



SELF-EDITING FOR AUTHORS

with Cate Ryan of CateEdits





WE'VE BEEN HERE BEFORE

WE'RE GOING IN CIRCLES

WRITING



EDITING



ROMANCE



SCIENCE FICTION



THRILLER



FANTASY

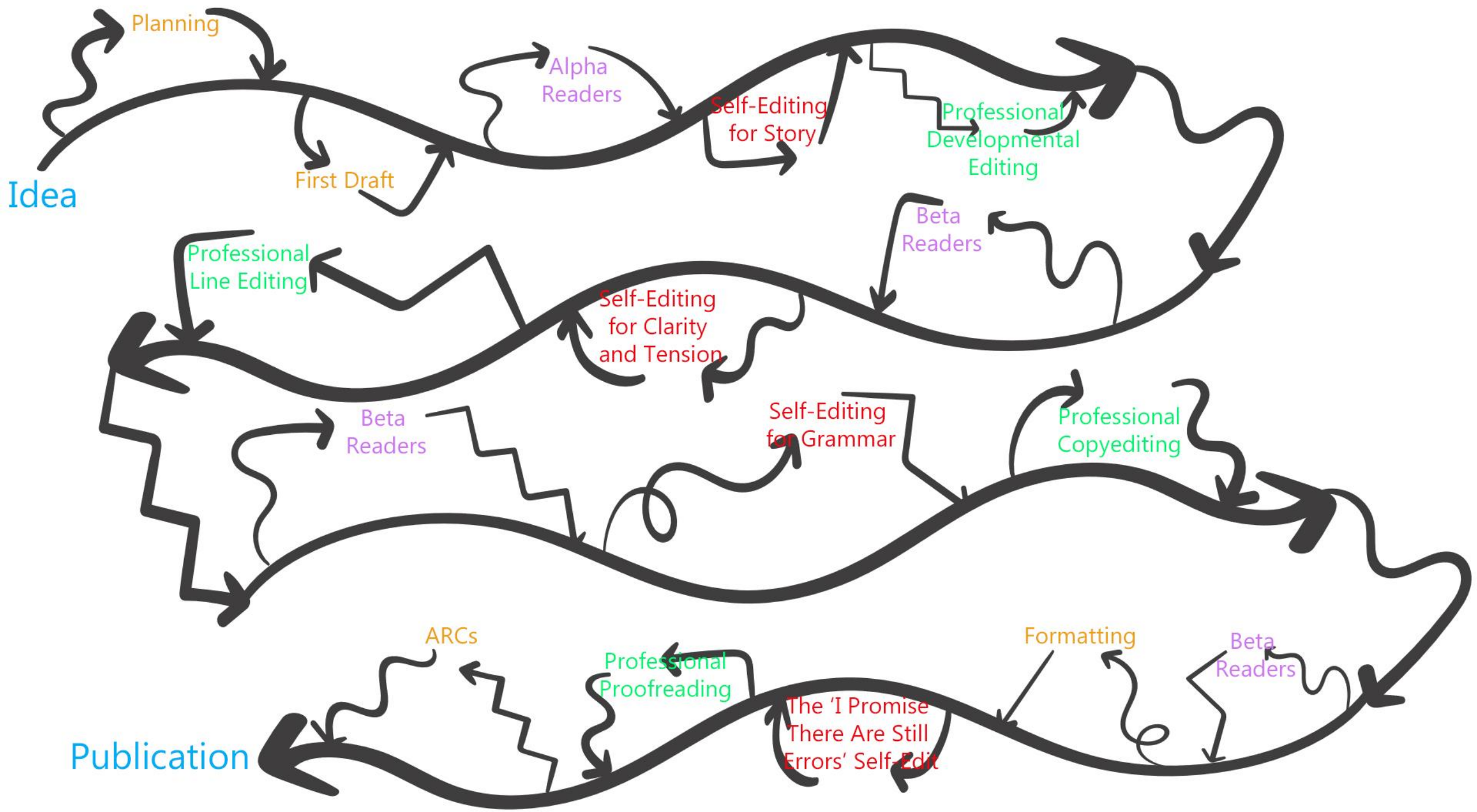


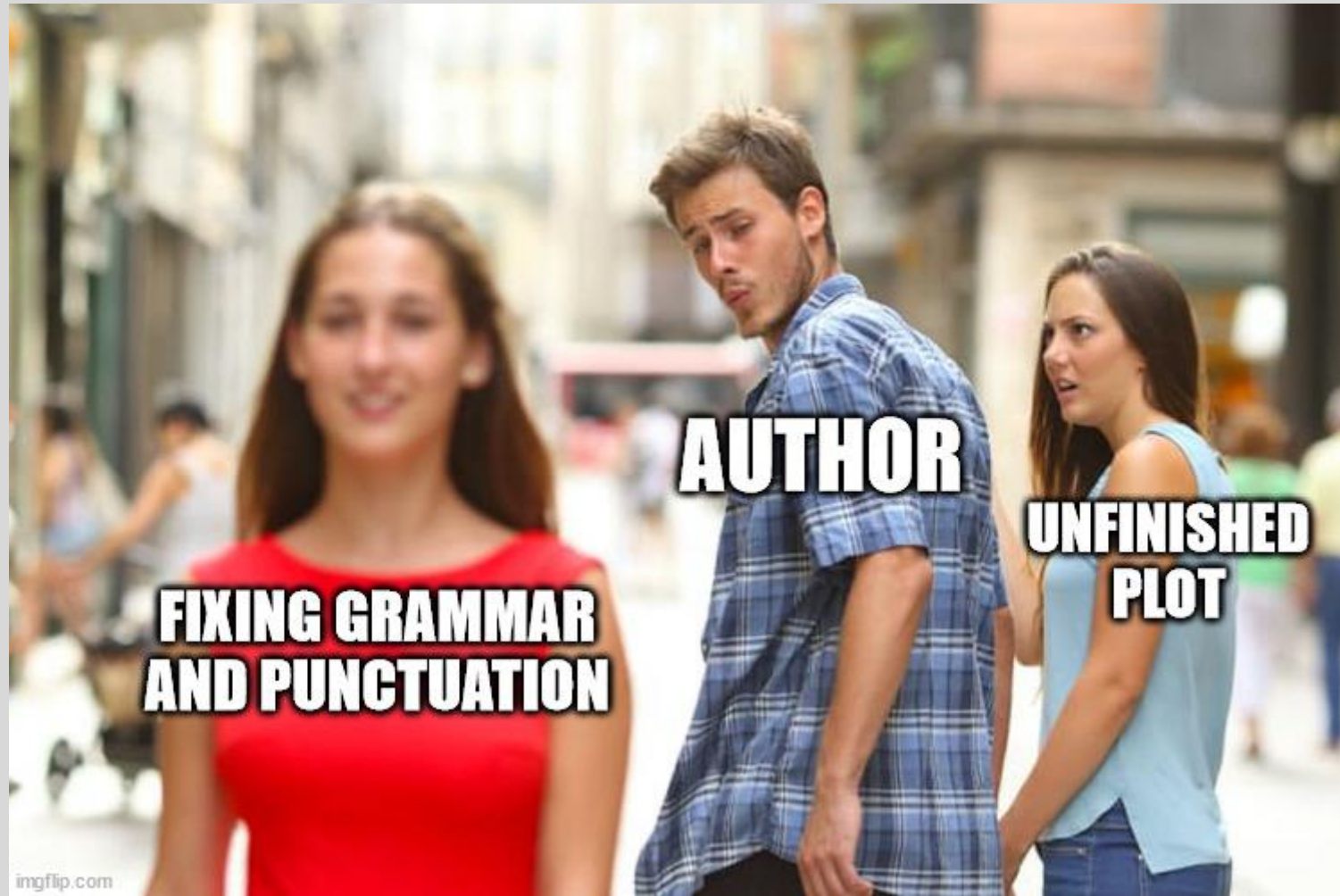
COZY MYSTERY



HORROR











Types of Editing

Planning

- Plot
- Character
- Setting
- Worldbuilding

Proofreading

- Adherence to style guide
- Grammar
- Punctuation

Developmental

- Plot
- Character
- Setting
- Worldbuilding

Line

- Clarity
- Tension
- Character Voice

Copy

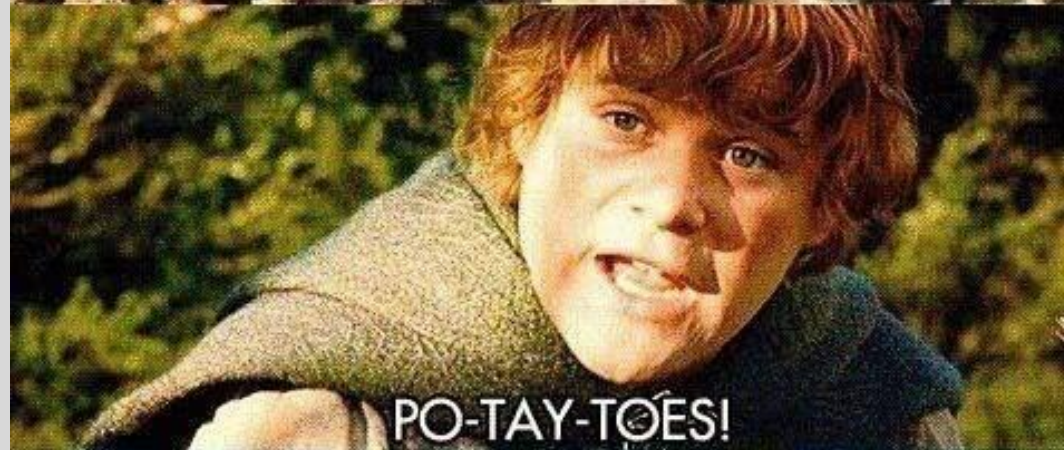
- Adherence to style guide
- Grammar
- Punctuation



What we need
is a few good taters.



What's 'taters', precious?



PO-TAY-TOES!



Boil 'em.

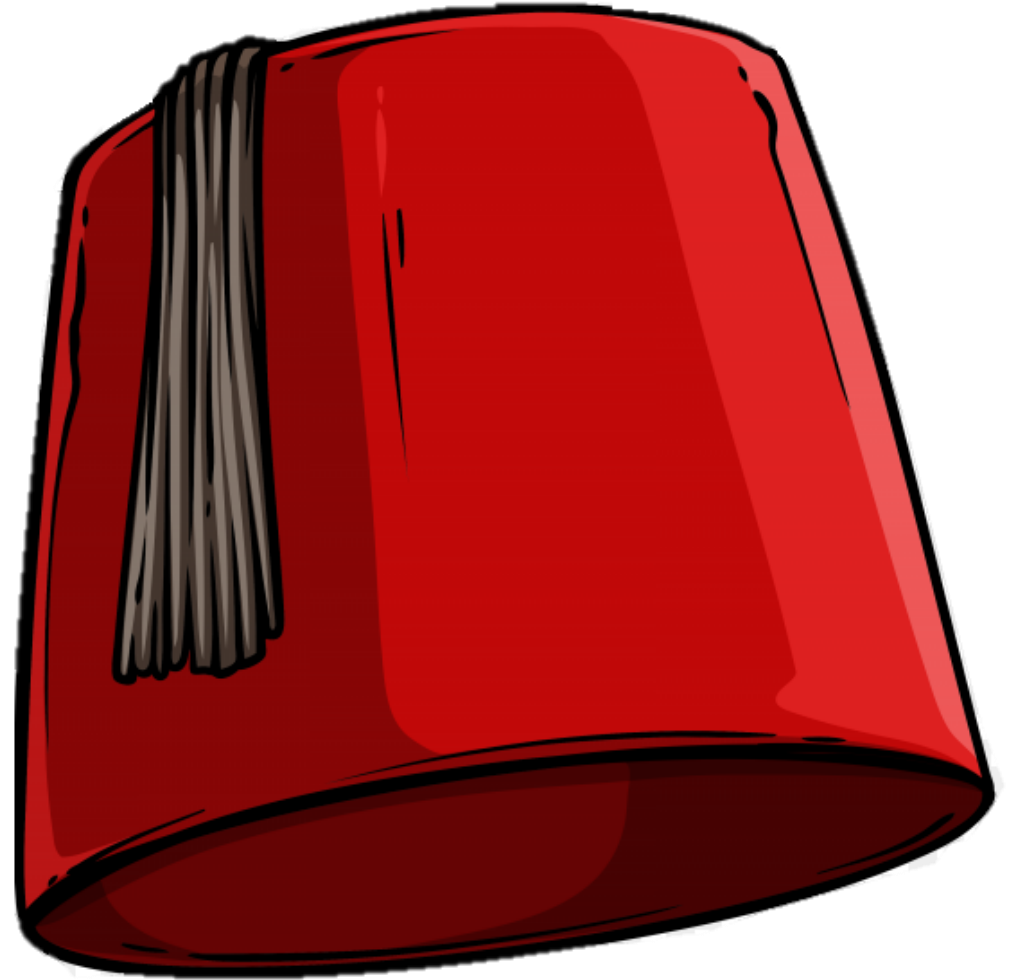


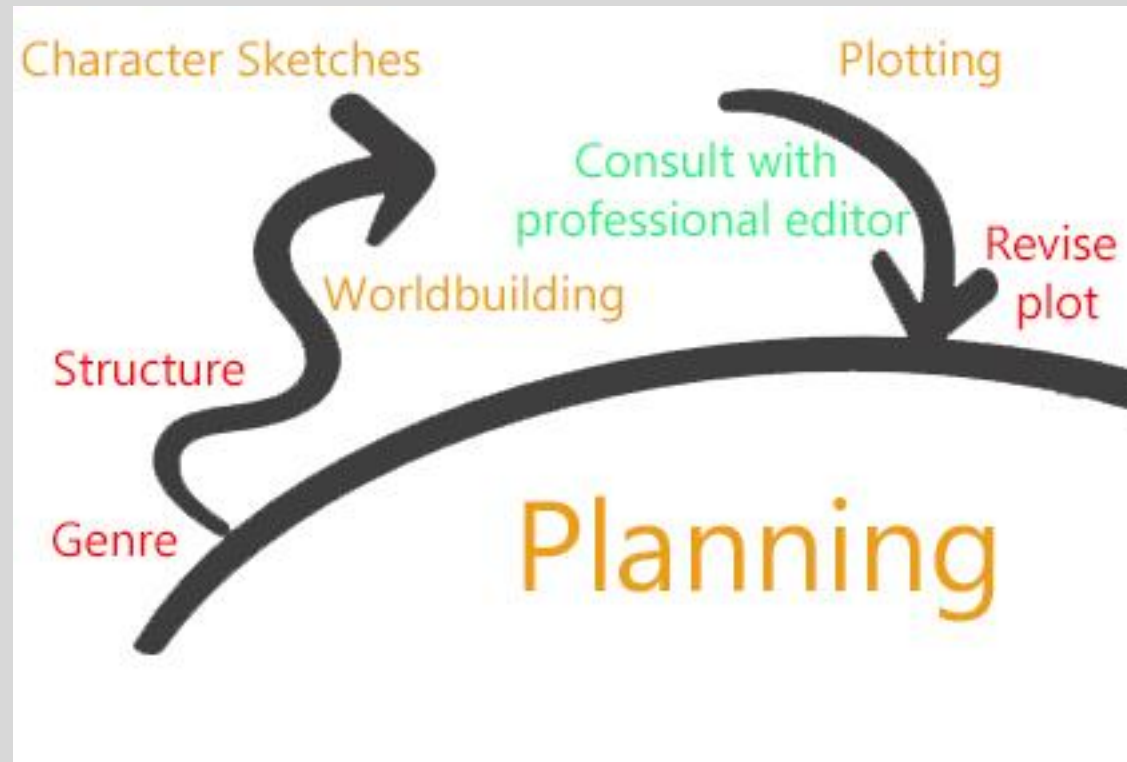
Mash 'em.



Stick 'em in a stew.

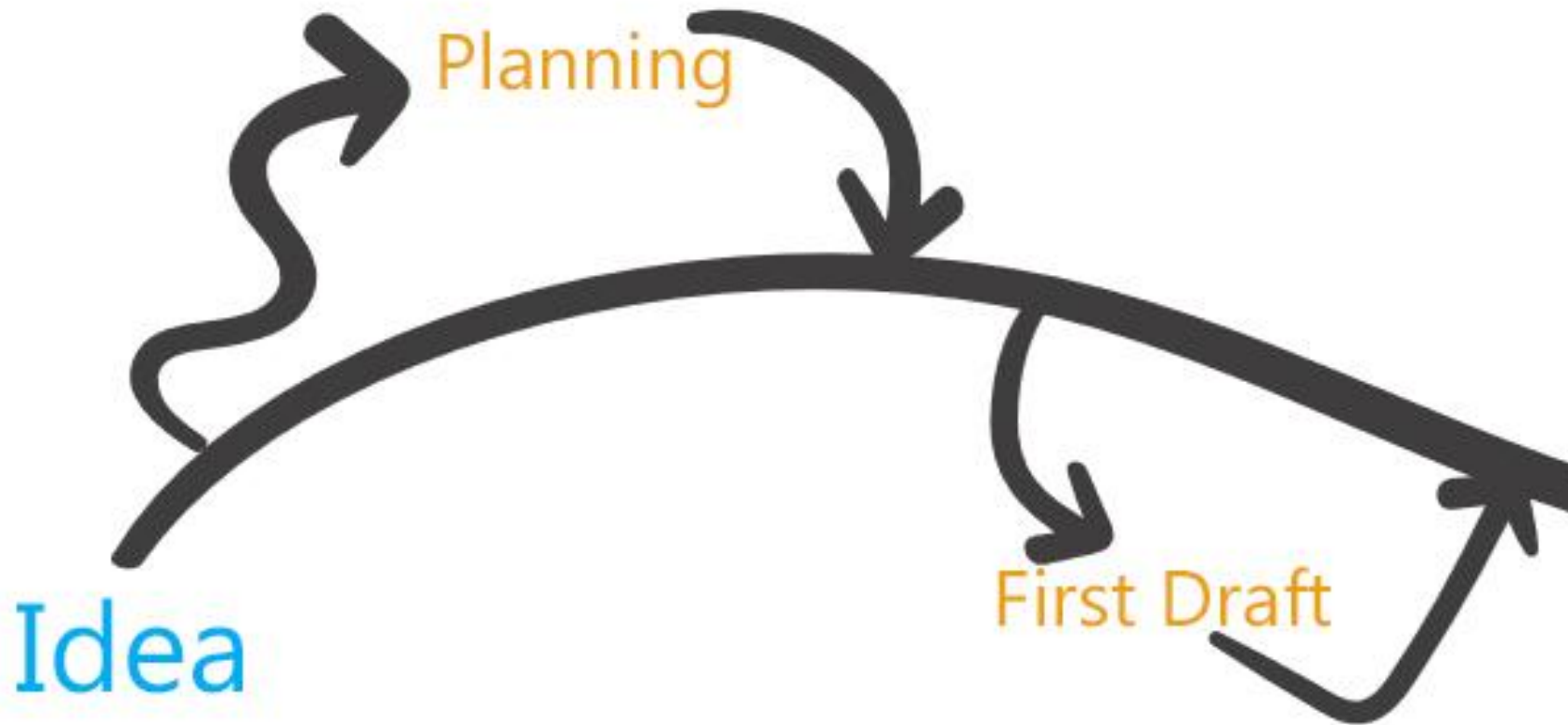






Tools

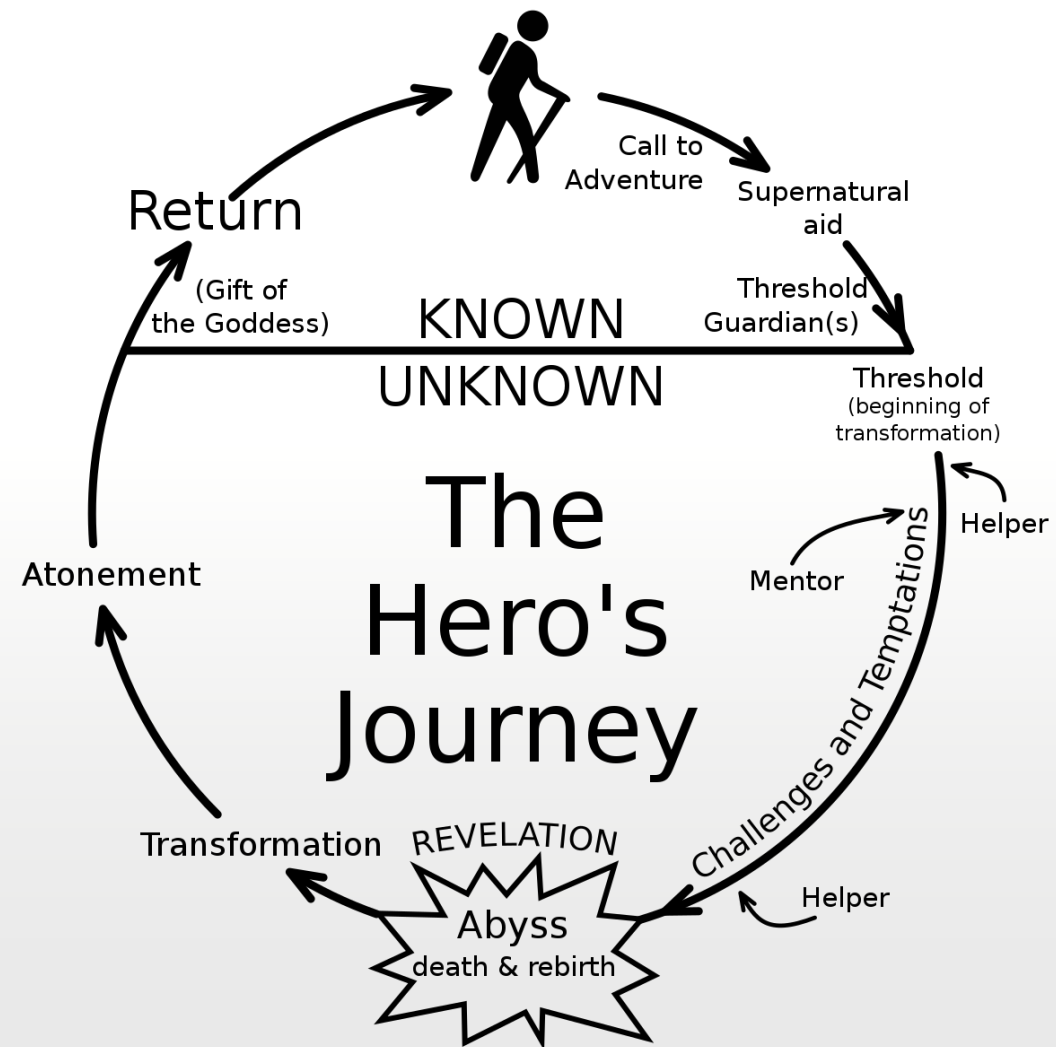
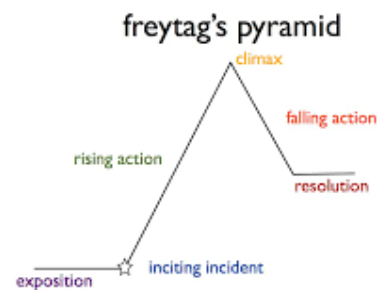
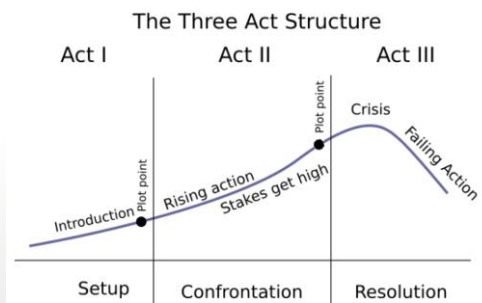
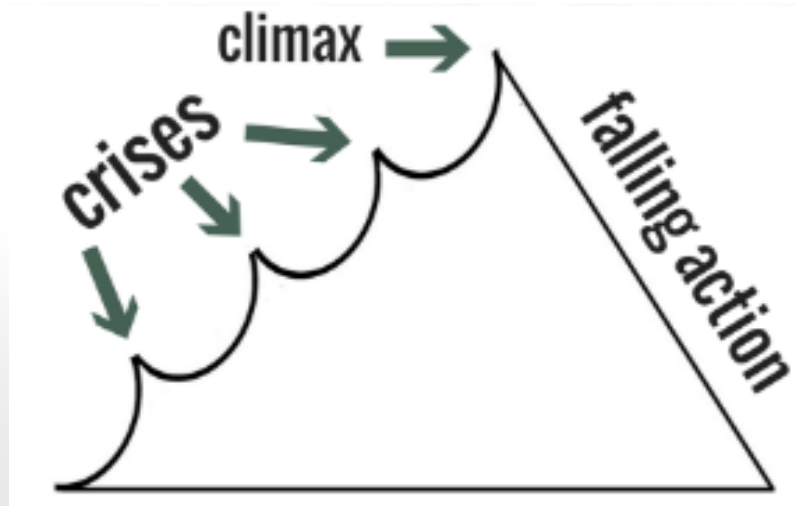
- Paper and pen/computer
- Plan
- Outline of your structure



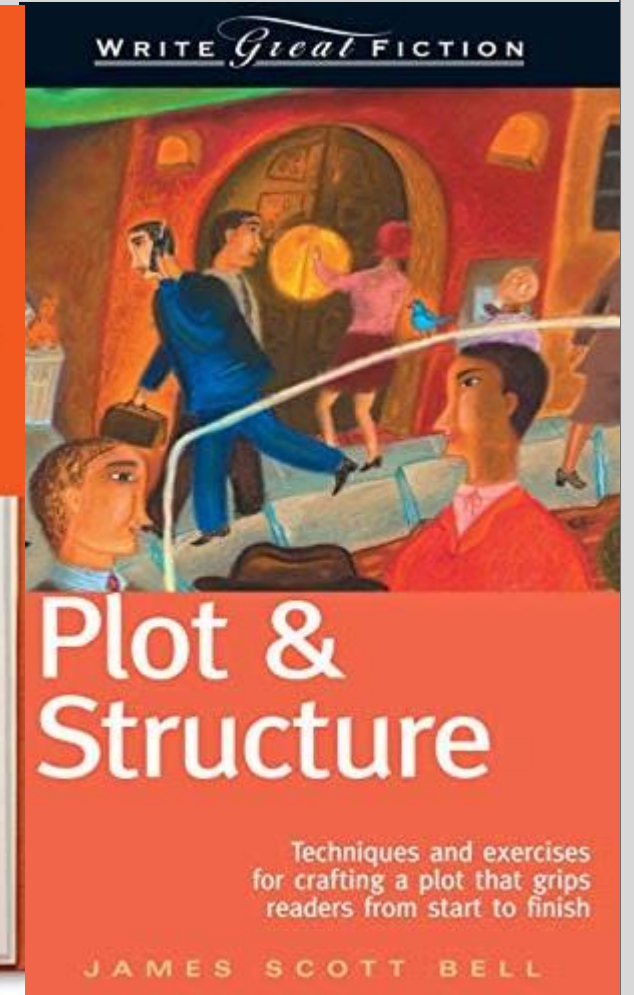
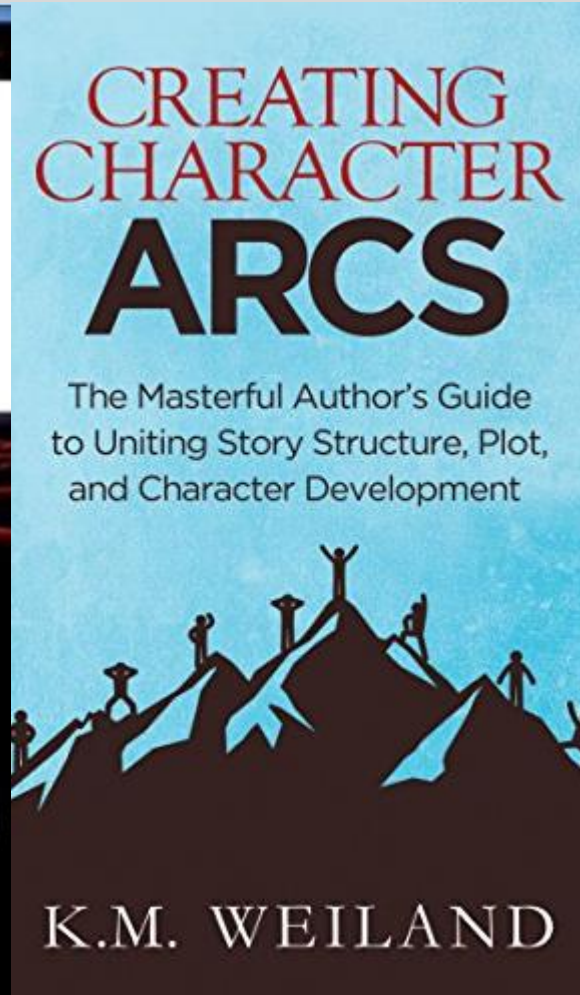
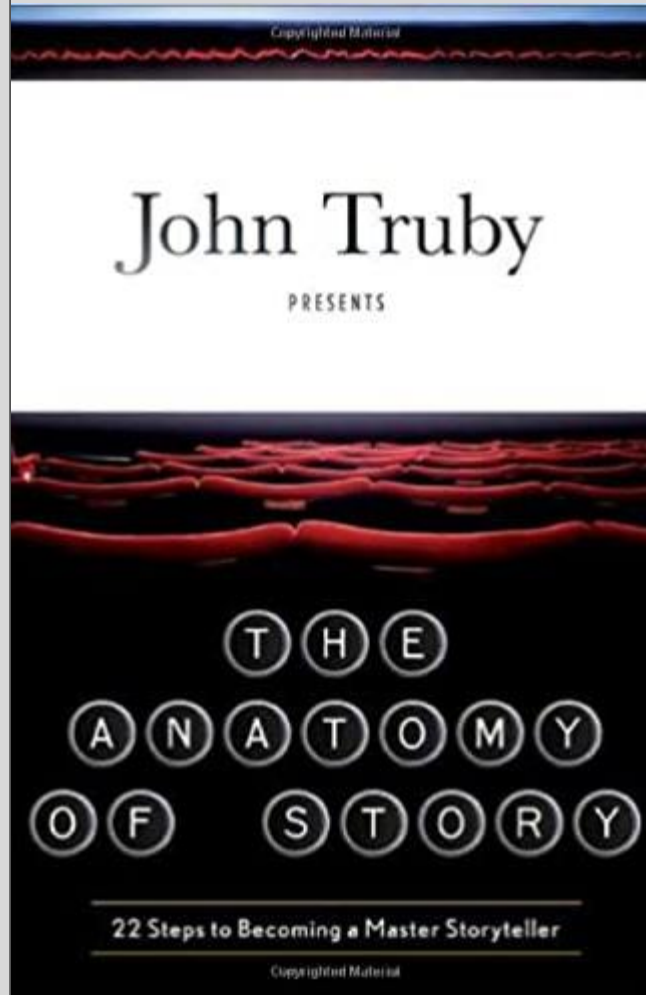
First Stop Planning

1. Choose genre
2. Choose novel structure
3. Decide word count goal
4. Set your intention
5. Are all story beats present?
6. Does each scene have a purpose?

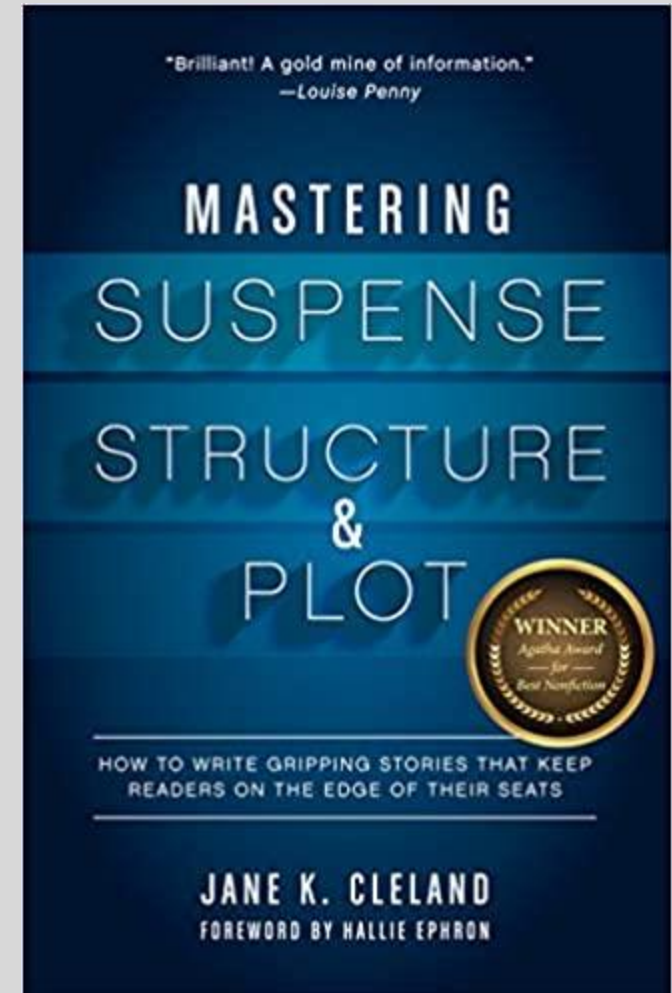
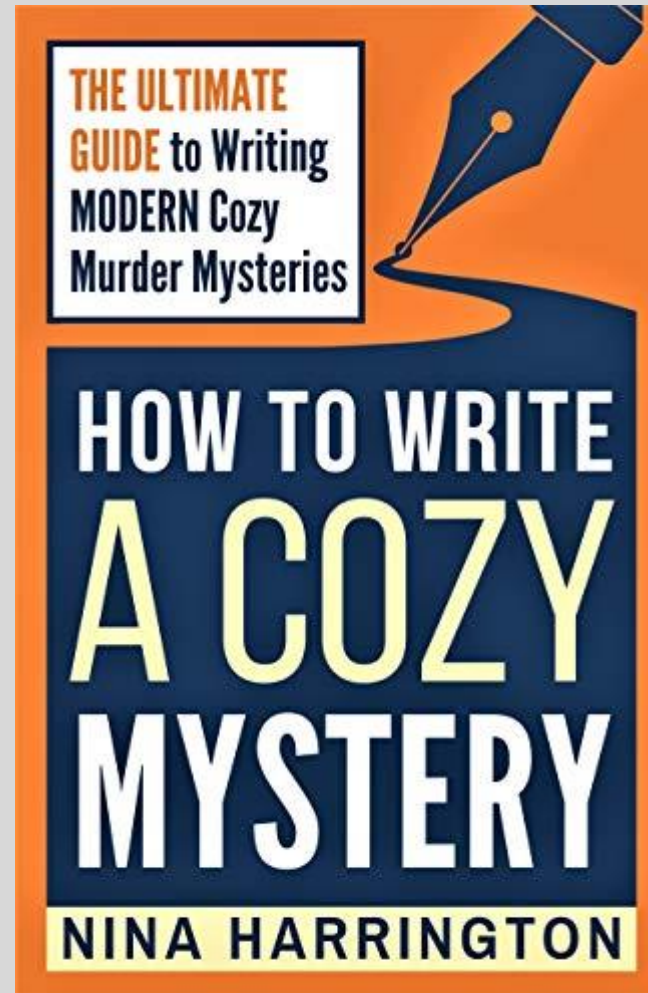
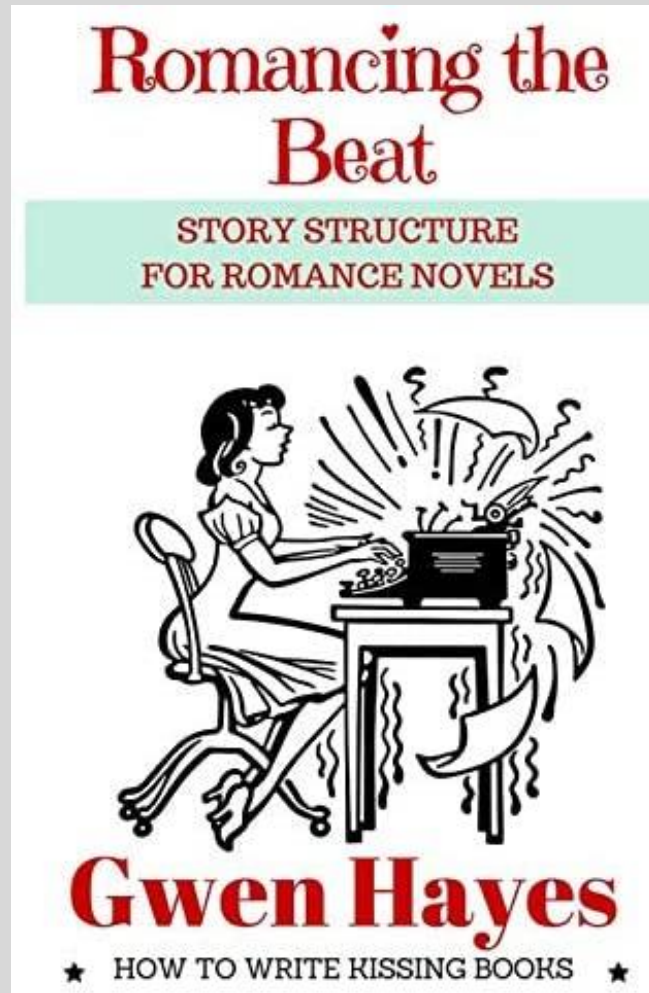
NOTE: If you'd like to download a copy of the Intentions page, head to CateEdits.com/Nebraska



A Few Books About Story Structure



Genre Specific Story Structure



Self-Editing Worksheet

J.R.R. Tolkien

Author Name

The Lord of the Rings

Project Name

Epic Fantasy

Genre

The Hero's Journey

Structure

120,000

Word Count Goal

PLANNING

- Novel Plan
- Information about the structure above

Tools Required

Ensure each scene serves a purpose
and all the beats are included.

My Intention



Break-in at Gringotts

Gringotts' Security Breached

BInvestigations continue into the break-in at Gringotts on 31 July, which is believed to be the work of Dark wizards or witches unknown. Gringotts goblins today insisted that nothing had been taken. The vault that was searched had in fact been emptied the same day. "But we're not telling you what was in there, so keep your noses out if you know what's good for you," said a Gringotts spokesgoblin this afternoon. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Integer ultrices venenatis tellus, eget dignissim turpis porta eu. Nulla ultrices gravida felis in sodales. Pellentesque aliquet justo non velit elementum biberra. Phasellus posuere.

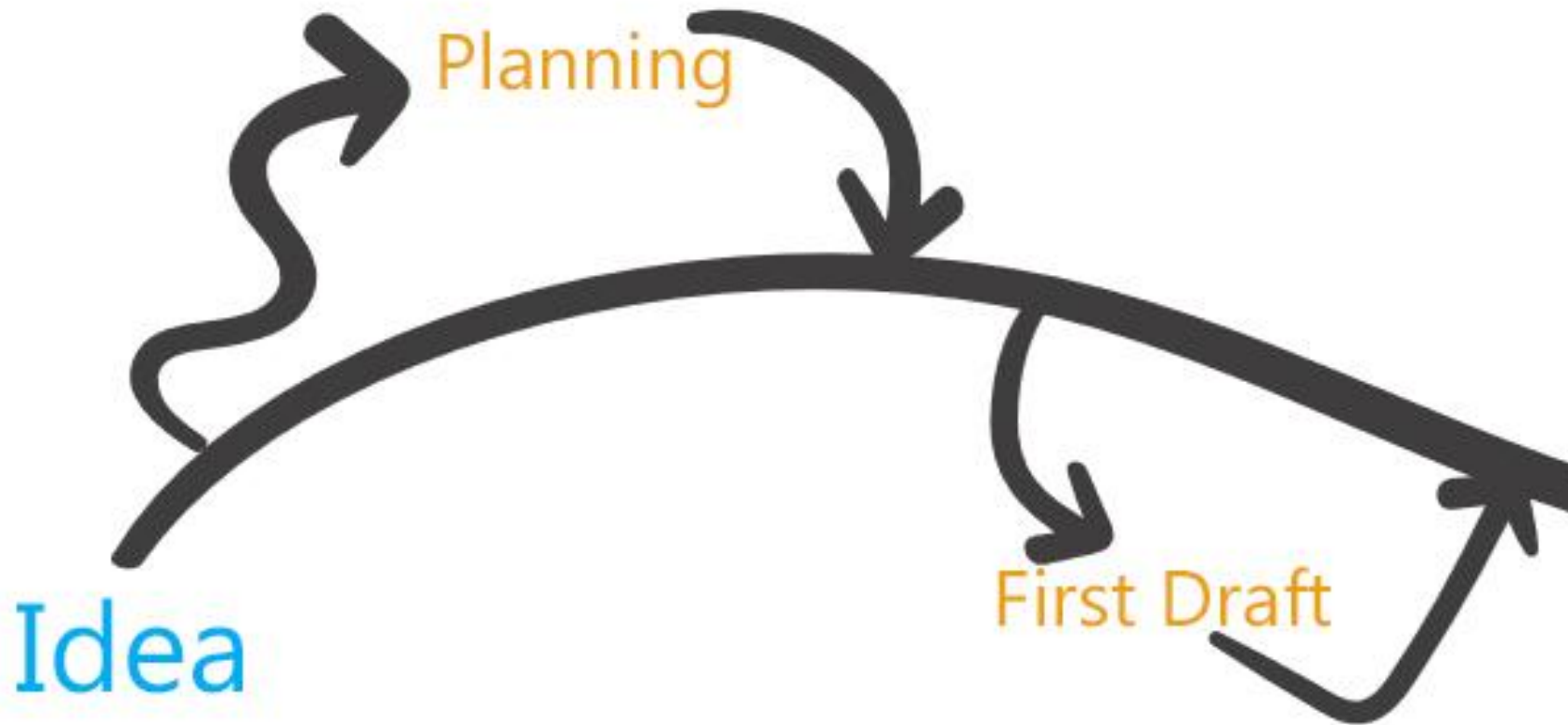
Goblins' heads are up in Arms

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Aenean ac nulla nunc, eget pulvinar risus. Proin ut lacus. Cras in ipsum sit amet dolor posuere cursus eu nec tortor. Phasellus vel nunc eros, eu fringilla urna. feugiat, eros id aliquam semper, lacus ligula placerat tortor, nec tristique est sapien ac eros. In hac habitasse dictumst. Integer ullam corper, felis et lobortis laoreet, purus ligula placerat leo, id ullamcorper eu nunc. Morbi vitae portitor nisi. In diam tellus, pretium eu rutrum nec, portitor quis diam. Vivamus dapibus tellus et quam consequat sit am. Morbi ac dui a nisi tempus pretium eu vel velit. Integer facilisis aliquam. Cras sit amet elit id massa pretium ornare in pretium nulla. Suspendisse potenti. Martenas feugiat accu ut nibh anteor iaculis.

Nothing Stole
roses out!"

Tools

- Paper and pen/computer
- Plan
- Outline of your structure



First Stop Planning

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Tools

- Paper and pen/computer
- Your manuscript
- Outline of your structure



Second Stop Self-Edit for Story

1. Check genre is the same
2. Set your intention
3. Are all story beats present?
4. Does each scene have a purpose?

TIP: You can do this section with a printed or digital version, but keep any notes you make very safe. I love to complete this phase by converting my document to PDF and sending it to my Kindle.



Google Docs

WHICH PROGRAM SHOULD I USE?

Let's Talk About Scenes

Treat each scene like a short story (it should have a beginning, a middle, and an end)



Beginning:

- Introduce characters + setting
- Hook the reader



Middle:

- There are some complications
- And also some shenanigans

Ending:

- The complication is resolved
- There may be some rejoicing



But this is just one scene of many...

A new complication
is revealed

“How do you pick up
the threads of an old
life? How do you go on,
when in your heart you
begin to understand...
there is no going back?
There are some things
that time cannot mend.
Some hurts that go too
deep, that have taken
hold.”



And it leads into a
new scene





SOMETIMES SOLVING ONE PROBLEM CREATES ANOTHER



AND SOMETIMES IT OPENS A WHOLE LOT OF
DOORS

Tools

- Paper and pen/computer
- Your manuscript
- Outline of your structure



Second Stop Self-Edit for Story

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Tools

- Paper and pen/computer
- Your manuscript (digital)
- ProWritingAid (optional)



Third Stop

Self-Edit for Clarity and Tension

1. Set your intention
2. Remove/Replace overused words
3. Replace repeated words/sentence starts (only if using ProWritingAid)
4. Identify key scenes
5. Read through entire manuscript making changes for clarity and tension (optional)
6. Focus on the key scenes for clarity and tension.

Commonly Overused Words and Phrases

Was –ing Phrases

- Was walking
- Was thinking
- Was wearing
- Was eating
- Etc, etc, etc,

Sense Words:

- Hear
- Smell
- Feel
- Felt
- Saw
- Watched

Often Overused

- Really
- Quite
- Suddenly
- Started
- Began
- Very
- Just
- Then

Advanced

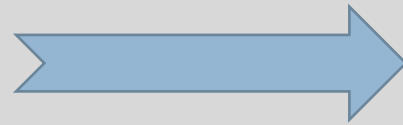
Remove weak adjectives:

- Loudly
- Happily
- Slowly
- Sleepily
- Large
- Small
- Etc, etc, etc

Was –ing Phrases

Was –ing Phrases

- Was walking
- Was thinking
- Was wearing
- Was eating
- Was climbing
- Was sleeping
- Was calling
- Was wondering
- Was doing
- Was smiling




Becomes

- Walked
- Thought
- Wore
- Ate
- Climbed
- Slept
- Called
- Wondered
- Did
- Smiled

Sense Words

Removes the reader from the action



Sense Words:


- She heard a shout
- He smelled garlic
- She felt sad
- He was feeling overwhelmed
- They saw a light
- They watched TV



Becomes

- A shout echoed through the room
- The scent of garlic reminded him of summers spent in Italy
- Tears streaked down her cheeks
- His eyes darted around, unable to settle on anything
- A light in the distance filled them with hope
- In the dark room, the flickering light from the TV lit up their face

*These are just examples.
Play around and come up
with your own*



In many cases
these can be cut
with no changes

Often Overused

You may want to take it
one step further and
strengthen the entire sentence

Often Overused

- Really
- Quite
- Suddenly
- Started
- Began
- Very
- Just
- Then

Example

- It was (really) loud
- They were (quite) pretty
- (Suddenly), the bomb exploded
- *It (started/began to) rain
- They were (very) late
- It was (just) business
- (Then) I went to the market

Read the sentence with and
without the bracketed word

Example

- The floor thudded in vibration with the music.
- Every head turned to stare at them.
- The force of it threw me forward and my head thudded against something solid.
- Fat drops of rain landed on the windshield
- They glanced at their phone, the voice of their father echoing in their head: do you think your time is more important than mine?
- Business, that's all it was.
- She loathed the spring market, but she went anyway.

*You may need to change the verb form: It rained.

Removing Weak Adverbs and Adjectives

Adjectives modify words so you want to make them count

Adjectives

- She called loudly
- He walked happily
- They ate slowly
- She waved sleepily
- The large book
- The small dog



These are just examples. Play around and come up with your own

Examples

- She shouted/screamed/yelled
- There was a spring in his step
- They savored every bite of the meal
- She yawned, her mouth open so wide it looked like a portal. "Sorry," she muttered, waving as she walked away.
- He struggled to lift the book
- The chihuahua

Tools

- Paper and pen/computer
- Your manuscript (digital)
- ProWritingAid (optional)



Third Stop

Self-Edit for Clarity and Tension

1. Set your intention
2. Remove/Replace overused words
3. Replace repeated words/sentence starts (only if using ProWritingAid)
4. Identify key scenes
5. Read through entire manuscript making changes for clarity and tension (optional)
6. Focus on the key scenes for clarity and tension.

"Your mother called."

"Your bloody mother called."

"So, um, err, I got a call from your mom earlier. She wants to talk to you."

"Tell your mom to stop calling."

"Call your mom back."

My mum had called while I was out. Never a good sign.

Mike told Sally that her mom had called while she was out.

Tools

- Paper and pen/computer
- Your manuscript (digital)
- Spelling/Grammar checker
- Text-to-Speech capability (optional)

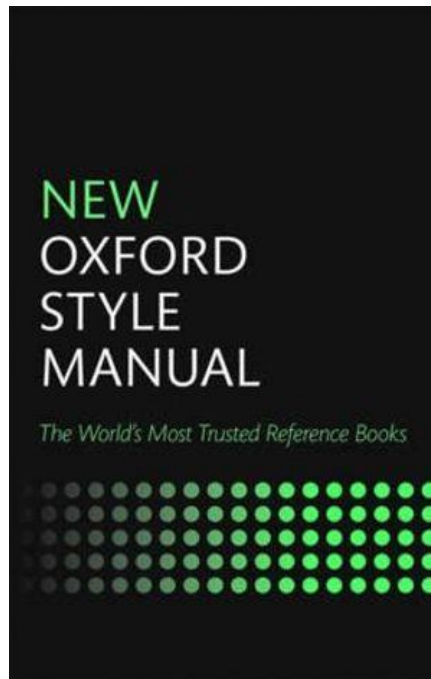


Fourth Stop Self-Edit for Grammar

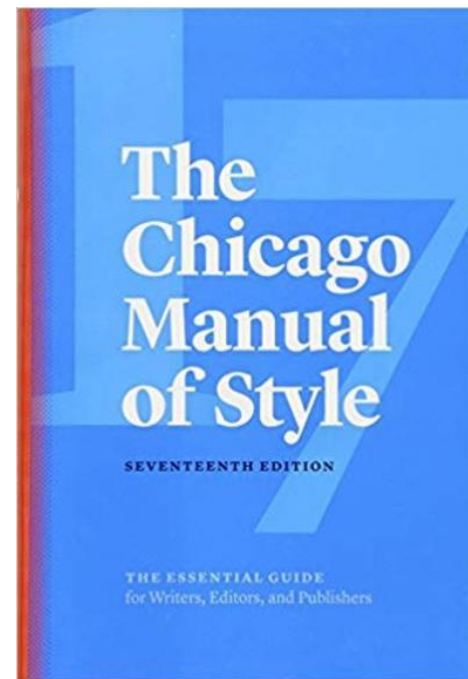
1. Set your intention
2. Use a spelling and grammar checker (built-in, ProWritingAid, Grammarly, etc)
3. Read through your entire manuscript fixing any errors (if you prefer, use a text-to-speech option to do this)
4. Work through errors identified by spell-check

TIP: If you're using ProWritingAid, you'll want to pay attention to the Grammar, Style, and Consistency reports)

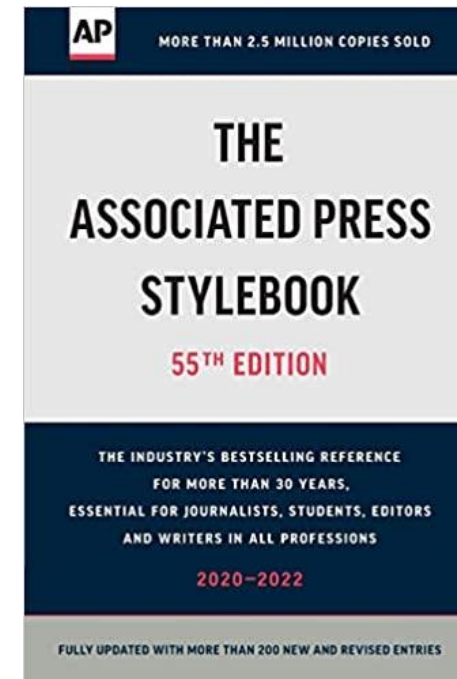
STYLE MANUALS



<https://www.amazon.com/New-Harts-Rules-Oxford-Style/dp/0199570027>



<https://journalistsresource.org/home/chicago-style-basics/>



<https://www.codot.gov/business/grants/safety-grants/assets/APStyleGuideCheatSheet.pdf>

Commonly Confused Words

A compliment is something you give, a complement is a relationship between two things

Compliment or Complement

- I want to **compliment** you on your blouse
- That blouse **complements** your eyes

Illicit is Illegal

Elicit or Illicit

She took **illicit** drugs and now we can't **elicit** a response from her

You're is a contraction of you are

Your or You're

- She is **your** sister
- **You're** going to be late

To, Too, or Two

- She was going **to** the shop
- I want to come **too**
- They bought **two** apples

Tools

- Paper and pen/computer
- Your manuscript (digital)
- Spelling/Grammar checker
- Text-to-Speech capability (optional)

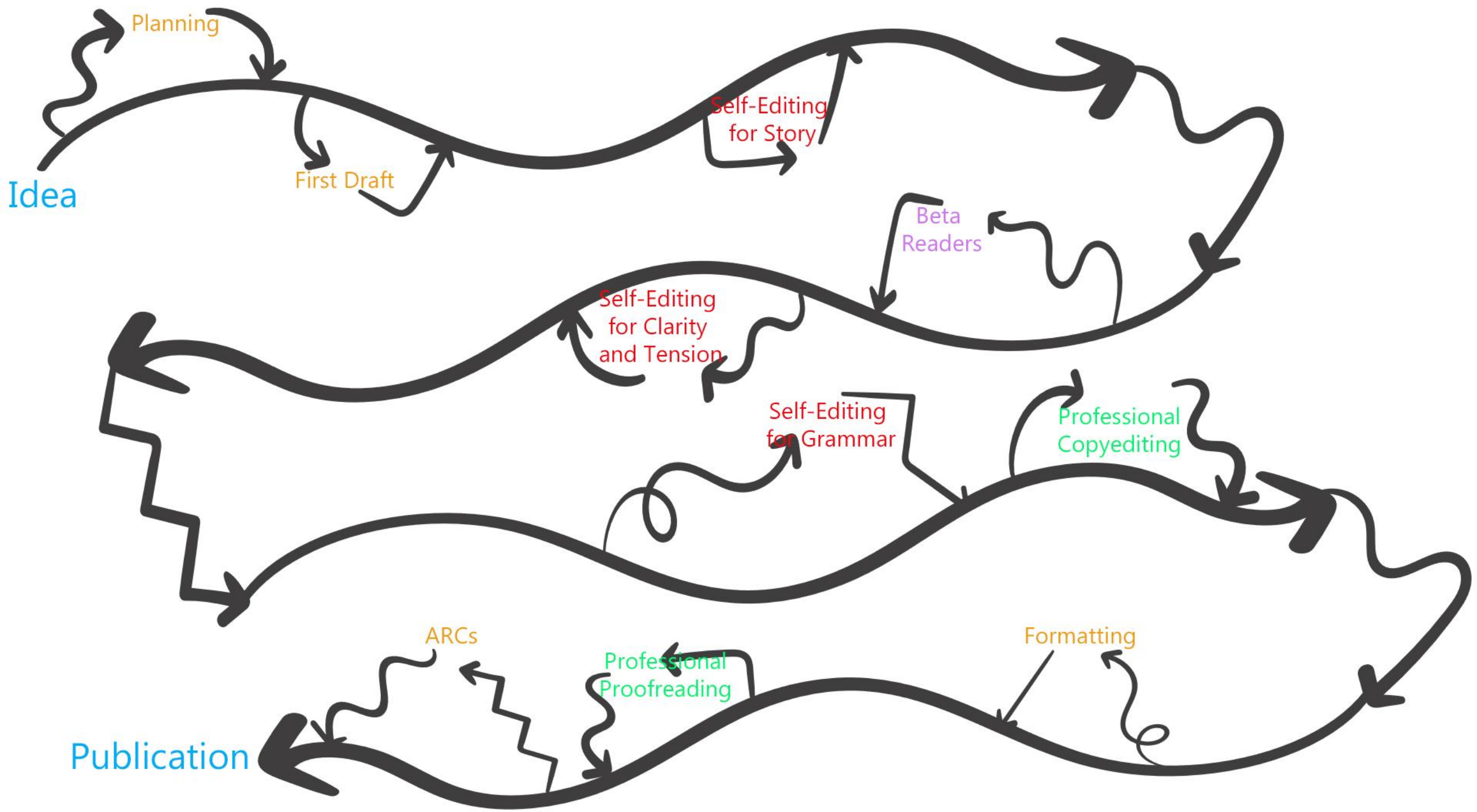


Fifth Stop

The 'I Promise There Are Still Errors' Self-Edit

1. Set your intention
2. Using text-to-speech, read through your manuscript and fix any errors.

NOTE: You should be using the formatted version of your manuscript for this stage if possible.





Thanks for coming along to Self-editing for Authors

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SERVICE!

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NEBRASKA in the subject line.

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- Developmental editing
- Line editing
- Copyediting
- Proofreading
- Coaching
- Novel planning
- Plot critiques
- Formatting

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