

Critique Group/Workshop

GUIDELINES FOR GIVING FEEDBACK ON A WRITERS WORK

1. Begin with a comment on something you enjoyed in the piece--something that worked well.
2. The content of a writer's work is not open to criticism. A writer must be judged from a knowledge of technique, rather than the critic's personal taste. If you are unsure whether your reaction is based on technique or taste, preface your comment with, "This may just be my opinion, but"
3. If you offer a comment about something that did not work for you, try to tell the writer WHY, and possibly offer a suggestion for revision that would work for you.
4. Don't ask the writer to explain what was intended. If you didn't get it, the writer needs to do some revising. Don't ask what's going to happen next in a story. You May comment on something that seems lacking, and say you hope it's coming up soon.
5. Don't hesitate to comment on picky stuff.
6. Don't repeat comments already made, but mention if you agree or disagree with it. A writer may take consensus when critiquers disagree.
7. Don't rewrite the writer's story.

GUIDELINES FOR WRITERS READING IN THE WORKSHOP

1. The writer is not allowed to speak until all the critiques have been given, unless asked a specific question. If the writer has questions, they should be posed before the reading or after the critique.
2. The writer must not give details about what's going to happen next in a story. This would interfere with feedback when that portion is read at a later time.
3. The writer must not explain the piece. If it wasn't clear to others in the group, it needs to be revised and clarified. That's what this is all about.
4. The writer must not argue with the critique, or defend the work. The group will tell the writer, honestly, tactfully, how they perceive the work. It is the writer's prerogative to accept or reject the opinions of the group. We are not here to change people's minds.

**adapted with apologies to Joan Oppenheimer