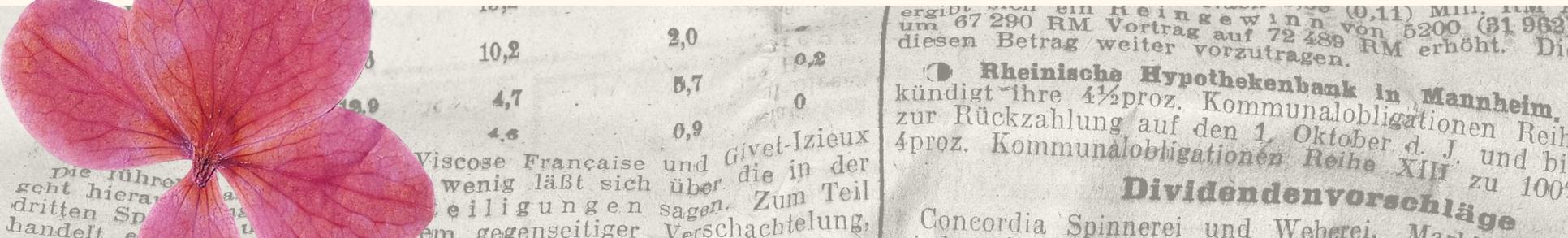




Polishing Your Manuscript

ARIELLE HAUGHEE



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Viscose Francaise und Givet-Izieux
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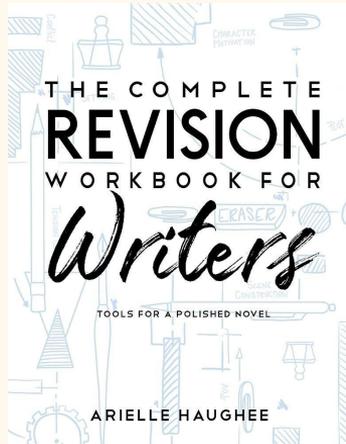
ergibt sich ein Reingewinn (0.11) Mil. RM
um 67 290 RM Vortrag auf 72 489 RM erhöht. Di
diesen Betrag weiter vorzutragen.

● **Rheinische Hypothekenbank in Mannheim.**
kündigt ihre 4½proz. Kommunalobligationen Reihe
zur Rückzahlung auf den 1. Oktober d. J. und bi
4proz. Kommunalobligationen Reihe XIII zu 100%

Dividendenvorschläge
Concordia Spinnerei und Weberei, Mar

Arielle Haughee

Author, Editor, Speaker, Publisher
Owner, Orange Blossom Publishing



Workshop Agenda



- Story Ingredients Checklist
- Tightening Prose
- Common Editing Mistakes
- Formatting for Submission

01.

Story Ingredients



Character

- Compelling characters
- Clear motivations
- Complete character arcs
- Story problems that are appropriate to them
- Solid POVs



Setting

- Clear setting
- Integrated setting
- Consistent world building (as appropriate)



Plot

- Information given at correct time
- Organic, connected plotline
- Conflict in many places (layering)
- Pacing that builds toward climax
- Explosive, appropriate climax
- Satisfactory resolution



Language

- Engaging voice
- Evokes feelings from the reader
- Crisp, interesting prose
- Engaging dialogue
- Conventions



Overall

- Narrative balance
- Creative and unique characteristics



02.

Tightening Prose



The Brain and Reading

- As you read this, the left occipitotemporal cortex is decoding each group of letters into its spoken equivalent
- One part determines meaning while the other part is automatically recognizing words
- You slowed down while reading occipitotemporal because part of your brain didn't recognize it automatically



**Occipitotemporal
Cortex**





The Brain Reading Cluttered Prose

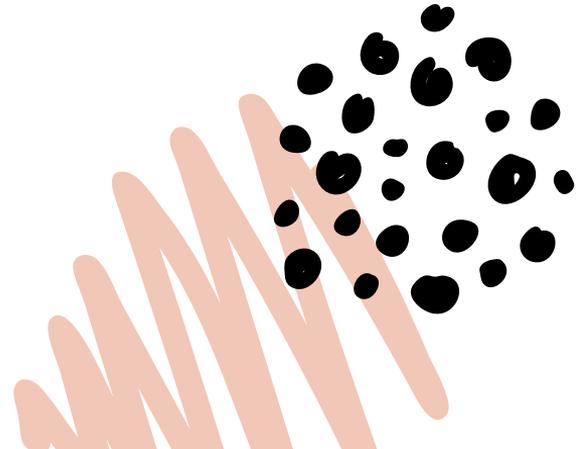
- The part of your OT cortex that automatically recognizes words is working faster than the part that determines meaning
- You have to slow down and reread to determine meaning so the other part can catch up/do its job





1.

What to CUT



THAT

- CUT the word THAT whenever it isn't necessary in the sentence
- Does the sentence make sense without it?

I believe that my family wishes that I were dead.

I believe my family wishes I were dead.



JUST

- JUST is often used for unnecessary emphases
 - The sentence itself implies the emphasis
 - often overused in dialogue
- 

“I just need to speak with the mayor for just one minute,” she begged.

“I need to speak with the mayor for one minute,” she begged.





Sense Words



- A word telling the sense the character is using
- Look, feel, saw, heard, noticed...
- CUT these and just say what is happening

She saw a strange man peek through the garage window.
A strange man peeked through the garage window.



Sense Words Example

Turning Basque around, I watched as the stablemen assisted John onto the old mare. She stood still as a wall, and despite the sour-faced rider, she seemed not to mind the weight on her back. Knight Valiente and Princess Sonja rode up beside me, their natural poise making it clear they weren't strangers to riding in the least. They watched as John squirmed and shifted, grunting to find some position of comfort on top of his saddle.



Sense Words Example

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BEGAN TO

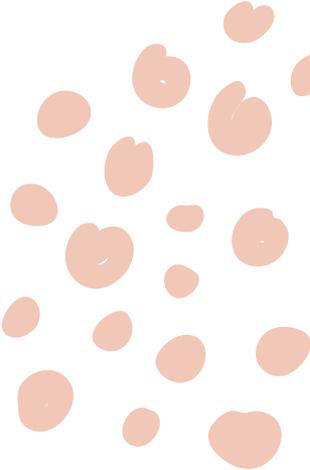
- BEGAN TO, BEGINNING TO, STARTED TO...
- Just put the action unless the action is interrupted for dramatic purpose

Gerald began to open the letter, his eyes scanning the page.

Gerald opened the letter, his eyes scanning the page.



Action AS

- When the word AS is used to show two things happening concurrently
 - Delete AS and make two sentences or turn the next verb to a gerund
- 

He smiled as he lifted the saber to charge.

He smiled. He lifted the saber to charge.

He smiled, lifting the saber to charge.





Past Perfect HAD

- Occurs when you are doing a flashback while writing in past tense (past past tense)
- The first had alerts the reader to the flashback, the rest are implied





Minerva slammed on the breaks. The pedestrian tapped his phone, completely unaware. They were both lucky this time. Last winter she had lost control of her Honda Odyssey and had swerved through an intersection. She had skidded onto the sidewalk and...



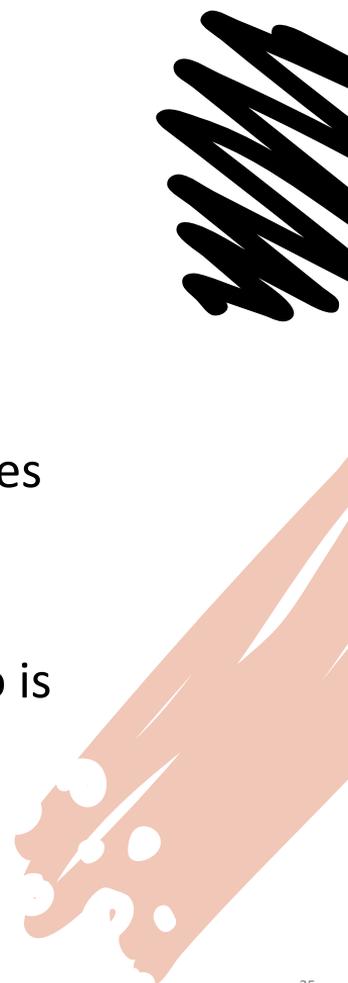


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What to CUT in Dialogue

- Use contractions unless intentionally elevating speech
 - Greetings are almost always unnecessary
 - YES and NO can be cut if followed by a sentence that gives the answer
 - Fillers like WELL, UM, UH can usually be cut
 - Speaker tags can be cut if an action sentence shows who is talking
- 

Jason entered the salon. “Hello,” he said. He stared at the list of services on the wall. “I have never been here before. Um, uh. I guess I will have the deep tissue massage.”

“Are you comfortable with deep pressure?” the attendant asked.

Jason smothered a laugh. He said, “Yes. I played football. I am used to getting beat up.”

“Okay. Your massage therapist will be Kendall. Follow me,” she said. She gestured toward a hallway.

They entered a dimly lit room with a sheet-covered table. “This is Kendall,” the attendant said. “Enjoy your massage.”

26

“Hello,” Kendall said. Kendall had muscular arms and looked like she played football herself. Her long dark hair parted in the middle, reminding Jason of the girl from *The Ring*. She cracked her knuckles. Jason gulped.

“Lay down on the table,” she said. She squirted oil onto her hands and rubbed them together with a knowing look in her eye.

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“Lay down on the table.” ~~she said.~~ She squirted oil onto her hands and rubbed them together with a knowing look in her eye.

Repetition Example

Gripping the doorknob, I paused, inhaling John's scent and focusing on his heartbeat. *He's asleep. Good.* Pushing through I was silent. John was hunched over the tiny table, his shirt and jacket tossed across the only bed in the room, and I scoffed. *Such a child.* Shedding my coat and pulling off weapons and kicking off boots. I did my best not to let the weight of my items clunk against the wooden floor. Drawing the lock, I turned to the bed and pulled his items off, halting a moment as I stared at the jacket. *I hope I never have to see his blood across this cloth again.* Shaking the past from head I hung them on a coat rack and turned to the sleeping man at the table.



Repetition Example



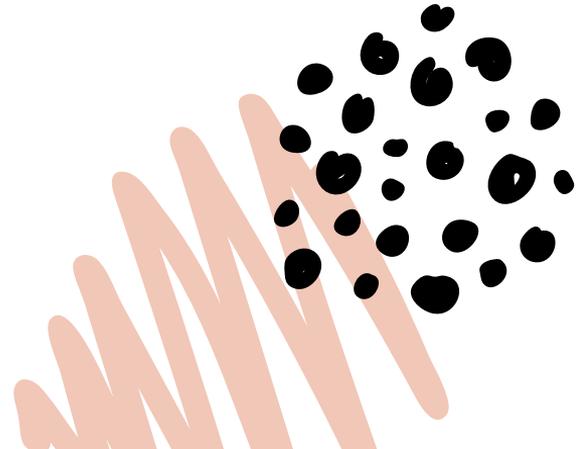
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2.

What to REPLACE





Adverbs

- Trade a verb + adverb for a stronger verb

She walked quietly out of the room.

She tiptoed out of the room.

Lauren smiled and gently touched his arm.

Lauren smiled and caressed his arm.





VERY

- Instead of very + adjective, pick a stronger word

Sarah is very bubbly and makes people smile.

Sarah is effervescent and makes people smile.



Verb + IN/WITH Feeling

- Can sometimes be cut or
- Can be replaced with better contextual clues or with a stronger word
- Yelled in exasperation, covered in fear, sighed with relief

Elaine cried in agony when she hung up the phone.

Elaine wailed when she hung up the phone.

Elaine crumpled when she hung up the phone.



WAS + Gerund

- Occurs when writing in past tense
- Was smiling, was leaving, was holding...
- Just use the past tense verb

The baby was laughing at the dog.

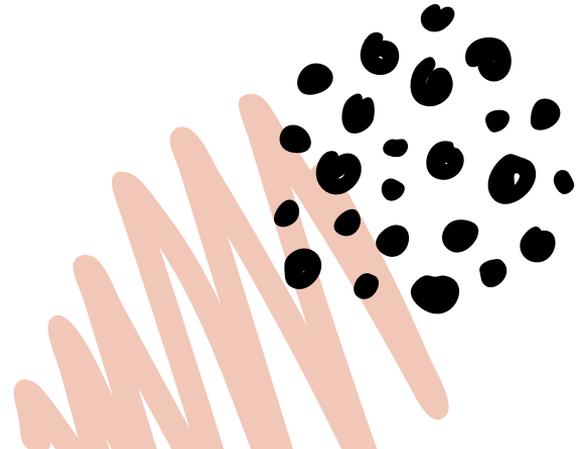
The baby laughed at the dog.





3.

What to TRIM

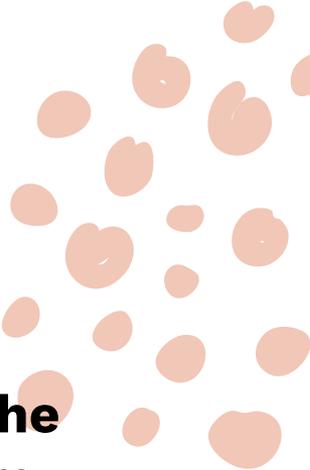




Redundancies

- Extra phrases and sentences that are unnecessary because they've already been shown

Maddux bolted across the room and shoved his head under my feet. With each crash of thunder he jumped. Tiny, desperate whimpers streamed from his mouth. It was storming and he was scared.

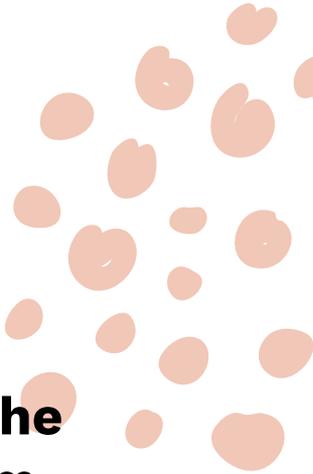




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Multiple Clauses

- Sentences with long strings of clauses should be trimmed or broken into two sentences.
- Short sentences give big impact

Early in the morning, we got up and grabbed our gear before heading down to the truck that was parked at the end of the driveway so Pete wouldn't notice that we were sneaking out while he slept on the couch.

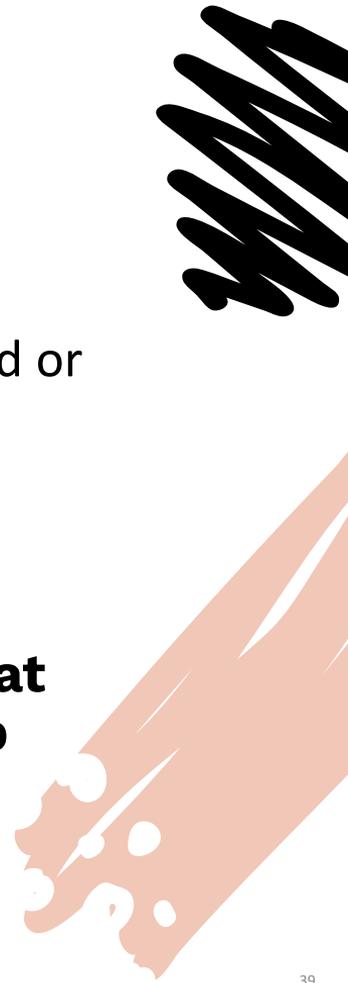




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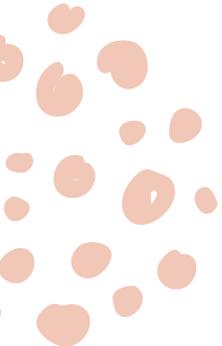


Sentence Length

- Short sentences (two or three words) give big impact
- Cut a regular length sentence into two short ones for more oomph

We tiptoed across the living room and turned the doorknob when Uncle Pete sat up.

We tiptoed across the living room and turned the doorknob. Pete sat up.



03.

Common Editing Mistakes



Versus!

- Blonde (female) v. blond (male/neutral)
- Peek (your eyes) v. peak (mountain)
- Gray (USA) v. grey (England)
- Premiere (performance) v. premier (status)
- Aide (an assistant) v. aid (to help)
- Alter (to change) v. altar (holy table)
- Soothe (to calm) v. sooth (truth)
- Fiancée (woman) v. fiancé (man)



Versus!

- Lay v. lie
 - You lie down, but you lay something down.
- Farther v. further
 - Farther for physical distances, further for figurative ones
- Everyday v. every day
 - Everyday is an adjective
- Toward v. towards
 - Toward is preferred in US, towards in UK



Military Names

- Lowercase without full title
- The navy, the army, the air force
- United States Navy, United States Army, United States Air Force
- The captain, the major, the lieutenant
- Captain John Warbock, Major Lisa Stone



Hyphens



- Hyphens are used more for ADJECTIVE forms of words
- A dictionary-wielding librarian helped me. (noun + adjective = adjective)
- Three computer-literate accountants also helped. (“ “)
- A three-year-old child is three years old. (age)
- Blue-green algae on a reddish-brown rock. (color)
- The half-hour session starts in a half hour. (time)
- The three-thirty train leaves at three thirty. (time)
- The dress needs a one-and-a-half-inch hem. (measurement)
- He gave a matter-of-fact reply. (adjectival phrase)
- My great-grandmother knew my great-great-grandmother. (familial)

Quotes in quotes



- Periods and commas always go inside quotation marks
 - “She said, ‘Leave me alone.’”
 - “He picked up a real ‘winner,’” Stan said.
- Question marks and exclamation points can go outside.
 - “Sean yelled, ‘Go away’!”
 - “What do you mean a real ‘winner’?” Lucy asked.



04.

Formatting for Submission



The Basics

- Times New Roman, size 12
- Double spaced
- Use the arrow in the ruler to indent instead of tab
 - No indents at new chapters or new sections after a section break
- Justified (optional, but will need to be in the end)
- Don't need copyright info in header/footer



First Page & New Chapters



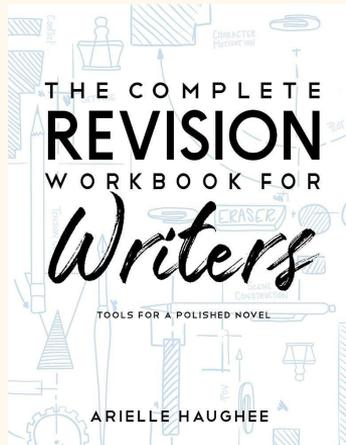
- First page
 - Include name and contact information in top left corner
 - Title halfway down the page
- New Chapter
 - Starts on a new page (page break preferred)
 - Three hard returns down
 - No indent



Thank you!

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