

## **Redact – Education strand**

Recently I was asked by my boss to manage a newly acquired educational list. I accepted the challenge, but soon realised I didn't really know where to start, as I have no experience in educational publishing. When I saw the Redact course included an education strand, I knew I had found my entry point. On the night before Redact, feeling slightly desperate but hopeful, I scrawled out a list of questions: What are the developmental stages and reading levels of children? Where do you get this information from? How do copyeditors know the syllabus? Furthermore, how on earth do they manage to carry the syllabus in their heads while they copyedit?

Well, these questions were answered during the first session on Friday afternoon, soon after our arrival at Mansfield. So from there on in, I could relax and soak it all up.

The education strand was run by Glenys Osborne, a former managing editor at Macmillan and Thomson who currently works as a freelance editor and teaches in the MA course at RMIT. Over the course of seven sessions in two-and-a-bit days, Glenys expertly guided us through the steps involved in commissioning, editing and publishing an educational textbook. While we did have a sample manuscript to work with, we didn't spend a lot of time analysing it closely. Rather, the sessions were intensive seminars, loaded with facts, processes, practical information and helpful class exercises. For my purposes, I found the sessions on manuscript assessment and substantive editing most useful.

Of course, the weekend wasn't all work. During the sessions, other participants (both in-house and freelance editors) shared experiences and strategies, and during our free time – at the bar, during mealtimes and at the pub – we had the opportunity to meet and mingle with those in the other two strands.

The weekend was hard work, but it was also informative and inspiring. It was a wonderful opportunity to connect with other editors, and I have brought back with me a renewed enthusiasm for editing, as well as a cache of new knowledge and ideas.

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