

Fiction

Genre-specific Self-editing

S. Rénā + Co. Editorial Boutique knows that self-evaluating a fiction manuscript is essential to ensure your story is engaging, well-paced, and emotionally resonant. Before sending it off to an editor (of any kind) be sure to take some time to dig a little deeper, particularly for developmental editing. The self-developmental edit is most beneficial when you separate yourself from the characters and plot to take full advantage of submerging yourself as a reader.

Here's a step-by-step guide to help you self-evaluate your fiction manuscript effectively:

1. Take a Break

- ✓ Step away from your manuscript for a few days or weeks to gain a fresh perspective before starting the evaluation.

2. Evaluate the Plot

- ✓ Review the overall plot structure and pacing. Ensure that the story unfolds logically and maintains a good balance between action, tension, and character development.
- ✓ Check for clear and compelling story arcs for each major character, ensuring they have clear goals, conflicts, and resolutions.

3. Assess Character Development

- ✓ Analyze the growth and evolution of your main characters throughout the story. Ensure that their actions, decisions, and emotions are consistent with their development.
- ✓ Evaluate the depth and uniqueness of each character, ensuring they feel real and relatable to readers.

4. Review Dialogue

- ✓ Check the authenticity of dialogue, making sure each character has a distinct voice and their conversations serve a purpose in advancing the plot or revealing character traits.
- ✓ Trim excessive or repetitive dialogue and ensure it sounds natural and engaging.

5. Examine Descriptions and Imagery

- ✓ Review the use of descriptive language and imagery. Ensure it enhances the reader's understanding of the setting, characters, and emotions.

- ✓ Avoid overloading with excessive descriptions and strike a balance between painting a vivid picture and leaving room for readers' imagination.

6. Analyze Point of View

- ✓ Assess the effectiveness of the chosen point of view (first person, third person, etc.) in telling the story. Make sure it aligns with the narrative's goals and helps readers connect with the characters.

7. Check for Consistency and Continuity

- ✓ Ensure consistency in the narrative, including details like names, physical characteristics, and timelines.
- ✓ Check for continuity in plot events and character behavior to avoid confusing readers.

8. Evaluate Emotional Impact

- ✓ Consider the emotional impact your manuscript has on readers. Evaluate if the story evokes the intended emotions and if it resonates emotionally.

9. Seek Feedback

- ✓ Share your manuscript with beta readers or a writing critique group to get feedback from fresh perspectives. Listen to their suggestions and constructive criticism.

10. Proofread

- ✓ After addressing content-related issues, proofread the manuscript for grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors.

11. Consider Reader Engagement

- ✓ Put yourself in the reader's shoes and evaluate if the manuscript maintains their interest and captivates them throughout the story.

12. Revise and Edit

- ✓ Based on your self-evaluation and feedback, make necessary revisions and edits to enhance your fiction manuscript.

Remember, self-evaluation is an iterative process, and it may take multiple rounds of revisions to refine your fiction manuscript to its best form. Be patient and committed to creating a convincing and immersive story, whether preparing for a developmental edit, copy/line edit or proofreading. It is essential for creating an impactful fiction work, regardless of the stage you're in. For a one-on-one review, please complete an inquiry at www.shaundalarena.com/contact.