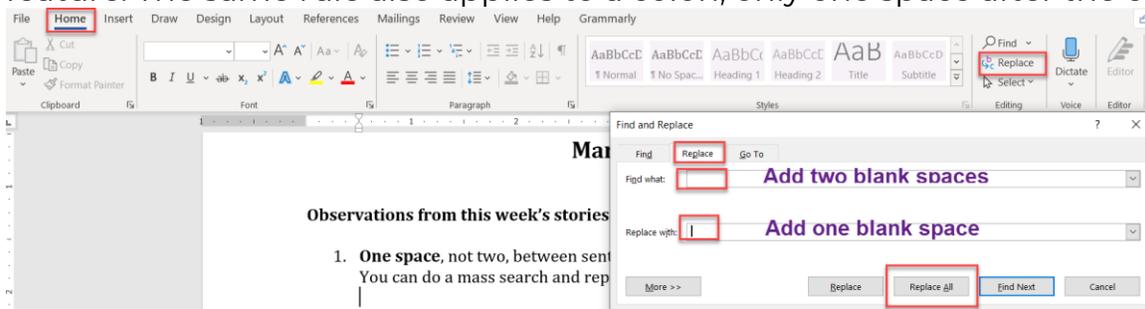


## Story Notes based on Dar Lamb's, "Good Night, Mystery"

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. **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.*

4. **Quotation marks.** When multiple sentences are spoken by the same person without interruption, you use an opening quotation mark before the first word and an ending quotation mark after the last word.

"I really want you to come to the party. It will be fun. Jackson will be there," my friend Josie said.

5. **Adverbs.** Mark Twain's take on adverbs is, "If you see an adverb, kill it." Stephen King says, "The road to hell is paved with adverbs." Adverbs are valid and useful at times, but they are overused, mostly to prop up a weak verb, or the writer doesn't trust the reader to understand. Sometimes, we think the verb alone is not enough, but a strong, well-chosen verb tends to eliminate the need for an adverb. My rule is: reach for an adverb only after you've decided there isn't a better verb that does the job.

6. **Page numbers.** Insert page numbers. It makes your story easier to discuss. (Use your word processor's toolbar to access the *insert* feature for placing page numbers in the document header or footer.)
7. **Multiple numbers in a sentence or paragraph.** Normally, we use words for all numbers below 101 and numerals for 101 and above. But, if you have a mixture of numbers, the rule changes. The *Chicago Manual of Style* says, "Where many numbers occur within a paragraph or a series of paragraphs, maintain consistency in the immediate context. If according to a given rule you must use numerals for one of the numbers in a given category, use them for all in that category."

*The class donated six coats and twenty pairs of gloves to the relief effort.*

*The class donated 6 coats, 20 pairs of gloves, and 300 scarves to the relief effort.*

8. **Comma and independent clauses (sentences).** An independent clause is another name for a sentence. It has a subject and a verb and needs nothing else to be a sentence. Put a comma in between two independent clauses/sentences connected by *and*, *or*, or some other conjunction.

*The boy ran to school, and he sneaked in without the teacher noticing he was late.*

9. **Comma with direct address.** Names or words used in direct address must be set off by a commas or commas.

*Give me a call, Jim.*

*Joan, your order is ready for pickup.*

*Next time, Ralph, tell me when you come to town.*