



NONFICTION EDITING 101

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LESSON #7

Formatting Particulars

Introduction

You've probably figured out that editing nonfiction is very different from editing fiction—at least in a variety of technical ways. When editing nonfiction, we still look for flow, clarity, PUGS (punctuation, usage, grammar, spelling), and more. But we've learned there's a whole different facet to editing nonfiction. And this lesson is about a few more areas: coding, lists, heads and subheads, autogenerated tables of contents, and lists of illustrations.

Coding

When I speak of coding a manuscript, I don't mean HTML kind of code. Rather, I'm referring to the codes that alert the book designer/typesetter to a section within the manuscript that requires special treatment as far as font, type, format, etc. If the publisher you're working for requires you to code your manuscript (not all do), the PM will provide you with a list of codes and how they are to be noted and placed.

If you are to code these special sections but the publisher does not provide you with a set of codes, make your own and include the list on the style sheet. If you're editing a manuscript for an author, you do not need to do any coding. (At the end of this section, I've included a set of sample typesetting codes I use.)

Let's say that the manuscript you're editing includes certain elements, such as sidebars [SDB], numbered lists [NL], poems [P], poem author [PA], block quotations [BQ], and more. Turn off Track Changes to add codes. At the beginning of the element, insert the appropriate code within brackets (some pubs prefer using < >); at the end of the section, add within brackets or angle brackets [END code].

Following is an example (PT = poem title and P = poem).

[PT]Mary Had a Little Lamb

[P] Mary had a little lamb,
its fleece was white as snow.
And everywhere that Mary went,
the lamb was sure to go.

It followed her to school one day
which was against the rule.
It made the children laugh and play,
to see a lamb at school.

And so the teacher turned it out,
but still it lingered near,
And waited patiently about,
till Mary did appear.

“Why does the lamb love Mary so?”
the eager children cry.
“Why, Mary loves the lamb, you know.”
the teacher did reply. [END P]

I highlight the code so that it stands out. And remember, if you code as you edit the manuscript, turn off Track Changes before you add the code, and be sure to turn on Track Changes once you’ve completed the coding. Of course, if you code as a separate pass, which is my recommendation, simply turn off Track Changes and move through the manuscript.

(If you edit websites, you already know about HTML coding, and you can see that what we’ve covered here is different.)

Following is my list of common codes I use.

COMMON CODES
(Place codes within brackets and highlight.)

BL	Bulleted list	ING	Recipe ingredients
BQ	Block quotation	INS	Insert
CALL	Callout	NL	Numbered list
CAP	Caption	P	Poem
CN	Chapter number	PA	Poem author
COQ	Chapter-opening quote	PN	Part number
COQA	Chapter-opening quote author	POQ	Part opening quote
CT	Chapter title	POQA	Part opening quote author
DED	Dedication	PT	Part title
EPI	Epigraph	RD	Recipe directions
EXC	Exercise	RT	Recipe title
EXT	Extract	SA	Story author
FMH	Front matter head	SDB	Sidebar
HI	First-level subhead	SQ	Story quote
H2	Second-level subhead	ST	Story title
H3	Third-level subhead	UL	Unnumbered list
H4	Fourth-level subhead		

Because I use these often, I've created macros for each code. Before I understood macros, I put in every keystroke for every code and every instance. Once I recorded macros for the codes, I went from coding a manuscript in two hours to doing it in less than thirty minutes.

Lists, Exercises, and More

Lists, exercises, study questions . . . these items are common to nonfiction titles, so let's take a look at what's involved in editing these elements.

Lists

You will find, or create, vertical lists in many nonfiction titles. They can be numbered lists, unnumbered lists, alphabetized lists, and bulleted lists. The list might be one word, one phrase, or a complete sentence per bullet. One manuscript can employ several types of lists. I can't tell you if one type is better than another. But do watch for a couple of things.

If the text preceding a list mentions a number, the list should be a numbered list. For example, the text reads, "Following are ten ideas for getting a good night's sleep." This calls for a numbered list, or numbered subheads, and make sure the author has given ten ideas—not nine and not eleven. You'll also edit to make sure numbering is complete and sequential.

If no number is mentioned in the introductory text, the list could be marked with bullets. If each item on the "list" contains several sentences, it might be better to use lower-level subheads. (More on this later.)

As you're editing a manuscript, you may find that a portion of text can be better presented in list form. By all means, do it! You want the readers to grasp the material easily and not have to work too hard for it. If a list accomplishes that, then both the audience and author are happy. And lists are visually appealing. It breaks up the monotony of text on the page and creates greater interest. This is especially true with websites.

How the list is introduced or how it is structured will influence the list's punctuation. I have section 6.127–132 bookmarked in my *CMOS* and refer to it often.

Remember that items in the lists should be parallel in structure.

Exercises and Questions

Even if you don't specialize in a particular field of nonfiction, chances are that someday you'll edit a book that includes some type of activity at the end of each chapter or at the end of the book. Many fiction titles include a discussion guide in the back, so maybe you have experience with this.

When editing exercises and questions, in addition to checking PUGS, make sure the exercise/question fits with the preceding text. If the text deals with raising chickens but the exercise or question has to do with goat feed, something is wrong. Check to see if the appropriate questions are at the end of another chapter. If you cannot find the correct questions, add a comment that alerts the author or PM to the problem.

Also, make sure that if the material is numbered, it is in numerical order. Many times I've encountered a list of questions with a number missing or two questions with the same number.

If several, but not all, chapters end with questions or a study guide, *all* chapters should end the same way. You can either contact your client or PM, depending on who you are working for, and ask for the material or add a comment that each chapter should end in the same manner.

All end-of-chapter questions/study guides should have consistent formatting.

Heads and Subheads

Head refers to the word or words at the top of the page to designate a category, like a chapter. *Subhead* is the word or words used within the text to indicate a subdivision. As you can see in this lesson, I use one head to designate the chapter number and chapter title, and I use subheads to indicate divisions within a chapter.

When I edit a manuscript, I use the same style for the chapter number and title. I use another style for a subhead, and if there are descending levels of subheads, I use other styles—all within the same font family. Here's a common explanation of subheads:

Head: All caps, bold

First-level subhead [H1]: **Upper/lowercase, bold**

Second-level subhead [H2]: *Upper/lowercase, bold, italics*

Third-level subhead [H3]: **CAPS/SMALL CAPS, BOLD**

Fourth-level subhead [H4]: **Run in with text, bold, initial cap only, followed by a period.**

These particular types I've listed may not show up in the same form in the typeset book. All I've done is designate the level of the head. It is up to the designer what those heads will look like in the final product. (This is a level-headed approach!)

Following is an example.

[CN]CHAPTER ONE
[CT]IT BEGINS

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, ad corrumpit adversarium his, eu pro aliquip salutatus consequuntur, quaerendum eloquentiam deterrisset ne his. No eos invidunt delicata, vel tempor voluptaria eu.

[H1]Practical v. Emotional

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, ad corrumpit adversarium his, eu pro aliquip salutatus consequuntur, quaerendum eloquentiam deterrisset ne his. No eos invidunt delicata, vel tempor voluptaria eu.

[H2]Practical

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, ad corrumpit adversarium his, eu pro aliquip salutatus consequuntur, quaerendum eloquentiam deterrisset ne his. No eos invidunt delicata, vel tempor voluptaria eu.

[H2]Emotional

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, ad corrumpit adversarium his, eu pro aliquip salutatus consequuntur, quaerendum eloquentiam deterrisset ne his. No eos invidunt delicata, vel tempor voluptaria eu.

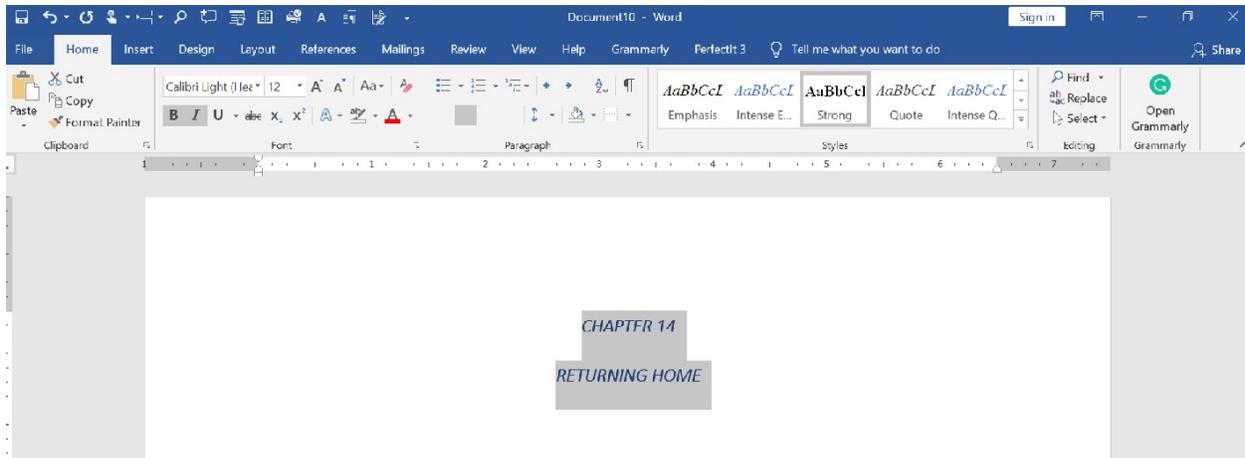
I've coded the heads and subhead so that the designer will know which is which (CN = chapter number; CT = chapter title). It is the designer's decision what font and size the heads and subheads will be in. I merely note the levels. The edited manuscript is not the final book. It is simply the edited manuscript.

As I mentioned in an earlier lesson, all chapters in nonfiction need to begin the same way. If one or two chapters of the manuscript you're editing begin with a chapter-opening quote, you will have to decide if all chapters will begin with a chapter-opening quote or if there will be no chapter-opening quotes. All or none; make the chapters all alike. Also, do not begin a chapter with a subhead. Introductory matter should follow the chapter number and title. Consistency is the key. If one or two or three chapters begin with a subhead, then *all* chapters must begin with a subhead.

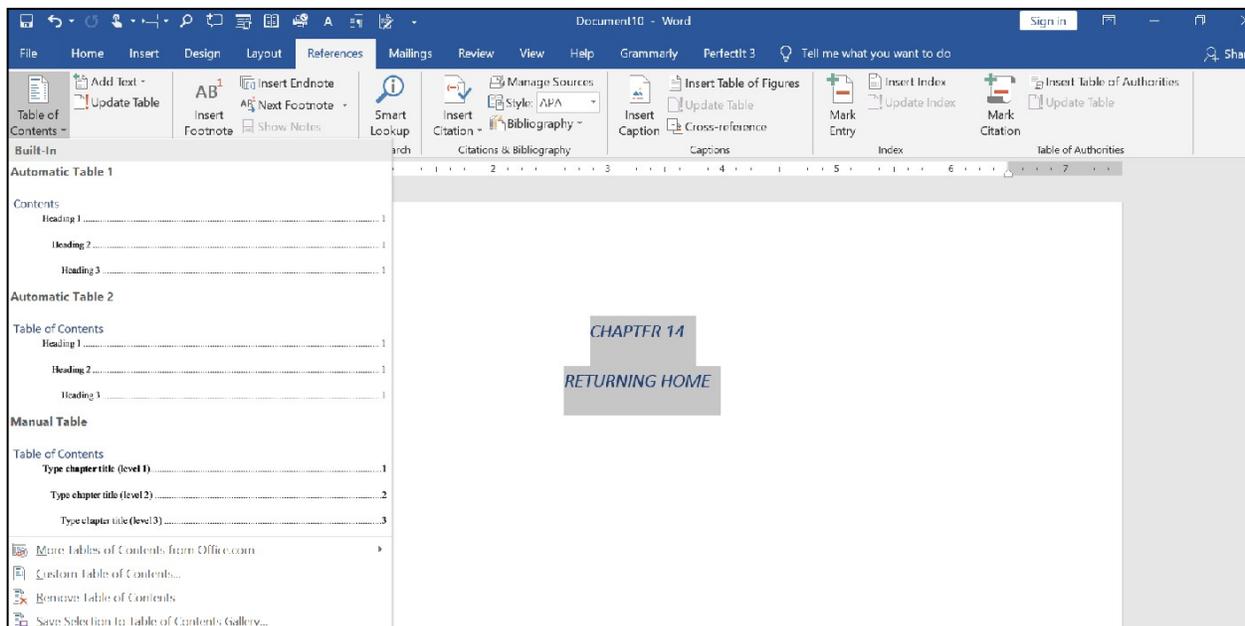
Autogenerated Table of Contents

Creating a TOC automatically saves time and ensures the list matches the chapter numbers and titles in the manuscript.

You'll first need to select and mark the material you want to include in the TOC—the chapter number and title. Go to the Home tab, then to the Styles section, and click the style you want. (In the example on the next page, you'll see the style I've chosen is highlighted with a gray box.)



Once you've gone through the manuscript and marked the entries for the TOC (or list of illustrations, etc.), you're ready to create the TOC. Place your cursor where you want the TOC to go. On the References tab, in the Table of Contents group, click Table of Contents and then choose the style you want.



Apply this same technique if you need to make a list of illustrations and the like.

And there you have it! Easy peasy, right? Hold on there, partner! You won't want to autogenerate a TOC if the manuscript is destined to be an e-book. Those must be manually created because part of the conversion process includes marking each chapter so that it becomes a clickable TOC.

Summary

We learned a bit about coding manuscripts to alert designers to special elements within the manuscript.

In nonfiction, it's a sure thing you'll encounter lists and study guides. Some lists will be numbered, while others will use bullets. Lists can take the place of text and present material quickly and in an interesting format.

Another element that's common to nonfiction books is the use of subheads. We learned four levels of heads and how to mark them.

Autogenerated TOCs can save lots of time and ensure that the chapter numbers and titles match what's in the manuscript. But if the manuscript is to be e-published, you'll want to manually create the TOC.

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LESSON #7 ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment #1

Using the codes supplied in this lesson, code the following (if you work for a publisher and code manuscripts, feel free to use those codes instead):

Chapter Two

1963–1967

Milestones

1963: U.S. Supreme Court prohibits required daily Bible reading in public schools.

“Beatles release: “I Want to Hold Your Hand”; later change to reality songs and release “Nowhere Man.”

1967: Janis Joplin at Monterey Jazz Festival.

Copyright date on *Go Ask Alice*, a controversial book on the life of a troubled teenage girl who died of a drug overdose.

Catholic “charismatic renewal” originates on university campuses in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania; South Bend, Indiana; and East Lansing, Michigan.

Facts and Rumors

From 1963 to 1967, the two local newspapers, *Review Journal* and *Las Vegas Sun*, vied to be number one in the Las Vegas valley. Some citizens viewed Hank Greenspun, publisher of the Sun, as a crusading reporter dedicated to exposing corruption and criminal activities; others believed him to be tied to organized crime. All this was flying about while Greenspun ran for governor on the Republican ticket, which made about as much sense as Ronald Reagan becoming a liberal Democrat! Locals didn’t know what or whom to believe. But for most residents, rumors of corruption by Las Vegas politicians, casino skimming, and the like continued to be part of another world.

President Kennedy’s assassination in Dallas in 1963 shocked the city just as it did every other city in the nation. Rumors of JFK partying with Frank Sinatra and other members of the “Rat Pack” died, at least temporarily, while people in the valley tried to deal with the reality of the murder of the president of the United States.

Assignment #3

Find a nonfiction book that uses several head levels. Are they used consistently throughout? How has the designer chosen to designate the different heads? (Bold, all caps, small caps, etc.?)