

Gulf Coast Writers Association - Fiction Judging Criteria

Control No.	Title of Entry
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Step One - Weed out entries

At the Judges discretion does the entry meet the general guidelines including: word count, complete story, no gratuitous violence or erotica, submission rules followed: times new roman, font 12, double spaced, pages numbered, title on each page.

		Score 1 equals very poor			10 equals excellent				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Step Two

Characterization

Does the author create believable, memorable characters with all the uniqueness, complexity, and individuality of real people -- people with both positive and negative traits present? Do the main characters respond to and influence events? Are they changed by the action in the story? Does the dialogue contribute to rich, vivid, unique characterization so that individual characters possess unique voices? Is the Author's voice distinctive?

		Score 1 equals very poor			10 equals excellent				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Plot

Does the author construct a clear, convincing and compelling story line with a clearly recognizable arc of conflict, crisis, and resolution? Does the narrative flow or tend toward disjointed? Are the obstacles to be overcome sufficiently challenging to the protagonists? Is the resolution innovative? Credible? Authentic?

		Score 1 equals very poor			10 equals excellent				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Theme

Does the author present a coherent theme? Does the story contain a central or dominating idea made concrete through the characters and their actions? How well is the message integrated into the story? Has the contest theme been observed?

		Score 1 equals very poor			10 equals excellent				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Writing Style

Does the quality of the author's prose (syntax, word choice, etc.) enhance the story? Do specific, definite, concrete, and particular details appeal to your senses and hold your attention? Does the rhythm of the prose enhance the meaning? Are there errors in spelling, grammar, paragraphing, and punctuation? Are words used incorrectly? Does the author show not tell? Is the writing active rather than passive voice?

		Score 1 equals very poor			10 equals excellent				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Impact

Does the story engage your emotions? Do you come to care about the characters and about the outcome of the story? Does the story use humor or tragedy to engage the reader? Does the author tie the end back to the beginning?

		Score 1 equals very poor			10 equals excellent				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Subtotals

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Total Score