

LESSON 5: BASICS OF EDITING



BIG PICTURE

- Structure
 - » Introduction—*What?* Catches attention and draws reader in.
 - » Body—*So what?* Supports with evidence, gives more detail.
 - » Conclusion—*Now what?* What do we now know based on the evidence? Come to a conclusion. Call to action.
 - » If it is a set type of article (i.e., a listicle) that already has a general form, it follows the structure of that form.
- Organization
 - » The ideas flow together naturally
 - » New ideas are separated by paragraphs
 - » There is a logical order to the presentation of ideas
- Theme
 - » There is a clear theme or main idea
 - » All subsequent paragraphs somehow connect back to this theme
- Tone
 - » There is a consistent tone. Ex. Formal, journalistic, personal, sarcastic
- Consistency
 - » Ideas and timelines
 - » Events and names
 - » Point of view
 - » Tense

LINE EDIT

- Grammar
- Punctuation
- Sentence structure
 - » Fragments
 - » Run-on
 - » Passive Voice
- Word Choice
 - » Weak and superfluous words
 - » Redundancy and colloquialisms
 - » Filler words, expletives

RESOURCES FOR GRAMMAR AND PUNCTUATION

- Elements of Style, William Strunk Jr. and E.B. White
- [TedTalk-Grammar Lessons](#)
- [Chicago Manual of Style](#)
- [Grammar Girl](#)



CHALLENGE:

Pick one of the 100word story submissions and edit it. Pick one that stands out to you in terms of needing clarity, brevity, or general grammar.

Example

Before: Paper thin wisps of existence, they begin their daily toil. Fractured noise that seems set to shatter hollow bones screeches across the edges of their prefab planet. The bitter cold snaps at charcoal outlines: no heat to warm straining necks; no blues or greens or earth browns to pick them out as more than sketches on tedious landscape. Still they toil. Dusty lungs slurp at the grey air like they might be drawing life through a straw. Death's slate-coloured kiss wets their lips and lingers; hope never rising. Only the smallest ones still raise their eyes expectantly to the east.

After: Amidst bone shattering noise, paper thin wisps of existence begin their daily toil on the harsh planet. Bitter cold snaps against straining necks. Their bodies appear as charcoal outlines; sketches upon a pallid landscape. Their dusty lungs slurp at grey air as if drawing life through a straw. Death's slate-colored kiss wets their lips. Still they toil. Only the smallest ones raise their eyes expectantly to the east.

Email your challenge to laurelnakai@gmail.com by April 4