial Board.) That in turn was reprinted in *The Last Refuge: Patriotism, Politics, and the Environment in an Age of Terror.* David Orr. Washington: Island Press, 2004.

Orr's premise—the earth is being destroyed by pollution—matters of degree and immediacy aside, is easily supported. His proposal—that environmental protections should be given the power of law and enshrined in our constitution—is enticing. His purpose—to persuade the reader that the problem is real and the solution achievable. His arguments are organized like a three-legged stool: because 3 points define a plane this is the most stable configuration (more legs can wobble, less fall over). Each leg represents a line of argument. The seat is the inevitable conclusion.



His writing style is flawless and his tone is perfect for his audience. In the sense of style, reasoning, organization, logic, and appropriateness for his audience: the article is an exemplar worth study. The more formal "The Constitution of Nature" is available at <http://riversfoundation.org/rfa/resources/publications/>. If you can copy his style and organization, and be sound and cogent, you will have mastered expository writing.

Amending the US Constitution is difficult because it requires: 1) Two-thirds of both houses of Congress vote to propose an amendments, or two-thirds of the state legislatures ask Congress to call a national constitutional convention to propose the amendment. 2) Three-fourths of the state legislatures must approve it, or ratifying conventions in three-fourths of the states approve it. Arguably, Orr's audience (*Orion*, *Conservation Biology*, and *The Last Refuge* readers) does not have the mass, power, or stature to achieve step one: they were the choir to whom he is preaching. Without reaching out to a larger audience, one not inclined to blindly accept dogma, his proposal has little value. I say

dogma because the errors in the article break each leg of the stool and leave his proposal not only unsupported but tainted with the stink of propaganda. I say *dogma* because nothing short of *divine revelation* can explain the acceptance of propaganda by three publishers and academics. This does not negate Orr's premise or proposal—but his article is at best specious.

Here are three examples, one for each leg of Dr. Orr's presentation:

Leg 1: The Founding Fathers (page 19)

> The framers of the Constitution could not have known about carcinogenic, mutagenic, endocrine-disrupting, or radioactive substances, but we do. For many toxic substances we know that there is no safe threshold of exposure. Chemicals that disrupt the endocrine system do their work in parts per billion, wreaking havoc on the development and immune systems of children. Had they known what we now know about the pervasiveness of chemicals and their effects, would the framers have extended the protections of due process to include the fundamental right of bodily integrity? And should such protections be extended more broadly to include deprivation of other ecological necessities of life and liberty? The philosophy and logic of liberty as the framers understood it leaves little doubt that the answer is affirmative. What else would they have protected us against, had they known the kind of world we would inherit? [LotL, page 19]

It is hard to know what other people are thinking, and harder still to know what people who lived two hundred years ago not only thought but what they would have done. If we grant Dr. Orr this presumption, there is a big hole in his argument. He goes on to remind the reader that it was the summer of 1787, hot and muggy in Benjamin Franklin's home city of Philadelphia when the Framers drafted the Constitution. Certainly they could not know the words *carcinogen, mutagen, or endocrine*, words not coined until 1854, 1933, and 1914, respectively. But Benjamin Franklin was not a cranky, kite flying, nut, he was an internationally respected scientist. To put him and the times into some perspective:

1739—Benjamin Franklin and neighbors petition Pennsylvania Assembly to stop waste dumping and remove tanneries from Philadelphia's commercial district. Foul smell, lower property values, disease and interference with fire fighting are cited. Franklin wins symbolic battle but dumping goes on.

1741—Foundling Hospital of London established. Other children's hospitals in Germany and France built, showing concern for infant mortality. By 1800, infant mortality in one London hospital dropped from 66 per thousand to 13 per thousand.

1748-1762—Jared Eliot, clergyman and physician, writes Essays on Field Husbandry in New England, promoting soil conservation.

1750s—Gin Lane by William Hogarth spurs social reform in England; newspaper editorials help reformers.

1751—Gin Acts give magistrates control over licensing pubs in Britain.

1762-1769—Philadelphia committee led by Benjamin Franklin attempts to regulate waste disposal and water pollution.

1775—English scientist Percival Pott finds that coal is causing an unusually high incidence of cancer among chimney sweeps.

1767—English physician George Baker, with help from Benjamin Franklin, traces notorious "Devonshire colic" to lead poisoning from cider mills built with lead linings.

1777—John Howard, sheriff of Bedfordshire, writes *State of the Prisons*, an early example of "…An aroused public opinion [that] could be employed as a lever to compel reform."

1779—Johann Peter Frank (1745-1821), writes *A Complete System of Medical Policy in Germany* advocating governmental responsibility for clean water, sewage systems, garbage disposal, food inspection and other health measures under an authoritative "medical police."

1789—Benjamin Franklin leaves money in a widely publicized codicil to his will to build fresh water pipeline to Philadelphia due to the link between bad water and disease. Within a few years, one quarter of the population of the town dies in a yellow fever epidemic.

Given Franklin's international reputation as a scientist, his correspondences with scientists and doctors, and what we know of him and his interests, it is difficult to imagine that sealed up as the Constitutional Congress was in that hot 1787 Philadelphia summer, he didn't make known his concerns about pollution—and many other things as well.

Clearly Franklin knew what pollution was and he had a good idea about its effects on the human body, in his generation and in future generations. Arguably, however, drafting the Constitution was a political process, just as amending it is today. It is disingenuous to assume that it would have been different had they known something Dr. Orr assumes they could not have known. The framers as they relate to drafting Constitution, to society in the late 1700s versus society in the 1900's, and as men of foresight are discussed in eight separate paragraphs. Their inclusion was not a mere rhetorical device, but a significant leg of the argument.

Leg 1, the Framers would have written the Constitution differently had they understood pollution and its consequences, is not a sound argument. It is questionable speculation at best. Most of the other arguments for Leg 1 are equally as susceptible to criticism: the fallacies include: hindsight, historian, composition, false dichotomy, over simplification, appeal to flattery, appeal to authority.

Leg 2: constitutions of other lands

Law of Other Lands: A Constitutional Parade of Environmental Stewardship

> *Since the 1948 adoption by the United Nations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) 130 of the world's 191 U.N. member nations (although not the United States) have written or amended their constitutions to address rights to and responsibilities for environmental protections. Some thirty of these constitutions incorporate all or parts of the UDHR. Others have borrowed or paraphrased language from dozens of subsequent environmental and human rights covenants, treaties, and declarations on nature and the environment. These documents formulate a global ethic that elevates a healthy self-sustaining environment to the level of a basic human right.… AFGANISTAN … AZERBAIJAN… BULGARIA… BURKINA FASO… CAMBODIA… COLUMBIA… ELSALVIDOR… ETHIOPIA… FINLAND… GHANA… HAITI… MONGOLIA… MOZAMBIWUE… NAMBIA… PAPUA NEW GUINEA… REPUBLIC OF CROATIA… SRI LANKA… TURKEY… UGANDA.* [LotL, pages 23-25. Specific language omitted following each country name. See next page for examples.]

Dr. Orr's concern is specifically that the Fourth, Fifth, and Fourteenth amendments—"Although the Fourth Amendment to the United States Constitution protects 'the right of people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects,' the privacy of the body has been violated without our knowledge or permission, and with little accountability by those responsible.… What, then, is the meaning of the constitutional guarantees in the Fifth and Fourteenth amendments that we cannot 'be deprived of life, liberty, or property' without 'due process of law'?… are "'mediocre at best.'"

In the quote above, Dr. Orr implies that the UDHR contains environmental language. It contains

no environmental language. In being critical of the Fourth, Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments throughout the article, and in citing the UDHR, Dr. Orr misleads the reader to believe that the UDHR uses better language than the Fourth and Fifth amendments when its language for comparable amendments/articles is virtually identical. See http://www.udhr.org/UDHR/default.htm.

"Environmental Stewardship" means:

> Stewardship is an ethic that embodies cooperative *planning and management* of environmental resources with organizations, communities and others *to actively engage in the prevention of loss of habitat and facilitate its recovery in the interest of long-term sustainability* (Fisheries and Oceans Canada - 'Stewardship in Action' program) … According to the EPA, Environmental stewardship is the responsibility for environmental quality shared by all those whose actions affect the environment.
> [< http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stewardship> emphasis added]

It means not only planning but management. Therefore the examples given are intended to show not only constitutional ecological language,

> AZERBAIJAN Article 39. [Right to Life in a Healthy Environment] I. Everyone has the right to live in a healthy environment. II. Everyone has the right to collect information on the environmental situation and to get compensation for damage rendered to…health and property due to the violation of ecological rights.
>
> HAITI Chapter Il, Article 253. Since the environment is the natural framework of the life of the people, any practices that might disturb the ecological balance are strictly forbidden.…Article 255. To protect forest reserves and expand the plant coverage, the State encourages the development of local sources of energy: solar, wind and others. [LotL, pages 24-25. Ellipses in the original.]

but to show language that is effective in the actual management and sustainability of the environment. However, most of these countries are examples of significant environmental mismanagement, degradation, suffering, and failure: making them exemplars is arrogant and contemptuous.

It is the fallacy fallacy that says an invalid premise does not invalidate the conclusion. But for the most part, this middle leg, leg 2, of Orr's stool is invalid. If his examples and their implications mean anything, that meaning is fallacious—fallacies include appeal to flattery, misrepresentation, post hoc, false attribution, false precision, lack of proportion, Ludic fallacy.

Leg 3: We've raped the land

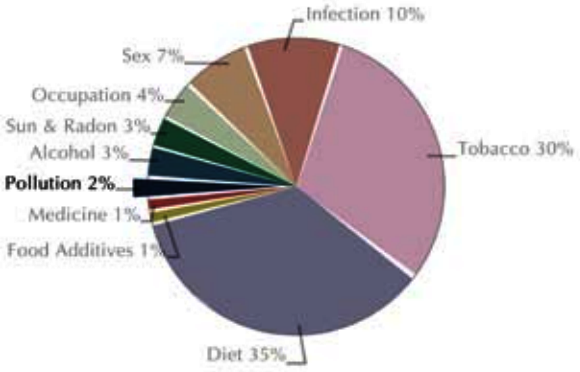
> Each of us Americans, on average, has 190 potentially toxic organochlorine compounds in our fatty tissue and body fluids, and several hundred other chemicals that may be harmful to our health. [LotL, page 19]

If you are like me, you thought of DDT, chlordane, chloroform, carbon tetrachloride, and dioxins, but "many organocholorine compounds have been isolated from natural sources ranging from bacteria to humans. Chlorinated organic compounds are found in nearly every class of biomolecules including alkaloids, terpenes, amino acids, flavonoids, steroids, and fatty acids," <April 2009 http://en. wikipedia.org /wiki/organochloride> that is, many organochlorines are naturally occurring. Many are in our bodies naturally. "Potentially" only means might be or might not be: "toxic." A toxic effect—i.e. damage to an organism—may be dose-dependent.

Dr. Bruce Ames, UC Berkley, a microbiologist specializing in cancer and aging, said, "…the

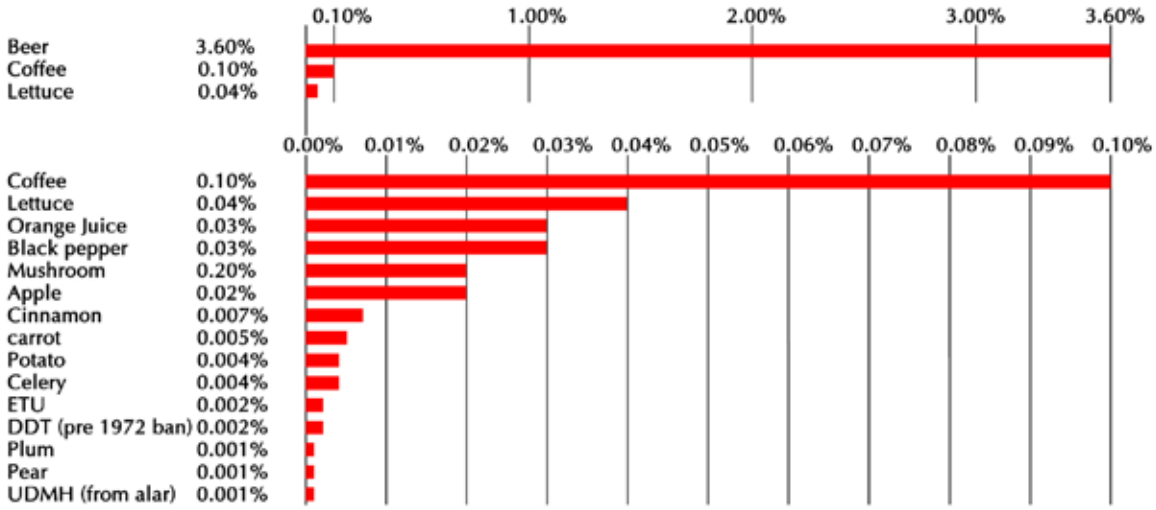
vast bulk of chemicals humans are exposed to are natural, and for every chemical some amount is dangerous": Even water can produce water intoxication—"[In] the…early stages…the patient may have symptoms of confusion, disorientation, nausea, and vomiting…which can lead to seizures, coma, and death" *The Journal of Clinical Pathology*, 2003 October: 56(10): 803-804.

The US National Research Council, part of the National Academy of sciences wrote that "the great majority of individual naturally occurring and synthetic chemicals in the diet appear to be present at levels below which any significant adverse biologic effect is likely, and so low that they are unlikely to pose an appreciable cancer risk."



A 1997 review of 4500 studies on cancer made by the World Cancer Research fund, the American Institute of Cancer Research, the World Health Organization, the National Cancer Institute, the International Agency for Research on Cancer, concluded, "there is no convincing evidence that any food contaminant modifies the risk of any cancer, nor is there evidence of probable causal relationship.…there is little evidence that chemical contamination of food and drink resulting from properly regulated use, significantly affects cancer risk."

A 1981 study (chart above) based on research by Richard Doll and Richard Peto found pollution to contribute to 2% of cancers. Whereas food represents 35%. The white spaces roughly distribute a 4% uncertainty factor. Adapted from *The Skeptical Environmentalist*, by Bjørn Lomborg.



This chart shows the relative risk of cancer (HERP: Human Exposure dose/Rodent Potency dose). Although these risks assume that it is possible to transfer rodents tests to humans, and if the EPA's methodology is relevant. Even if the those conditions don't hold, the data does show the relative risks of ingesting these things daily. Note that the relative cancer risk of DDT is based on ingesting pre-1972 ban dosages. The alcohol intake is based on an adult American consumption of 1.7 beers per day. The chart is based on Bruce Ames and Lois Swirsky Gold, "The causes and prevention of cancer: the role of environment," *Biotherapy*, 1998; adapted from *The Skeptical Environmentalist*, by Bjørn Lomborg.

Are the "190 organochlorines" more or less toxic, dose for dose, than coffee or beer? How many

of them are toxic and at what relative levels of toxicity? Dr. Orr's sentence has little factual meaning, but lots of emotional meaning.

The sentence introduces his article the thesis of which is that human pollution is destroying the world: therefore, how many of the organochlorines and "several hundred other chemicals" are man made? How many hurt us? One way to look at this is to look at this (acknowledging that I am as non-expert as can be), might be to examine life expectancy data. Historically, the average life expectancy (in years) from birth was 20 Neolithic, 20-30 Classic Rome, Greece and Medieval Britain, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/life_expectancy>, but Dr. Orr is specifically talking about the toxic effects on the health of citizens of the United States. Those are his words and he set the context: organochlorine pesticides, which were developed just prior to and during World War II, were widely used throughout the states starting after the war. The life expectancy of all races and genders in the US was 47.3 in 1900, 68.2 in 1950, 77.8 in 2005 (National Center for Health Statistics, *Health, United States, 2008*, with Chartbook, Hyattsville, MD: 2009).

To generalize, if the effects of toxic chemicals is organ damage, and if organ damage is significant, it should show up in longevity numbers. Of the 37 countries listed in the National Center report, with various levels of medical care, only the Russian Federation longevity went down between 1980 and 2004: otherwise, the data are consistent with the US longevity figures quoted above. My assumption and the apparent conclusion may have no relevance; e.g. longevity and organochlorine toxicity may be uncorrelated. (DDT is the only organochlorine listed in the chart above, but the HERP data for other organochlorines are:

DDT (Pre 1972 ban	0.002	Lindane	0.000001
Toxaphene	0.0002	PCNB	0.0000004
DDE/DDT (1990)	0.00008	Chlorobenzilate	0.0000001
Dicofol	0.00002	Folpet	0.000000008

Remember that on this same scale of risks, celery and potatoes are 0.004, coffee is 0.1, and less than 2 beers is 3.6 percent.) But Dr. Orr's statement has no supporting information, citations, etc.

I have only done a cursory look at this, and I am not a trained medical researcher—but I've done enough reading to be suspicious of Dr. Orr's statement (his doctorate is in International Relations). This opening sentence was removed from the article published in *Conservation Biology,* which, presumably has a more rigorous review process than *Orion.*

Leg 3, carcinogens etc., is not a sound and cogent argument, and most of the Dr. Orr's related arguments are equally susceptible to critical examination: fallacies include false precision, lack of proportion, slippery slope, failure to elucidate, appeal to fear, composition, circular, ecological fallacy, over simplification, non sequitur, exaggeration, lack of proportion.

The Seat: the 4th and 5th Amendments don't work

> Although the Fourth Amendment to the United States Constitution protects "the right of people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects," the privacy of the body has been violated without our knowledge or permission, and with little accountability by those responsible. The ubiquity of pollution means that responsibility is difficult to ascertain. Still more difficult to determine is which of hundreds or thousands of chemicals, mixing in ways beyond our comprehension, caused exactly what pathology in our bodies. Our knowledge of such things is inescapably general.

> We know that some of these substances, singly or in combination, undermine health, reproductive potential, intelligence, ability to concentrate, and emotional stability—hence the capacity to pursue and experience life, liberty, and happiness. In some cases the effects will manifest far into the future, placing perpetrators beyond the reach of the law and leaving their victims without remedy. What, then, is the meaning of the constitutional guarantees in the Fifth and Fourteenth amendments that we cannot "be deprived of life, liberty, or property" without "due process of law"?… The evidence indicates serious decline in the habitability of the American land. Dead zones, extinctions, toxic pollution, soil erosion, radioactivity, urban sprawl, dumps, smog, industrial sacrifice areas, and changing climate are the ecological hallmarks of economic development in the United States.…The founders' generation fought to overthrow the tyranny of the British monarchy, and the Constitution reflects that struggle. But tyranny in our time is far more pervasive and oppressive …. [LotL, pages 19-23]

The three legs of Dr. Orr's lead to the conclusion that the Constitution, specifically the Fourth and Fifth Amendments, has failed to protect us: therefore, we must amend it.

What is a constitution? It is a set of rules for government. It defines fundamental political principals. Ours sets out a balance of powers and responsibilities for the three branches of government. It grants basic rights to the people. The US Constitution is relatively short. It is difficult to amend so as to protect it from mischievous or dangerous alteration. It presumes that most law would be passed at various levels of society, municipal, state, or federal, and these laws would be in accord with the principles in the Constitution.

What evidence is there that the US Constitution should, does, or does not cover the environment? Comparing Dr. Orr's 19 exemplars to each country's actual ecological state and stewardship shows a strong (95%), positive correlation between environmental language and environmental disaster. Is that really his conclusion? No, but it is exactly what he shows.

If the Constitution does protect the environment, what evidence is there that it failed? Although there is pollution and there are centuries of damage still around, but is acid rain or the ubiquity of organochlorines such as DDT greater today than 1972? Is water and air quality better or worse than 1955 when the Air Pollution Control Act was passed, or 1972 when the Clean Water Act was passed, or 1973 and the Endangered Species Act .

What evidence "indicates the serious decline in habitability?" If there are "dead zones," are there more or less since 1973? (The Adirondacks, for example, experienced a *rebirth* (unextinction) of about a dozen extinctions with the reduction of acid rain and other environmental efforts: I suspect that if the extinct species were extinct as scientists, environmentalists and politicians said, then their rebirth can only be due to divine intervention—re-evolution does not work in four decades.)

In fact, without benefit of specific environmental, constitutional, language, in 1872 the US government created Yellowstone National Park to protect it. Yellowstone was the first national park in the world.

Arguably, the laws cited above were made possible by the Constitution, and government did step in to protect the environment and the people. That such protection is not perfect does not mean the laws have failed, or that new laws are necessary.

Although LotL was poorly edited, those flaws, if corrected, would not have materially changed the article. Without its legs, or the seat itself, Dr. Orr's stool collapses into so much dust.

Don't let this happen to your book.

Work Sheets

Print out copies of these sheets. Keep a binder with work sheets and drafts of your manuscript. I have found that it is easier to fill these sheets in and revise by hand, rather than by word processor. It is also easier to proofread from paper.

Style Sheet: As you write, you'll find yourself making decisions about spelling, compound words and capitalization. When you stop to make a decision, enter it on the sheet.

Character Sheet: As you meet your characters, describe them. Once you spend a hour looking for the color of a character's car, or her boss's name, you'll see the wisdom of keeping character sheets. Don't feel that you have to know everything about your characters, but the more you know the better, even if you don't use it all.

Plot Sheet: Some people just start writing. Others plot out their stories in great detail. Remember, you're not locked into what you write down. It's not hard to throw out a piece of paper. But it's good to have some idea of where things are going.

Editing Checklist: While you should not feel trapped by a checklist, it is handy to have, at least until you are comfortable with the process of editing. To get things right, you'll probably read your book at least three times. If you find a mistake either mark it immediately or correct it. The first read/edit should be to look for substantive issues, a general assessment of your work and your audience. The second read/edit should be line by line, looking for spelling, punctuation, grammar, and style issues. The third read should be to hear your work.

Style Sheet

ABCD	Page	EFGH	Page
IJKL		MNOP	
QRSTU		VWXYZ	
ABBREVIATIONS		NUMBERS/DATES	

Character Sheet

Name: _____

Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Parents: _____

Address: _____

Description: _____

_____

_____

_____

Quirks: _____

_____

Car: _____

Job: _____

Boss/Coworkers: _____

_____

Education:_____

_____

Family: _____

_____

_____

Pets: _____

_____

Shopping:_____

Favorite: Movie/TV/Books/Music _____

_____

_____

Friends:_____

_____

_____

Plot Sheet

Basic conflict: _____

_____

Story Line; _____

_____

_____

_____

Antagonist: _____

Protagonist: _____

Opening: _____

_____

_____

Ending: _____

_____

_____

_____

Notes: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Plot points: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Editing Check List 1
Substantive • Language • Integrity

When you revise your work, you may find yourself removing a sentence or paragraph that just seems wrong—who cares if John broke his ankle? Without thinking it through, you remove it. Fifty pages later, John can't drive, and you wonder if you had explained why he couldn't drive. You need to edit ruthlessly, but it is easy to alter a fact through careless editing.

As you read, try to read as if you are your ideal reader, who has never seen your manuscript before. Read for the overall sense of your book:

- Are you telling the story you set out to tell?
- Is it coherent?
- Does the style work?
- Is all the necessary information there.
- Pacing: is there a natural blend in you narrative of dialogue, description, and summary?
- Show and tell: have you shown what you can?
- Have you shown what is unnecessary?

Mark spellings, grammar, punctuation, etc., if you see them, but you'll read for these in the next step. Read with a pad of stick-it type.

Write for your audience:

- Do you have a specific audience in mind? Have you written for it?
- Does you ideal reader need to know something special? If there are specialized terms, have you explained them.
- Do you have examples or scenes?
- Are there ambiguities that you need to clear up?
- Is your language biased?
- Is your language appropriate for your audience?

Interest:

- Is your writing concrete?
- Are your descriptions full and rich?
- Does the structure of your story entice the reader?

Logic:

- Are you consistent?
- Are there continuity problems?
- Does the order of scenes, propositions, or arguments make sense?
- If you've relied on the logical presentation of ideas to persuade, have you used fallacies?
- Will a reader understand?

Clarity:

- Does the reader know: who, what, where, why, when, and how?
- Are there ambiguities?

Edit Check List 2
Copy • Facts • Manuscript

Copy: correct spelling, grammar and punctuation
Abbreviations: don't use too many, and those you use (titles, acronyms, etc.) use correctly
Capitalization: be correct and consistent
Compound words: e.g. *bookcase* not *book case*; *I have a credit card*, but *credit-card application*
Dates: *1950s*; *March 12* not *March 12th*; spell out at beginning of sentence; class of *'68*
Dangling modifiers: correct misplaced and ungrammatical modifiers
Double comparatives: correct them—*slower* not *more slower, slowest* not *most slowest*
Exaggeration: be wary of exaggeration; be wary of *most, all, none, worst, best,* etc.
Familiar/unfamiliar: chose the familiar word over the unfamiliar word, but know your audience
Favorite words: change your favorite numbers, names, colors, etc.
Jargon: avoid jargon except when it is appropriate for your audience
Miscues: correct miscues
Mixed metaphors: avoid mixed metaphors
Numbers: spell them out at the beginning of the sentence; in non-scientific work spell out numbers under one hundred
Passive voice: whenever you use passive voice have a reason for it or make it active voice
Positive/negative: prefer positive over negative, because it is often shorter
Pronouns/antecedents: make sure the antecedent of every pronoun is obvious
Quotes: direct quotes use quotation marks or block formatting; indirect quotes have no special formatting
Redundancies: remove them—*free gift, verdant green, null and void*
Shifts: correct shifts in number, tense, subject, voice, viewpoint
Show don't tell: except for reasons of pacing and significance, show don't tell
Tense: be consistent with tense
Unnecessary qualifiers: remove them when they aren't needed—*kind of, quite, sort of, a bit, very*
Weak/strong, abstract/concrete: for clarity and precision prefer strong and concrete words

Facts: **check all real and internal facts**

Manuscript: make sure your manuscript is properly formatted
Formatting: check that your formatting follows a guide and/or is consistent
Header: if your use a header, make sure it contains the necessary information
Pagination: make sure your manuscript is in page order and has all the pages
Pictures: check that they are properly labeled
References: make sure you have included all the references you need and are formatted correctly
Tables: check that they are properly labeled

Punctuation Quick Guide

The purpose of punctuation is to cue the reader. When we speak, we use a variety of things—inflection, tone, pitch, pauses, facial expressions, gestures, speed—to convey meaning. The written word, void of punctuation is void of such nuance, and often void of clear meaning.

Consider the traditional nursery rhyme:

> Every lady in this land
> Has twenty nails—upon each hand
> Five, and twenty on hands and feet:
> All this is true without deceit

It is a riddle because the punctuation is off. But it is not a deceit: Every lady in this land has twenty nails. Upon each hand five; and twenty on hands and feet. (From *Eats, Shoots, and Leaves*, by Lynne Truss.) When the written word existed without punctuation or word spacing reading was slow and thoughtful—how else to understand "isawaseesawontheseashore"?

If properly understood, punctuation is used not simply to fulfill rules of grammar, to keep Mrs. Whitehouse at bay, but to provide emphasis and clarity to the written word: to assist the reader in understanding. It supplies the cues for inflection, tone, pitch, pauses….

This is a quick guide for simple punctuation problems. It is not a replacement for grammar and punctuation handbooks. Punctuation is intended to help the reader understand what he is reading. If you want to do something idiosyncratic, be consistent, for example: Suppose you like and copy the way William Gaddis sets off quotations with a dash,

> —I wanted to see if you heard me.
> —I heard you!
> She paused and looked at me. —Why did you have that look on your face?

do it throughout your book. Lack of consistency will confuse the reader.

If you are a student, please note that although the following can be confirmed by a variety of sources (*Modern American Usage*, *A Manual of Style*, etc.) many teachers have pet rules and sources. If, for example, your teacher agrees with Diana Hacker, "Do not use a colon before a list unless the list is preceded by an independent clause," follow that rather than Garner's less restrictive, "…the colon can introduce a list of items."

I start with dialogue because that seems to be the most confusing; and I follow the American style of punctuation. Exceptions are marked *NOTES,* in red.

Dialogue, quotes, and quotation marks: use quotation marks (“ ” or " ") , to indicate direct quotes. Commas and periods go inside; semicolons and colons go outside; question marks, exclamation marks, and dashes go insides if they are part of the quotation, outside if not.

“Quotations are capitalized and punctuated like this.”	quote
“Quotes,” Mrs. Whitehouse said in class today, “have to be punctuated correctly.”	interrupted quote
“Is that correct?” she asked.	with question mark
“Yes!” he replied.	with exclamation mark
“Am I wrong in thinking Mrs. Whitehouse said, ‘Use single quotes for quotes within quotes’?” Jane asked.	quotes within quotes
Who said, “Give me liberty or give me death”?	punctuation outside a quote
Mrs. Whitehouse said, “Start each person’s dialogue as a new paragraph to make it easier to distinguish who is speaking.”	new speaker new paragraph
Mrs. Whitehouse said we should never use quotation marks for indirect quotes, like this one.	NOTE indirect quotes
While she was talking I thought, “This is getting boring.”	directly quoted thought
Although quotes start with the first word capitalized, as Mrs. Whitehouse said, when a quote is blended into another sentence “the first word is not capitalized.”	blended quotes
“I was bothered by the report. It made me wonder…”	trailing thought
“I was thinking—” “You weren’t hired to think.”	interrupted dialogue v
“This is paragraph one of a multi-paragraph quote.… “This is paragraph two—the last paragraph. Only the last paragraph has a closing quotation mark. The preceding paragraph(s) have opening quotation marks only.”	multi-paragraph quotes
I like Hemingway’s *Old Man and the Sea* and some of his short stories like “The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber,” “In Our Time,” or “The Snows of Kilimanjaro”; however, I never liked “The Killers.”	short literary works.
When I use the word “term” as a word or term, it is set off in quotation marks, or they are italicized.	a word used as a term

Apostrophes: use an apostrophe (’ or ') to indicate possession or contractions

The meeting’s purpose is to show you how to vote. Tom’s vote will count. Everyone’s vote will count.	singular possessive
The meetings’ purpose is to show you how to vote. The citizens’ votes will count.	plural possessive
E.E. Cummings’ or E.E. Cummings’s. [Not Jesus’s, where it is awkward.]	possessive words ending in ***s***
Simon and Schuster’s book list [taken as a group]; however, Montaigne’s and Locke’s essays are interesting [members of a group taken separately].	compound possessives
The meetings are intended to teach you about voting.	NOTE not possessive
The choice is hers to make, or are you saying it is yours?	possessive pronouns
Didn’t (did not), ’em (them), should’ve (should have)	contractions
Let’s try to get the tent posts set before Tom lets go of the rope.	Let’s try (let us try)…lets (let, lets, letting)

Its name is hard to pronounce; so it's hard to remember.	Its name (the name of it)… so it's (so it is)

Colon: the colon (:) has almost the weight of a period (as a stop), but it connects what precedes it with what follows. As Garner (*MAU*) says, it "promises the completion of something just begun."

The Speaker of the House left some chips on the table: if the President agreed to the amendment, the House would vote on the bill.	linking two separate clauses or phrases to indicate a step forward
Man proposes: God disposes.	structural balance
The sources are: *Modern English Usage*, *Modern English Usage*, *Writer's Guide and Index to English*, and *A Manual of Style*.	introducing a list of things
Regarding the use of a colon to separate and link two separate sentences, Garner says: "Authorities are divided on whether the first word should be capitalized."	formally introducing a quote
Despite is testimony to the court, his behavior can be summed up in one word: cowardice.	emphasis
Dear Mr. Smythe:	after a salutation, formal
The ratio of boys to girls in third grade is 1:1.4.	between numbers in a ratio
The meeting starts at 5:45.	between hours and minutes

Comma: the comma (,) is the least emphatic most varied of the punctuation marks. There are two styles of use: open, which has fewer commas, and close, which has more commas and tends to have fewer miscues. There are nine common uses.

The birds, the primates, and the large cats were all we had time to see.	items in a series
Students will go to room 207, and teachers will go to the lounge.	coordinated main clauses
After the lunch break, we will all meet in the gym.	introductory phrases
I promise, however, it won't happen again. He said to me, as if it wasn't important, that he would take care of the matter.	parenthetical (nonrestrictive) word, phrase, or clause
The old, rusted, red, broken-down wagon was half buried under the wet leaves.	adjectives
Mr. Jackson said, "The forms don't need to be completed until Saturday."	direct, not indirect, speech
Having finished his work, he left work early. David, didn't we talk about the meeting before?	participial or verbless, phrases, vocatives
Dear Jean,	after a salutation, informal
On March 27, 2009, we'll meet at 1336 East Central, Glendale, Arizona.	parts of an address or date

Dash: the em-dash (—) marks an interruption in a sentence.

I like the dash—it adds a lighter more open look to a page of type—but most people prefer parentheses or commas.	parenthetical
The purpose of punctuation is obvious—it makes it easier to understand the written word.	replacing a colon
"I was thinking—" "You weren't hired to think."	interrupted dialogue
When you wash your hands—use warm water and soap.	emphasis

Ellipsis: the ellipsis points (…) indicate that something has been omitted

I like the dash…but most people prefer parentheses or commas. [see complete sentence above, under **Dash**]	omission
Our variety of fruit flavored ice creams (mango, lemon, orange, papaya…) is what we're famous for.	unenumerated series, et cettera
"I was bothered by the report. It made me wonder…"	trailing thought or pause
The bank robber held the gun close to the teller's head. "I would suggest… you cooperate."	unstated alternative

Exclamation Mark: an imperative sentence ("Stop at the stop sign.") may end with a period. Use the exclamation mark (!) to show strong emotion or urgency ("Stop! Didn't you see the stop sign?").

I hate Mrs. Whitehouse!	strong exclamation

Hyphen: the hypen (-) is used to show a end-of-line word break, phrasal adjectives, to join compound words.

This use occurs at the end of a line of type. If this were the end, its use is evident, don't you think?	end-of-line break
tenement-house, brother-in-law, one-half, vice-president, thirty-two	compound word
bookcase, crosswalk, schoolhouse, housekeeper, thunderstorm… (see http://www.rickwalton.com/curricul/compound.htm)	NOTE hyphenless compound words
pay-as-you-go, up-to-date, first-class, narrow-minded	phrasal adjective
pro-Clinton, ex-President Bush	prefixes
re-collect/recollect, re-sign/resign, re-cover/recover	meaning and clarity

Parentheses: parentheses (()) enclose words, phrases, or sentences that provide interpolated or supplementary material, without altering the meaning of the actual sentence.

Punctuation is somewhat boring (I think it is poorly taught in school), but important.	interpolations and remarks
Mrs. Whitehouse taught tenth-grade English (no one liked her) for thirty years.	asides
Fowler (*The King's English*, Oxford University Press, 1936) is quite opinionated when it comes to punctuation.	references
We will send you four (4) books.	numbers

Period: use a period (.) to end most sentences, with abbreviations, and with numbers as a decimal point.

Most sentences end with a period.	ending a declarative sentence
She wondered why this took so long.	ending an indirect question

Dr.	Mrs.	i.e.	abbreviations are followed by a period
Ph.D.	Ms.	e.g.	
A.M.	B.C..	etc.	

OH IRS SEC	AZ IBM UN	NATO FTC ACLU	NOTE agencies and states have no period
It costs $95.27.			decimal point

Question Mark: use the quotation mark(?) at the end of a direct quote.

Where is Mrs. Whitehouse?	direct question
I wonder where Mrs. Whitehouse went. Jane asked me where she went too.	NOTE indirect question has no question mark
Is the rental car available tomorrow? deluxe? insured? fully gassed?	separate emphasis to interrogative elements
Socrates 469BC (?) - 399BC	in parentheses to show doubt
Do not write: I read some of John's short stories (?) before he submitted them.	NOTE do not use for irony or humor

Semicolon: the semicolon (;) is used to separate independent clauses not joined by a coordinating conjunction (and, but, or, nor); to separate independent clauses linked by a conjunctive adverb (however, moreover, therefore); and it is used between a series of items containing commas.

He got the job because of his experience; he kept the job through hard work.	no coordinating conjunction
He got the job because of his experience; however, he lost it through his laziness.	conjunctive adverb
I like movies, especially westerns; mystery novels; and classical music, early music in particular.	series with commas

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