

# Short Story Peer Review Template

Read your peer's story closely. The first reading: make no notes; just read holistically. The second reading, pay attention to the following questions and answer them thoroughly (on your own paper). Remember, your goal is to help your fellow writers see their stories through a reader's eyes. Your comments should be specific, honest, and helpful. Number each response. Refer to the line number(s) and briefly explain your thoughts.

## Story Structure

1. What is this story's central conflict? Who/what are the opposing forces? What are the stakes over which they battle?
2. What event introduces the conflict (inciting incident/narrative hook)?
3. Does the *nouement* knot/twist up the plot with appropriate tension leading to the moment of crisis? Comment on any areas that seem not to work for you— *Be as specific as possible!*
  - a. any place in the story that needs more development or transition;
  - b. any part of the story that lacks verisimilitude (not like real life, not credible);
  - c. any place that doesn't make sense;
  - d. any place that seems to stall—that doesn't progress the story, etc.
4. What event is the epiphany/climax/crisis moment? The final battle that determines the outcome of the war?
5. Does the story come to a satisfactory conclusion? Comments?
6. What are the main character's psychological (holds back/hurts self) and moral (hurts others) needs?
7. Describe the moment of self-revelation.
8. What is the protagonist's new equilibrium? (How is the balance different at the end than at the beginning?)
9. Does every part of the story advance the plot and fill in back-story details without going into tedious explanation? *Identify any areas that tell too much and show too little.*

## Characterization

10. Are the characters and their problems believable? *Identify any areas in the story where you question character motivations, words, or actions.*
11. What's the balance between direct characterization (telling) and indirect characterization (showing)? (Estimate a percentage.)

## Dialogue

12. Is the dialogue believable? Note any areas where the dialogue seems stilted or mechanical or doesn't make sense.
13. Does every bit of dialogue progress the plot? Note any areas that do not.
14. Does the dialogue incorporate action, reveal emotion?
15. Is all the dialogue properly punctuated and paragraphed? (Check your punctuating dialogue packet!)

## Point of View

16. What point of view does the writer use? Prove it!
17. Does the POV remain consistent throughout the story? Identify any areas where it deviates.

## Craft & Style

18. Identify any examples of figurative language the writer employs.
19. Identify exceptional use of imagery.
20. Identify any use of Sound & Sense devices (aural imagery).
21. Identify any instances of foreshadowing.
22. Does the writer employ any type of irony? Where/how?

## Writing Conventions

23. In what tense does this story begin? (present or past) Identify any areas where the tense shifts randomly.
24. Note any spelling errors.
25. Note any grammatical, mechanical, or usage errors.