

Manuscript Evaluation Checklist

Protagonist

- Is my protagonist sympathetic?
- Is my protagonist believable?
- Does my protagonist change in a positive way?
- Does my protagonist have a flaw?
- Does my protagonist have a cause for the greater good?
- Does my protagonist act believably (not like a puppet)?

Story

- Does my story start at the last possible moment?
- Have I established a story question on page 1?
- Is my character's goal clear from early in the story?
- Does my character overcome a flaw to solve the problem?
- Are things most hopeless right before my character's problem is solved?
- Is my protagonist the active character solving the problem?
- Did my protagonist achieve the initial goal or a suitable substitute?
- Did I answer most story questions (not necessarily all of them)?

Plot

- Is my protagonist the first one on stage?
- Is there plenty of conflict?
- Is there plenty of suspense?

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- Does dramatic tension steadily increase until the climax?
- Is there the likelihood of the wrong outcome?
- Do things wrap up quickly after the climax?
- Is there a feeling of catharsis after the climax?
- Is the ending believable, but not predictable?

Writing Big and Writing Well

- Does each scene advance the plot or story?
- Are the scene transitions fluid?
- Are the chapter breaks suspenseful?
- Is there a strong sense of setting?
- Have I avoided viewpoint errors and used viewpoint consistently?
- Have I done a good job of showing, rather than telling, whenever possible?
- Is my novel mostly dialogue and action, with little exposition?
- Does the ending work well with the beginning?
- Is my novel the correct length?
- Is my spelling, grammar, and punctuation perfect?
- Does my novel represent my best possible writing?