**Editing Coming of Age Memoirs**

First Read Through:

1. Read your paper out loud to yourself (under your breath).
2. Fix any apparent sentence structure/word choice/punctuation errors you find while reading

Second Read Through (making sure you have all content required for this paper!)

1. Highlight your dialogue: is it done correctly? Look at the sheet I gave you for help. Could more dialogue be added? Is the dialogue you used adding to the story, or taking away from the stories main action? The dialogue you use should represent the “sounds” of your memory. Do not force it. Remember in the one mentor text piece we read the only dialogue was what the girl heard her mom saying on the phone with the hospital when her dad was dying. Read the dialogue out loud again, does it sound like the person is speaking?? Does it need to sound more realistic?
2. Underline your use of the 5 senses. Are there other places you could add more?
3. Highlight your similes or metaphors. Do you have at least one of each? Where could you add more?
4. Put a star next to your interior monologue. Is it truly representing your thoughts during that moment? How could you expand your ideas more or be more descriptive?
5. Read over your introduction: do you think it may “hook” a reader? If not, go back to the narrative beginnings sheet I gave you and add in one of the examples.
6. Read over your conclusion: Does it wrap up all of your “loose ends”? Does your memoir leave the reader with a sense of HOW you may have changed your perspective or become an adult? If not, add some of these ideas into your paper.

Third Read Through: Word Choice

1. Look at your word choice more carefully: get rid of words or phrases that are not needed, like: I think, I believe, really always, very, so
2. Do you use lots of abstract nouns like love, honor, glory or friendship? These words are ghost words-people can’t see them. Give the ghost some clothes. Do not just say you “love playing baseball.” Let us hear the bat, see the field etc.
3. Don’t try to impress your reader with huge words that do not represent who you are as a reader. Go back and look at your large word choices and really make sure these words represent who you are (and they are words you know how to define!)
4. Get Active! Circle every is, was or were in your paper, then go back and determine if you can rearrange the line or sentence without using is, was or were. Make your verbs the workhorse of the sentence. Use strong verbs.

An example:

Original sentence: Logan’s decision to buy two mules was a shock to Janie.

Revision: Logan’s decision to buy two mules shocked Janie.

Fourth Read Through: Sentences

1. Look at your sentences: are they different lengths? Add in a list, or a question, or combine two sentences using a semi-colon or a comma with a conjunction (“but” or “and” etc...) You should have a combination of short and long sentences.
2. Look at the beginning of each sentence: are you starting every sentence with the same word? Is there more than one sentence in a paragraph beginning with the same word? Fix these!

Some basics of Editing: RADAR

Replace:

* Words that are not specific
* Words that are overused
* Sentences that are unclear

Add :

* New information
* Descriptive details
* Rhetorical or literary devices

Delete

* Unrelated ideas
* Sentences tat sound good but create unity problems
* Unwanted repetition
* Unnecessary details

And Reorder

* To make better sense or to flow better
* So details support main ideas

\*\*Attach your rough draft to your final draft due Friday 5/17. I should be able to see proof of editing on your rough draft and final draft.