

SUBMISSION CHECKLIST

FORMATTING

Times New Roman, 12 pt, double-spaced, 1" margins. No extra space between paragraphs. Hanging first line indent, 0.5".

Only one space after the end of a sentence.

COMMON FIXES

Like

If what follows could be an independent sentence, like is incorrect. Replace it with as, as if, as though, the way that as apt.

Take a moment to check whether the verb should be subjunctive, that is, does it state a condition that is contrary to fact. If so, then it should be subjunctive in narrative and in some dialog (old fogies, professors, or historic context).

Even

Rarely adds anything to the sentence.



ly : really, probably

Eschew adverbs. Most of the time they are not needed; usually in dialog they are redundantly telling what is (or should be) shown either in action or in the dialog itself.

For a second

For a while

Rarely needed. Always delete with words such as pause.

Kind of

Sort of

Weasel words. Eliminate them and use a more precise word instead of what these modify.

There

Sentences beginning with there are weak and should be recast whenever possible.

Reach

Leans

Unless the action is interrupted, get right to it.



Which, then, that

Down

Up

Rarely needed, especially with words like sit and stand.

Further/Farther

Further is metaphysical distance; farther is physical distance

Backwards, towards, forwards etc.

Search for wards and in words like those above, change to ward.

Feel/felt

Often misused. Should only apply to tangible things or emotions or states of being.

GLOBAL REPLACE

alright replace with all right

FILTER WORDS

Watch, look, see, think, thought, realize, wonder, feel, felt, feeling, know, see, sound (like), can hear, can see, wish.



DIALOG TAGS

Get rid of adverbs in dialog tags.

Proper use of dialog tags.

GERUNDS AND PROGRESSIVE VERBS

Remove all unnecessary gerunds and progressive verbs.

Here's a helpful article about gerunds.

Here is a helpful article about progressive verbs.

ELLIPSES AND EM-DASHES

Insert space after ellipses.

Remove spaces around em-dashes.

An em-dash is not a double dash.

Use ellipses for pauses in speech and em-dashes for interruptions (self or other).

TITLES

Song titles are in quotes, not italicized.

Album, television, book and film titles are italicized

