

Editing Tips and Tools with Patricia Charpentier August 29, 2020

1. How do you feel about editing your writing?

_____ Love it.

_____ Tolerate it.

_____ Hate it.

2. Three main types of editing

Content editing

○ Some items to address in content editing:

- Did you tell the story you _____ to write?
- Did you get your _____ across?
- Is the information presented in an _____ way?
- Does the opening _____ the reader's attention?
- Are there appropriate levels of _____ and _____, if warranted?
- Are the people in your stories believable, more than just _____ on a page?
- Are the characters' actions _____ with your description of them?
- Is the closing _____ and _____ to the reader?

- Is any information _____, or is anything _____?
- Have you checked the facts for _____?

a. **Line editing**

b. **Proofreading**

Items to address in proofreading:

- misspellings
- missing words
- grammar errors
- punctuation errors
- style inconsistencies

3. **Essential editing tools**

Begin building your writer's library with reference books you can consult.

Dictionary - There are several good online as well as print dictionaries, including:

- *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*
- *Oxford English Dictionary*

Thesaurus - Rely on a good thesaurus for help with word choices. There are several good online as well as print thesauruses:

- *Roget's Thesaurus*—best known
- *Merriam-Webster*
- *Oxford American Writer's Thesaurus*

Grammar book - Have a good, comprehensive book on hand. The best grammar book is one you will use. When you are choosing a grammar book, make sure it has an excellent table of contents, good index, and great examples.

- *Painless Grammar* by Rebecca Elliott
- *The Elements of Grammar: The Essential Guide to Refining and Improving Grammar* by Margaret Shertzer
- *Eating an Elephant: Write Your Life One Bite at a Time* by Patricia Charpentier

You also have many online grammar solutions, but you must be careful and use one from a reputable source. Most universities have writing sites anyone can use, including OWL (Online Writing Lab) at Purdue University, <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>.

4. Two simple editing practices

Evaluate the strength of your nouns and make them as specific as possible.

Evaluate the strength of your verbs. Can any state of being verbs be made active?

5. Know thyself

Make a detailed list of habitual writing mistakes, e.g., words you spell wrong, typos, things you forget, etc. Make a list of your favorite mistakes.

6. A tool I can't live without

Text to speech (TTS) software translates your written words into speech.

MS Word read aloud

Natural Readers - <https://www.naturalreaders.com/online/>
