

English 11 Questions to ask during revision

These questions were taken from Monica Wood's book, The Pocket Muse 2.

1. What interests you most in this draft? Why is it so interesting?
2. Is the main character sympathetic? If not, are the character's motives and actions at least recognizable, understandable, plausible?
3. Do we have enough information about the character and his/her circumstances, or does the draft seem to be hiding the heart of the matter?
4. Conversely, do we have too much information and not enough implication?
5. Do you believe in this world you've created?

Five more questions to ask during revision:

1. Is your language carefully crafted, or are there areas where the words lose precision?
2. Does the dialogue illuminate character and advance the story?
3. Is the point of view consistent?
4. Is the point of view well chosen?
5. If you've come up with a clever or unusual gimmick (e.g., a surprise narrator, a reverse chronology), does the piece subsist on its own, beyond the gimmick?

Five more questions to ask during revision:

1. Do factual inaccuracies rob the draft of authority?
2. Similarly, does incorrect punctuation, spelling, or usage rob the draft of authority?
3. Does the piece bog down with unnecessary "business", such as introductions, or hellos and goodbyes?
4. Does this draft seem the right length for its breadth and depth?
5. Are you ready to identify that one nettlesome worry that has troubled you just under the surface while writing this draft?

Five more questions to ask during revision:

1. Does this draft have a beginning, middle, and end?
2. Do scenes flow logically from one to another?
3. Is there a missing scene?
4. Is the ending too rushed or, to the contrary, too slow?
5. Does the ending leave you with too many questions to be able to say what the piece is about?