

# THCS

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## Your Guide to Ghostwriting, Editing, and Proofreading

Your novel is important to you. Whether you're a first-time novelist or an accomplished author who needs a second set of eyes on your story, your novel needs that "I-can't-put-it-down" page-turning power, and I can help you get it.

No one will work harder to make you happy.

Here's a quick guide to my ghostwriting, editing, and proofreading services.

### Overview

I provide my valued clients with personal one-on-one service. I never outsource and I use no lower-priced assistants. When you become my client, I'll provide you with:

- Developmental editing to help make your story come alive.
- Expert advice on plot, character, setting, and voice.
- Line editing and proofreading with unmatched attention to detail.
- Confidence that your novel is everything you want it to be.

Genres include:

- ✓ Science fiction
- ✓ Paranormal
- ✓ Thrillers
- ✓ Romance
- ✓ Adventure
- ✓ Historical novels
- ✓ Memoirs
- ✓ Business novels
- ✓ YA and middle grade

My clients often ask if I do editing or ghostwriting. My answer is always this: I will do whatever it takes to make your story the very best that it can be! If some content needs to be ghostwritten,

that's what I'll do. If your book is complete and needs editing, that's what I'll do. My goal is to help you create a book that will compete in the marketplace with any other novel in its class.

It's as simple as that.

## Ghostwriter

When you don't have the time to write or complete your novel, I can write it for you. I'll work closely with you to bring your ideas to the printed page. Your book will be written based on your input and in your voice, and you will retain full copyright. The book may be sold or offered under your name alone. I will gladly sign a non-disclosure agreement (NDA).

I'm proud of my track record of success. I'm happy to provide work samples and links to specific books on Amazon or Barnes & Noble, and explain my role in creating the book.

How is my fee calculated? Ghostwriters are usually hired on the basis of the delivered **word count**. Novellas are 18,000 to 40,000 words. Novels are in the range of 40,000 to 100,000 words. Most YA novels are 40,000 to 60,000. Of course, the Harry Potter novels are a big exception—*The Order of the Phoenix* clocks in at a hefty 257,000 words! The first novel in the series, *The Philosopher's Stone*, is 77,000 words, which while closer to the standard is unusually long for a debut YA novel.

Specifying the number of *pages* can be difficult, because the page count will vary depending upon size of the text, margins, illustrations, and chapter breaks. However, for a typical book in 11-point Times New Roman, you can expect to get about 350 words per page. A novel of 80,000 words would be about 230 pages.

Ghostwriting prices are usually ten cents per word. I will always provide a price based on a flat rate for the project, or based on a price per word. I do not get involved with creating graphics or cover art; writing is a highly specialized occupation, and like most good writers, I just write.

## Editor

When you have a nearly complete novel, I will provide editorial services. I'll read the entire Word document and help you to organize and present your story as effectively as possible. I may suggest adding material or deleting passages that aren't effective. In this process it pays to have an open mind, because many authors are sensitive about their work and it can be difficult to be objective. I'm very easy to work with. You do not want an editor who is bossy and won't explain why he or she favors certain changes. It's your book and your name on the cover!

Editing prices range from two cents to six cents per word. I will always give you a price in advance. Then, as the work progresses through the milestones, you review the results, and only when we are in agreement should you continue. There are never any surprises.

A **full edit** means that I work in partnership with you to develop and shape the text and the content. This is also called **developmental editing**. I will consider and advise you on every aspect of your novel including:

- ✓ Voice – What's the point of view, and is it consistent?
- ✓ Plot – Is it interesting and fully developed?

- ✓ Characters – Are they real and relatable?
- ✓ Pacing – Are there any dull moments?
- ✓ Dialogue – Properly presented and authentic in tone?
- ✓ Suspense – Does the reader always know what to expect, or are there welcome surprises?
- ✓ Setting – Is it consistent and believable? If the setting is historical, is it accurate?
- ✓ Your writing – Is it dull and lifeless, or vibrant and alive?

A **copy edit** means that I will look at every aspect of your story. Does it make sense? Is it readable? I may ask to re-write sections or suggest changes. The “five Cs” summarize the copy editor’s job: Make the copy CLEAR, CORRECT, CONCISE, COMPREHENSIBLE, and CONSISTENT. I also provide formatting services so that your book has a professional look.

A **line edit** is when I ensure that every individual sentence reads properly, but I do not address larger issues of plot, theme, character, or continuity.

When deciding questions of grammar and punctuation, I use the *Chicago Manual of Style*. It is a highly regarded industry standard. But there are others, and you may specify which style you want to follow.

No matter which style you choose, the key is *consistency*. For example, if you choose to write out numbers below ten (one, two, three, as opposed to 1, 2, 3), this should be done consistently throughout the document. But in cases where there is some ambiguity, the bottom line is always readability: does it make sense?

I will always work closely with you to preserve *your* voice and *your* personal vision. Your story is unique, and whether your style is chatty or hard-boiled or academic, I will always be in tune with your expressive voice.

## Proofreader

For novels that are ready for publication, I’m an experienced and meticulous proofreader. I will check for mistakes of grammar and spelling, fact check, and correct typographical errors. I will not interject my editorial opinion about the content of your work.

No proofreader is more meticulous than I am. My goal is for your manuscript to have *zero errors* and to stand up to the most rigorous scrutiny.

I ordinarily use the *Chicago Manual of Style* for tricky questions of usage and grammar. I know correct punctuation (when to place a semicolon instead of a comma, for example, or the difference between an m-dash and a hyphen). I have a thorough knowledge of English vocabulary and grammar (when to say “ensure” rather than “insure,” or “farther” rather than “further”). These details are very important to any professional document. One needless mistake in your book may cause a reader to go elsewhere.

You can hire me on a per-word basis or by the project. I will provide a firm estimate in advance.

## A Critique

Many of my clients purchase a written critique. I'll carefully read your novel and provide you with a two-page analysis of plot, character, dialogue, and all the important aspects of your novel. I'll highlight both strong areas and weaknesses. It's like having a master's degree course review of your novel, and can give you valuable insight into how literary agents, publishers, and readers might respond to your book.

## How the Process Works

I never ask for a contract. You can engage my services on a pay-as-you go basis.

For projects over \$250, it is a good idea to establish **milestones**. This provides you with confidence and protection because you're not committed to using my services beyond each milestone.

For example, let's say you hire me to edit your 60,000-word novel. The fee might range from \$1,200 to \$3,000, depending on the condition of your manuscript. Let's say we agree on \$1,600. We might agree on four milestones of \$400 each:

1. Basic formatting and first 15,000 words.
2. Editing up to 30,000 words.
3. Editing up to 45,000 words.
4. Final editing and polish.

At each step, I will deliver drafts for your approval. When editing, I use the Word edit tracker so that you can see every change. The process is collaborative and I welcome your phone calls or emails.

I use PayPal. If you are an Elance or Guru client, both of these services offer convenient escrow accounts. You pay into an escrow and release the funds only when a milestone is complete. This system offers a high degree of protection and confidence for both you and me.

## My Invitation to You

Remember, a novel is a work of art. It is your personal vision. No matter what I (or anyone else) say, at the end of the day you must feel confident that your novel reflects your vision, and that your story will make an emotional connection with your readers.

I invite you to contact me so that we can discuss how I can help you reach your goals. There is never any obligation. I look forward to hearing from you.

