

The Creative Process & Feedback

Refer to the 'Creative Exercise' worksheet for writing prompts.

What to Look For: Fiction

- Is the **opening gripping**/interesting? Does it start in the middle?
- Is there a lot of narrative summary instead of scenes? (Does the author **summarize** a lot **rather** than **show** the action?)
- Is there **conflict**? Does the conflict build? Where is the climax?
- Are the characters interesting or flat? What **motivates** the characters and how is that shown in the narrative?
- Is the **dialogue** believable? Does it move the story forward?

What to Look For: Poetry

- Does the author use a lot of **abstractions** instead of concrete nouns/**imagines**?
- Is the poem static? (Does it move in time, place, ideas, zoom in or out, etc?)
- How successful are **line/stanza breaks**? (Line break places emphasize on last/first words.)
- Is the poem wordy?

What to Look For: Creative Non-Fiction

- Does the voice of the piece appear to be an **authority** on the subject?
- Has the author considered the **audience** appropriately?
- Are **transitions** from one thought to the next logical and coherent?
- How original is the essay?

What to Look For: Playwriting

- Is the **dialogue** all moving the action / **conflict** forward?
- Is the **exposition** (relationships, date, time, place, etc) delivered **naturally**?
- Have you blurred the lines of **stage and film**?
- Are **symbols** used **consistently** throughout?
- Are **stage directions** clear, **concise**, and **necessary**?

What to Look For: General Tips

- Is everything **necessary**? Is anything **missing**? Is it in a coherent **order**?
- **SHOW don't TELL**
- **Clarity and Continuity** – beginning, middle, ending; transitions; point of view
- **Language:**
 - **Use:** rhythm, imagery, sensory details, vivid verbs
 - **Avoid:** **redundancy**, over-use of adjectives and adverbs, **wordiness**

Point of View Basics:

	Narrator Knows:	Narrator Doesn't Know:
1st Person (main character or witness)	Knows only their own experiences and knowledge.	Can't know anything outside of their own experiences.
3rd Person Omniscient	Knows everything about the external world and internal world of the characters.	N/A
3rd Person Limited	Knows everything that a specific character knows.	Can't know anything outside of the focal character's knowledge.
3rd Person "Fly on the Wall"	Knows everything external happening in a certain location.	Can't know anything about the internal world of the characters.

3rd Person Warnings:

- Be careful not to switch to different kinds of 3rd POV.
- If you're following one character for most of the story, don't randomly switch to another for periods of time.
- o **Distance:** How close is the narrator to the character(s)? Is the narrator formal and distance? Or intimate and close? Are you switching between distances?
 - *Distant:* Mr. Johnson stood outside in his thick jacket on the cold December day.
 - *Medium:* Bill Johnson shivered despite the warm jacket protecting him from the December chill.
 - *Close:* Bill's feet were numb and he wished he'd worn warmer socks.

Important Terms:

- o Protagonist – the character with a goal or objective. The main character.
- o Antagonist – a character who acts against or influences the protagonist.
- o Flat Character – a character without defining attributes, without motivation (versus round character who is fully developed).
- o Static Character – a character who doesn't change over the story (versus a dynamic character who does change).
- o Climax – the moment when the protagonist must make a decision and/or change.
- o Stanza – a group of lines in a poem.
- o Lyricism – a quality of language created by the sounds of words through alliteration, assonance, rhythm, etc
- o Metaphor – a comparison that does not use like or as.
- o Simile – a comparison using like or as.
- o Adverb – a word that modifies a verb, usually ending in -ly.
- o Adjective – a word that modifies a noun.
- o Tone – the emotion created by word voice and sentence structure.
- o Voice – the personality, cadence, vernacular, etc of the narrator.
- o Passive Verbs: (caution: avoid passive voice)

Passive Voice: The cat *was bitten* by the dog.

Active Voice: The dog *bit* the cat.