



Boroondara Writers Inc

Encourage, Support, Improve

A0061053C

August 2024

NEXT MEETING: Saturday, 31 August, 1 pm.

Bonjour!

It's Olympics time! I hope you're all enjoying watching the magnificent feats of sporting endeavour undertaken by very fit and attractive young people.

In the newsletter today, we have a selection of competitions still open for submissions. Writers Victoria have a new program of [writing-themed events](#) to round out 2024. If Writers Festivals are your jam, the [Bendigo Writers Festival](#) is coming on 16-18 August and the [Emerging Writers Festival](#) on 7-8 September at the Wheelers Centre in the Melbourne CBD. It is also [Family History Month](#) and there are a number of writing workshops connected to it.

Finally, I give some tips on the process of self-editing and its importance to polishing up your work for publication. Continuez à écrire!

Sarah Craze

Are you on Facebook? Why not [join our private group](#)!

Chat and share your thoughts with other members in between meetings.

Stories ideas

Your Golden Moment

You may interpret any way you see fit!

DATES FOR 2024

31 August, 28 September, 26 October, 30 November

Meeting Room 1

Ground floor, Hawthorn Library

1 - 4.30pm

Competitions, Courses and Events

[Please note that we do not endorse the following opportunities, we simply pass on information]

THE BEST AUSTRALIAN YARN

CLOSES: 12 AUGUST

The Best Australian Yarn celebrates the art of storytelling by giving writers across the country a platform to share their short stories. Submit your best short story for your chance to win a life-changing \$50,000 major prize! [Visit the website](#).

THE SCARLET STILETTO AWARDS

CLOSES: 31 AUGUST

Women's crime and mystery short story competition. This prestigious award has \$13,400 of prizes on offer for a story with a maximum length of 5,000 words. There is a \$25 fee for entering, \$20 if you're a member. [Visit the website](#) for more information.

WOORILLA POETRY PRIZE

CLOSES: 30 SEPTEMBER

A \$3,000 prize for the winner and a \$20 entry fee, there appears to be no guide or limitations on what you can submit. You do get your work published in the Woorilla Poetry Collection of Poems. [Visit the website](#).

2025 FABER WRITING SCHOLARSHIPS

CLOSES: 20 OCTOBER 2024

Each year the Faber Writing Academy at Allen & Unwin awards scholarship places for its prestigious Writing a Novel program. One scholarship will be awarded to a recipient undertaking Writing a Novel in Melbourne. [Visit the website](#)

WRITING A NON-BORING FAMILY STORY FOR A SIGNIFICANT CHILD

30 AUGUST

To celebrate Family History Month, Hazel Edwards will provide you with the tools needed to plan and write a family history story or anecdote aimed at entertaining the younger children in your family. This three hour workshop is strictly limited to 25 participants, so you can get the most out of the session. \$28 Hosted by the [Victorian Archives Centre](#), 99 Shiel Street, North Melbourne

ODYSSEY VICTORIA ANNUAL SHORT STORY COMPETITION

6 NOVEMBER

The theme is 'regret' and the submission must be no more than 1,500 words. You need to reference alcohol and/or drugs because Odyssey is a drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre. First prize is \$1,000 and a one year membership to Writers Victoria. [Visit the website](#) for more information.

All about Self-editing

WHAT IS SELF-EDITING?

Self-editing is the process of improving your writing by correcting your mistakes, revising structure and honing your words. This is different from the writing process because it requires you to take several steps back from your work and think critically about what you have written. Improving your self-editing skills helps to increase your writing's readability and overall quality. The less editing a publisher has to do the more interested they will be in your work.

TIPS FOR EDITING YOUR OWN WRITING

- Try to look or hear your work in a different way. You can do this by printing it out and reading it aloud.
- Take a break. Walking away from your writing for a few days or weeks helps you create an emotional distance. When you come back to it, you'll see mistakes you haven't seen before.

- Eliminate passive voice. Look for words like am, is, were, was, have, had, would, be, being, or been and cut them out, re-working your sentences as you go. Passive voice tends to make sentences wordier than they need to be and can obfuscate what you're trying to say. Using an active voice keeps the tone of your work energised.
- Use a grammar software program (or even just activate the grammar settings on Microsoft Word) to help you pick up grammatical errors, double words, and spelling mistakes. I have a two comma per sentence rule (aside from lists). In my opinion, if a sentence has more than two commas, it's too long.
- Look out for words that you repeatedly use without realising. I tend to start explanatory sentences with "So, blah blah blah". When I go back is when I realise that the "so" was completely unnecessary. Other people overuse "generally" or "of course" or use too many adverbs or not enough adjectives. Work out your little writing quirks that trip you up and start reining them in.
- As you read through each scene, give it a three/four word name. "Jack and Liza's argument", "Jerry's last stand", "the bus ride", "Simone's golden moment". The idea is that this gives you a quick way of identifying whether the scene is actively contributing to your plot or is meandering aimlessly like a lost cow. This helps you sharpen up the scenes and tighten up the structure of your narrative.
- Your point-of-view characters need goals. These should be specific, tangible and just a little out of reach. As you self-edit, keep an eye on the end game for your characters. What do they want more than anything in the world? How does this shape their actions, decisions and interactions? Is what you've written moving them towards their end game? Are any setbacks being resolved and do they make sense to the end game?
- Make sure you're engaging all the senses in your descriptions. What does that filthy street smell like? What sounds can your character hear? What are the textures? Try and create an immersive experience for your reader.

Further reading:

[How to do a thorough self-edit](#) from The Novel Factory

[Is your manuscript ready to be submitted?](#) From Rachel Rowlands

[Nine editing tips](#): how to self-edit your own writing, from Reedsy

[The complete guide to eliminating passive voice](#), from Between the Lines Editorial