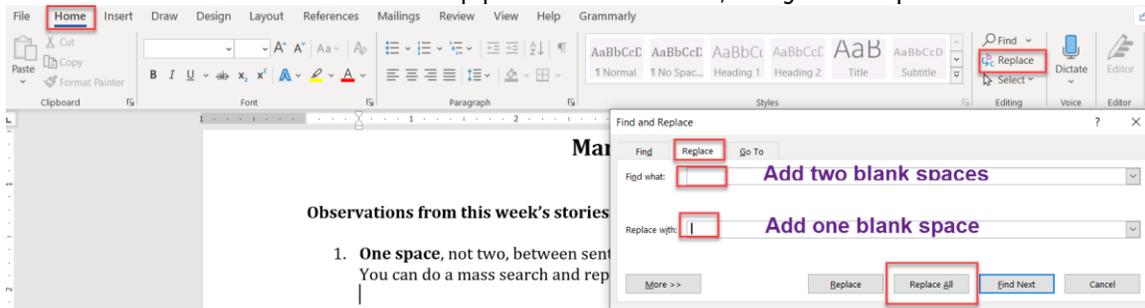


Story Notes based on John Roche's story, "Labor Day, Part One"

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. **No periods with capital-lettered abbreviations.** When you are using an abbreviation that includes two or more capital letters, do *not* separate the letters with periods, i.e., US, CEO, UK, MD, NY, etc.
4. **Use periods with lowercase-lettered abbreviations.** Use periods with abbreviations that end in a lowercase letter, i.e., e.g., a.k.a., a.m., p.m., Ms., Dr., etc.
5. **Titles of books, plays, albums, television shows.** Italicize the names of longer works. All shorter works like stories, poems, songs, television episodes, etc., should be enclosed in quotation marks, e.g., Maya Angelou's poem, "Still I Rise" but "Where Did Our Love Go" and "Baby Love" are songs included in the album *Where Did Our Love Go* by The Supremes.

6. **Excessive punctuation.** Be careful *not* to overuse any one piece of punctuation, i.e., commas, exclamation marks, semicolons, colons, parentheses, dashes, etc. Overused punctuation marks distract the reader and cause them to focus more on the punctuation than the actual story. One solution may be to vary your sentence structure to eliminate excessive punctuation.

7. **Compound words.** When you have two words that combine to describe *one* thing, check to see if they are two separate words, hyphenated, or one word—*backyard, front yard, red-light*. You can type the word(s) in question into an online search engine followed by the words Merriam-Webster to see the current status of such words or phrases.

8. **Numbers.** Use words to spell out all numbers below 101, including ages, and use numerals for (almost) everything 101 and above. *I bought six new books. I'll add those to my collection of 600. My class has thirty-two students. My hometown has only 400 people.*

9. **Direction or location.** When using *north, south, east, or west* as a direction, lowercase the first letter, i.e., *He turned south on Main Street*. When used as a specific location, capitalize the direction, i.e., *Northeastern Maine, South Louisiana*. If the direction has *the, a, or an* right before it, it is typically a place and should be capitalized.