

How Your Stories Will Be Graded?

I will be grading your stories by looking at a number of the areas we have looked at in our workshop this year. Each part is worth up to five marks.

The Title – does the title of your story spark initial interest and does it relate well to the story you have told? Purely functional title rarely receive top grades here.

The opening – does your story, after the first paragraph or two, inspire me to want to read on? Sparking interest through mystery, suspense, action, flashbacks, emotions, etc. are all key in having a good opening.

The setting – do I know when and where your story takes place? Please be sure to have at least one paragraph largely devoted to setting description. Show off your skill.

The characters – do you have well developed and believable characters? I should see some physical character description as well as the personality coming out. I will also be looking for your characters having some meaningful dialogue.

The plot – is your storyline interesting? Does it have any confusing parts or plot holes that distract the reader? Is it consistent throughout? For example, did a character die early in the story and then is suddenly alive near the end with no explanation given? (It actually happened one year)

The climax – does your story reach a high point that is ultimately resolved? Have you built up the conflict enough so that you didn't hit the high point of the story too early?

The ending – does the ending please the reader? Have you made sure that it makes sense with the rest of the story? Have you given thought, based on our discussion, of what kind of ending would work?

Grammar– is your work free of major grammatical errors? It is permissible to have grammar errors like sentence fragments if they are used stylistically.

Spelling - errors should not be evident unless they are used on purpose to show someone speaking. "Thar she be," said the pirate.

Overall Impression – despite errors along the way, was the story memorable? Did it create a sense of awe or wonder? Did it teach something powerful? Did it make

the reader laugh? Did the story itself make sense and flow? Was it an “easy” read?

These are the basic ten categories. For the really dedicated, there is an additional category called “Cover”. You can design a cover for your story. This too would be graded out of five marks. You now have eleven categories. I would take the best ten.

Finally, there are three additional categories that can net you a one extra mark bonus per item. They include the following:

Storyboard – map out your story ahead of time through words or images.

Early edit bonus – get me to look at your story by Oct. 30th. I will give you ideas of what needs improvement.

Peer edit bonus – have a classmate edit your work. Let me know who edited it and what kinds of suggestions the person made.