

Giving & Receiving Critiques

1) Why is it vital to have your work professionally and peer critiqued?

- As a writer, it helps to be realistic. Once we put our work out there, people will judge, review, and criticize it. But critiques are more helpful when they are received long before publication. Critiques are one of the best ways to improve our writing. As authors, it’s difficult to objectively critique our work because we mentally fill in the missing blanks.

2) Why is it vital to be able to give others a well-rounded critique

- It’s vital to provide a good critique because it’s often reciprocal. Many of us who want critiques that will help us improve our work will find a writing partner or critique group. This is a give-and-take relationship. We won’t only receive valuable feedback and commentary—we’ll also provide them! Fortunately, critiquing other writers’ work thoughtfully and intelligently will strengthen our writing.
- There’s an art to providing well-constructed and thoughtful criticism that helps a writer improve the work and that recognizes the fine line between personal preference and the objective quality of the work.

3) Where are the best places to find professional editors?

(This list isn’t everything out there, but they’re some of my favorite go-to’s)

- www.TheChristianPen.com
- www.fiverr.com,
- www.reedsy.com
- <https://ashevillechristianwritersconference.com>
- <https://www.realmakers.com/>, <https://beautyforashes.com/>
- www.BlueLakeChristianWritersConference.com
- <https://bluelakecwr.com/>
- <https://vcwconf.com/>
- www.BlueRidgeMountainsChristianWritersConference.com
- www.WriterCon.com
- www.WritetoPublish.com
- <http://stdavidswriters.com/>
- www.KillerNashville.com
- <https://thewritelife.com/book-editor/>
- <https://www.listennotes.com/podcasts/your-best-writing-life-linda-goldfarb-mYPwflj-r1z/>

***Types of Editing:**

- **Developmental Editing** examines the big picture and structure of a book. This is heavy editing and, if needed, should occur first.
- **Line Editing** is stylistic editing, which refines each line for smooth and clear text.
- **Copy Editing** addresses grammar, word usage, and punctuation while checking for internal consistency of facts.
- **Proofreading** is the final check for typos, repeated words, spacing, and formatting consistency.

4) Where are the best places to find quality peer critiques?

(This list isn’t everything out there, but they’re some of my favorite go-to’s)

- <https://word-weavers.com>
- <https://app.inkedvoices.com/>
- <https://www.abctales.com/forums/discuss-writing-abctalescom>
- <https://www.critiquecircle.com/landing>
- <https://www.faithwriters.com/>
- <https://groups.google.com/g/critique-partner-matchup>
- <https://seekerville.blogspot.com/>
- (10 Minute Novelists) <https://www.facebook.com/groups/488365771285615/>
- <https://www.morethanwriters.com/>
- <https://www.sistersincrime.org/>
- <https://acfw.com/>
- <https://www.crimewritersofcolor.com/>
- <https://beckyantkowiak.com/540-club/>

5) What are the essential components of a literary critique?

- **Professional:** Whatever we do or say during a critique, our feedback should be directed at the writing, not the writer. We shouldn’t start your comments with the word *you* — ever. We should always refer to the piece, the sentence, the paragraph, the prose, or the narrative. We are judging the work, not the individual who produced it. Though compliments aimed at the writer might be well received, there’s a subtle but significant difference between pointing out flaws in the piece versus the person who created it.
- **Constructive:** If a critique is productive, then it should involve compassion. If someone cares enough about their work to show it around and invite feedback, then it’s probably something they’re emotionally invested in. If we’re the person others feel qualified to

provide feedback, then we should embrace the invitation as an honor and approach it respectfully.

- **Positive:** Begin and end critiques with positive feedback. Providing feedback can be awkward at first when it’s not glowing—who wants to be the bearer of bad news? However, when giving feedback pointing out shortcomings should still be framed positively, mainly since almost every critique contains at least a little bad news. After providing a few reviews, we usually get the hang of it, and positively giving feedback becomes natural.
- **Specific:** Generic feedback that doesn’t specifically assist the author in improving should be avoided. Pointing out particular areas where the writing excelled or lacked helps direct others to finetune their writing.

***Essential Tips Regarding Critiques:**

- Please don’t provide a critique unless we’ve been invited to do so.
- Don’t waste time on writers who are looking for praise. Seek out writers who want feedback that will help them improve their work.
- Take time and try to offer a thoughtful and helpful critique; otherwise, politely decline.
- Critique the writing, not the writer.
- Always start with the strengths, then address the weaknesses and problem areas using positive language.
- Be objective, especially if the piece you’re critiquing is not in your preferred style or genre.
- Make solid suggestions for improvement. Don’t be vague.
- Follow up with the writer to offer support and encouragement.

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Books: <https://www.amazon.com/Gods-Little-Black-Dress-Women/dp/1365056163>

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Podcast (Apple): <https://podcastsconnect.apple.com/my-podcasts/show/murder-mystery-mayhem-laced-with-morality/ade5f5bb-6cbf-4722-a421-9874b24fa49d>

Podcast (Spotify): <https://open.spotify.com/show/4zWmZckdnPsYG9CUAKkv1p>