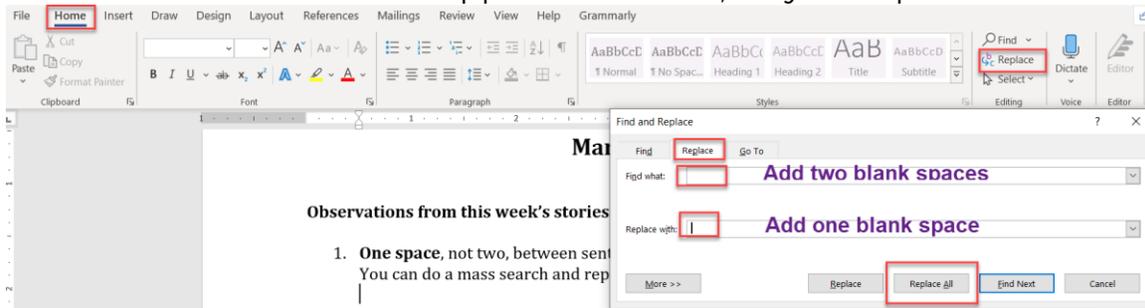


Story Notes based on Judy Fink's story, "Aunt Polly"

1. **Create a personal editing checklist.** Use these story notes as a basis to build a personal editing checklist. Add other items you often overlook and use these sheets to check your future stories *before* submitting them for review. Included a blank editing checklist that you can fill in and add to.
2. **One space**, not two, between sentences, always and forever, since well before the 1990s. You can do a mass search and replace using the MS Word *replace* feature. The same rule also applies to a colon, only one space after the colon.



3. **Family member's titles as names.** When writing about a family member *without* attributing a possessive pronoun (*my, your, hers, his, our, their*) or other designation, capitalize Mom, Dad, Grandpa, Aunt Rose, etc. *Grandma Donna is my dad's mom, Uncle Jim's stepmom, and my cousins' and my favorite grandmother.*
4. **Italics for emphasis.** Use italics for emphasis rather than quotation marks or underlining. I want to go, *now*. It's not incorrect to use quotation marks, but it's old-fashioned, as is underlining, which was done for manuscripts written with typewriters to indicate typesetters should use italics.
5. **Compound adjectives.** Combining two adjectives to describe a noun creates a *compound adjective*, and a hyphen is needed to connect the two.

She wore an orange-red hat to dinner.

6. **Vague words.** Be careful with words that don't give much information, words like *things, everything*. Those don't say much.

7. **Would** – Many, many times you can replace *would* in a sentence with the simple past tense, which makes the sentence much stronger.

I would go to the movies every Saturday afternoon.
I went to the movies every Saturday afternoon.

8. **Subject/object pronouns.** Pronouns used as the object as opposed to the subject of a sentence include *me, you, him, her, it, us,* and *them*. Subject pronouns are *I, you, he, she, it, we,* and *they*. You run into a problem when you use a subject pronoun as the object of a sentence or an object pronoun as a subject, which is less common.

John went to the movies with my brother and I. (incorrect)
John went to the movies with my brother and me. (correct)

Me went to the movies with Sue and David. (incorrect)
I went to the movies with Sue and David. (correct)

9. **Compound words.** Check compound words to see if they are two separate words, hyphenated, or one word—*backyard, front yard, in-depth*. You can type the word(s) in question into an online search engine followed by the words *Merriam* and *Webster* to see the current status of such words or phrases.
10. **Professional, military, religious, and civil titles.** Unless the person's title appears *before* his/her name, it should be lowercased, always.

County Commissioner James Washington made his state of the county speech last night.

James Washington, county commissioner, made his state of the county speech last night.

11. **I remember, I recall.** Not always, but most of the time, you do not need to attribute an activity or event to your memory. You are writing the story, so everything comes from what you remember.

I remember how perfect Greg's ducktail was.
Greg's ducktail was perfect.