



Evaluation Rubric for Copyediting

(rev. 9/7/2025)

I will evaluate the correct application of the rules and consistent application of the rules.

Total possible points = 50 points

Passing = 80%, or 40 points

1. Formatting

Possible 3 points

- Track Changes always used (except for silent changes) and done cleanly (in general, change just the letter, not the whole word)
- Chapters begin on new page
- Silent changes done
- Line breaks added/deleted
- One space after periods
- Apostrophes turn out at beginning of words
- Curly quote marks
- Etc.

2. Style Sheet

Possible 3 points

- Does it cover what it needs to cover? (e.g., prefixes: re-, non-, co-; suffixes: -like; colors; directions)

- No typos
- Succinctly written
- Only include what's relevant for the book you're working on, with examples from current book
- Etc.

3. Queries

Possible 3 points

- Understand when to query (not too much, not too little)
- Tone of queries
- No typos in queries
- Queries shouldn't be anchored to deleted text
- Explain your change (succinctly)
- Prompt the writer at the end of the query: "Change OK?" "Reword?"
- Query changes you make for continuity

4. Fact-Checking

Possible 3 points

Please highlight the terms you've checked!

- Are facts checked when needed?
- Did you cite the source in the query, when called for?
- Did you use the right sources?
- Did you not go overboard and fact-check TOO much?

5. Commas

Possible 3 points

- Comma splices fixed (if appropriate)
- Series comma
- Commas in pairs
- Coordinate vs. cumulative adjectives
- Commas deleted where they shouldn't be
- Commas added after intro phrases (if that's the style)
- Etc.

6. Punctuation (no commas)

Possible 5 points

- Semicolons used correctly
- Colons used correctly; lc or cap after colon
- Quote marks correct; correct treatment of scare quotes; nested quote marks; punctuation WITH quote marks correct; quote marks when speech continues over more than one paragraph
- Dialogue tags correct (no action verbs used for dialogue tags)

- Ellipses
- Parentheses
- En and em dashes
- Apostrophes
- Plural possessives
- Stray quote marks
- Etc.

7. Spelling / Compounds / Hyphens

Possible 5 points

- Open vs. closed vs. hyphenated compounds
- Spellings checked in M-W
- Spellings consistent throughout MS
- Hyphens with adjectival phrases
- NO hyphens with -ly adverbs
- Hyphens with colors
- Hyphens with prefixes, suffixes
- American English, not British English
- Etc.

8. Capping

Possible 3 points

- Done correctly in speech
- Capping of titles and terms
- Directions
- Trademarks
- Small caps
- Words not capped at random
- Etc.

9. Italics / Bold

Possible 2 points

- Ital for internal thoughts done right (or not applied, but consistently yes or no)
- Non-English terms italicized (if called for)
- Ital used for emphasis (not all cap)
- In general, no bold
- In general, no underline
- Ital for words as words, letters as letters, or sounds
- Consistent ital/not ital for commas etc. after ital words

- Etc.

10. Numbers

Possible 3 points

- Spell out one through ninety-nine and whole round numbers
- Height
- Times of day
- Years, dates
- Addresses
- Percent
- Etc.

11. Grammar / Sentence Structure

Possible 3 points

- Parallelism
- Subject/verb agreement
- Dangling modifiers
- Adverbs (placement)
- Subjunctive mood
- Etc.

12. Word Choice / Usage

Possible 4 points

- Repetitive terms queried
- Delete unnecessary “that” and “of”
- Contractions used when appropriate
- Onto vs on to; into vs. in to
- That vs. which
- Who vs. whom
- Lay vs. lie
- Dropped words
- Wrong word
- Etc.

13. Tense

Possible 2 points

- Jumps between present and past tense fixed
- Past perfect applied judiciously

14. Continuity / Choreography / Timeline

Possible 3 points

- Continuity and consistent spelling of character names, place-names
- Continuity of character traits (it depends!)
- Continuity of info
- Choreography makes sense
- Timeline adds up
- Etc.

15. No Line Editing

Possible 3 points

- Did copyeditor stay in their lane and leave alone matters of literary style?

16. Not introducing errors (being sloppy with markup)

Possible 2 points

- From typographical to spelling to editorial

Occasional issues

- POV (head hopping)
- Inclusive language ("Black"; microaggressions identified and queried; authenticity reader recommended, if necessary; sources cited)
- Permissions/copyright (song lyrics and poems flagged; song titles NOT flagged)