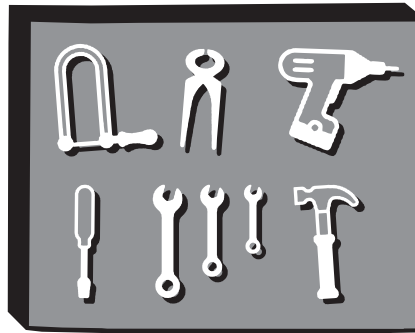


The Workshop



Today your novel will be read for the very first time by someone other than you! Fortunately, that person is also a novelist. He or she knows what you've been through in the last month and will have a lot of useful tips on how to improve your work. You will do the same for him or her, too.

Below are guidelines you and your partner will follow as you read one another's novels.



- **Read the draft once without writing anything.** Then read it again and write your ideas and questions on the side.
- **Forget about grammar, spelling, and how you would say something if it were your novel.** Today, focus on the story—the characters, the events, the setting, and your partner's awesome writing.
- **Take time to circle words, sentences, or whole sections that you really like.** Then, on the side, write a short sentence describing what you liked about each one.
- **Ask lot of questions.** If something doesn't make sense, ask about it. If you need more detail about a character, ask about it. If you just want to know how your partner came up with a word, phrase, or idea, ask about it!
- **Be kind, and specific, as you point out things you don't love.** "This paragraph is really long" is much more helpful than "I don't like this paragraph."

To get an idea of what “helpful” comments are, compare these two paragraphs.

Not So Helpful

“Stop, thief!” Ann cried. People stared as the guy took off with her backpack. Ann panicked. She had to get that pack back! What would she tell Juan when she got to their ?? meeting spot without it? And without the magic stone inside, how would they travel back in time to stop Mt. Toppopoffolis from erupting and destroying their whole town?

I don't get it

I like your writing.

Unfortunately, like a boring novel, these comments lack detail. It's hard to tell what the reader is confused about in the first sentence, or why he or she wrote question marks a few lines later. And the last comment, “I like your writing,” doesn't let the writer know what he/she is specifically doing well.

Helpful!

“Stop, thief!” Ann cried. People stared as the guy took off with her backpack. Ann panicked. She had to get that pack back! What would she tell Juan when she got to their meeting spot without it? And without the magic stone inside, how would they travel back in time to stop Mt. Toppopoffolis from erupting and destroying their whole town?

It's not clear where this scene takes place

Did you rhyme on purpose?
Nice!

Very mysterious.
I want to read more!

These comments are more helpful because they are specific. Now the writer knows what he or she needs to fix and what he or she is already doing well.

Reader Review Worksheet

Take out your partner's draft and fill in the blanks below. And remember, be specific! Return this sheet to your partner when you are done.

Your partner's name: _____

Novel Title: _____

1. Based on the beginning, what do you think this novel is about?

2. Who is the most important character so far? What is he or she like?

3. Where is the story set? Would you like more detail? If so, what part of the setting would you like to know more about?

4. List two things you really like about your partner's work so far.

5. List two things your partner can work on as he or she revises.
