

Secrets: How to Self Edit

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Self- editing is hard for impatient personalities, like me.

The original idea might have been terrific in my head, but on the screen or paper, I've left out the links.

As a fast reader, I get the gist of the story and don't notice the punctuation or formatting.

So what are my secrets to self-editing?

1. Time. Leave the 'hot' project until it cools. Then come back and read as if you are a new reader, not the writer.
2. Use TRACKING which suggests improvements, without losing the original sequence of ideas. You still have a choice of using the original or the revamped version, for each phrase.
3. Read it aloud. To the cat. Or on your phone. Better still, get someone else to read it back to you with their emphasis. Mark your own copy as they read and fix any ambiguities.
4. Workshop it in your writing group. Even tidying it up, to present for workshopping forces you to correct it.
5. Change the order of paragraphs. Most dramatic first. Second most dramatic last. Boring in the middle. Then fix the boring.
6. Self-edit for punctuation or spelling EARLY in day when fresh.

Hazel Edwards' 'Complete Your Book in a Year' (BookPod 2020) and the 'Hijabi Girl' series (Ali-Gator Publishing in 2021) prior to the Larrikin Puppet Musical touring are her most recent projects. www.hazeledwards.com