STEPS OF SELF-EDITING

STEP 1

Self-Critique

Your first reread! As you go, highlight anything that you may consider changing, definitely want to change, needs to be expanded on, etc., and consider using different highlight colors. Some authors prefer to print their manuscript for this.

STEP 3

Take a Step Back

Take a month off! Stepping away from your manuscript, and the characters that have consumed you for months, will help you to critique yourself more effectively.

STEP 5

Line Editing

Once your plot and characters have all the development they need, it's time to add more style, tone, and flow to your work. As you reread your manuscript yet again, consider if anything sounds unnatural or not concise. This is the time to pull out a thesaurus!

STEP 7

Proofreading

Use a free grammar program such as Grammarly or ProWritingAid as a general guide during your final proofread. Do not trust every squiggly red line! Technology will never replace a human eye.

STEP 2

Developmental

Make any changes that you highlighted in your first Self-Critique.

STEP 4

Self-Critique (again...)

Your second reread. After taking some time away from your book, try to see it in a new light. Are your characters fully developed? Does your plot have any holes? If so, repeat steps two through four until you are happy.

STEP 6

Copy Editing

Copy editing can be done in tandem to line editing, however, I do not recommend that if you haven't edited much before. During this step, check for inconsistencies, fact check, and generally perfect your work as much as possible.

