
Suggestions for Writing a Critique

These questions will give you a solid foundation for writing a critique, but they are not all the ideas worth discussing. Please feel free to add any other suggestions that you think will benefit the author of the manuscript.

Your first impression. Write a sentence summarizing how you felt when you finished reading the manuscript.

How strong is the story's opening? Did you want to read on, or did it feel uninspired?

What do you think the story is about? Is the plot easy to understand? Offer a suggestion for improvement.

Is there sufficient exposition? By the middle of the story, do you feel like you're following along? Is there anything else you feel you need to know to keep you engaged?

Are the characters well-enough developed? Where is there room for further development? Describe how you think this added character development will help the storyline.

Is the setting effective? Can you see enough of what is discussed? Where would you like to see more descriptions of the physical surroundings of the characters, and how do you think it will benefit the storyline?

How is the pacing handled? Is too rushed or too slow in any parts? Discuss where you think the pacing should be different and what effect you think the change will have on the story.

How is the dialogue? Is it realistic? Does it propel the storyline? Do you want to see more of it? Less of it? Why?

Is there solid imagery used throughout? Where would like more descriptive language used, more sensory details? Why do you want to see it there?

Overall, what is at work in the story thematically? Do all the above elements successfully support the theme and help it unfold? Offer some suggestions for improvement.

Preparing for the Workshop

This part of the story worked for me (and why):

This part didn't work for me (and why):