

Making Your Voice Shine: A Creative Editing Guide

This guide is here to help you with some tips and tricks for editing, but remember you're the artist in charge! Some of these tips might click with you right away; others might not fit your style, and that's okay. Pick and choose what works for you - this process is all about letting your creativity shine.

General Tips

- Don't forget the word count of **500 words!**
- Make sure all the work is your own. We want to hear your voice, not someone else's! This includes any music you use in a song or a rap.
- **Theme Check:** Is your writing about "**My Voice**"? This can be interpreted in many different ways so don't be afraid to be creative.

Unique Voice: Does it feel personal and authentic, like your voice?

- **Read it aloud:** Reading your writing aloud can feel totally different than reading it in your head. This is especially important with poems, songs, and raps. This is all about your voice after all...
- Polish spelling, grammar, and punctuation if needed—but remember, creativity matters most!
- To have your work accepted to the Voices Competition, it is important that it doesn't include any personal information like peoples' names or places. We also might remove swear words.
- Don't forget to take breaks! Your voice needs rest just as much as you do. Sometimes returning to your writing with fresh eyes can spark new ideas you would never have thought of before.

To Make Your Entry Shine...

Be Brave: Let your personality, ideas, and emotions stand out—this is **your** voice!

Be Honest: Share your real feelings or thoughts—it's the truth that makes your voice powerful.

How to edit my...Poem

Unique Points to Consider:

- **Rhyme and Rhythm:** Does your poem have a clear beat or flow? Rhyming can help, but free verse (no rhyme) is also powerful if it suits your style.
- **Line Breaks:** Are your line breaks intentional? They can emphasise important ideas or emotions.
- **Imagery:** Use vivid images to make your voice memorable. Instead of "My voice is strong," try something like "My voice is a river, flowing strong and carrying my truth." or "My voice is thunder - impossible to ignore." What else can you think of?
- **Metaphors and Similes:** Comparing your voice to something else can make your poem more creative.

Self-Editing Prompts

1. Do the words sound strong and personal?
2. Does the poem feel like it flows naturally when I read it aloud?
3. Have I used imagery or comparisons to make my ideas come alive?

How to edit my...Rap or Song

Unique Points to Consider:

- **Rhyme:** Are your rhymes creative and fresh? Avoid simple, predictable pairs like "light" and "bright." Instead, surprise the listener!
- **Metre and Rhythm:** Does your rap or song follow a consistent beat? Perform it to check if the words flow with the rhythm.
- **Repetition:** Repeating key phrases can make your message more powerful (e.g., a chorus or refrain like "This is my voice, my truth, my song").
- **Emotion Through Sound:** Consider how your tone and word choice create an emotional impact. Do you want it to feel powerful, joyful, or reflective?

Self-Editing Prompts

1. Do the rhymes and rhythm feel natural when I perform it aloud?
2. Does the repetition (if any) make the message stronger?
3. Does my song or rap make listeners feel the emotions I'm expressing?



How to edit my...Short Story



Unique Points to Consider:

- **Character Voice:** Do the characters have unique voices? How do you show this in your writing?
- **Conflict and Resolution:** Is there a challenge or problem that helps the character discover or use their voice?
- **Dialogue:** Are conversations realistic and engaging? Does the dialogue show the characters' emotions or thoughts?
- **Pacing:** Does the story build interest and emotion, moving smoothly from beginning to end?

Self-Editing Prompts

1. Does the story show what "My Voice" means to me or the characters?
2. Are the emotions of the characters clear and relatable?
3. Does the story have a memorable beginning, middle, and end?

How to edit my...Creative Non-fiction

Unique Points to Consider:

- **Structure:** Does your work have a clear introduction, middle, and conclusion?
- **Argument:** Do you have an argument? What are you trying to say? Are your ideas well-organised and supported by examples or stories?
- **Clarity:** Is your writing easy to understand, even if the ideas are complex?
- **Personal Touch:** Does the essay reflect your unique experiences, beliefs, or emotions?

Self-Editing Prompts

1. Does the essay explain what "My Voice" means in a clear way?
2. Have I included examples or personal stories to make my points stronger?
3. Does the conclusion leave the reader with a strong impression of my voice?