

THINGS I NATURALLY NOTICE DURING INITIAL MANUSCRIPT READINGS

- Does it read smoothly or do I trip up a lot as I read it?
- Does it make me feel emotion?
- Do I find myself smiling or chuckling?
- Do I feel anxious, excited or sad for the main character?
- Do I find myself cheering for the main character?
- Do I “get it,” or am I confused?
- Does it have a satisfying ending?
- Am I distracted by poor punctuation and grammar?
- Do I feel connected to the story?
- Do I like it, love it, or is it not my favorite?
- What do I think makes it a likeable story?
- What do I think makes it a confusing story?
- What do I think makes me not so keen on the story?

QUESTIONS I ASK MYSELF AFTER I HAVE SET WITH MY INITIAL IMPRESSIONS FOR A WHILE

- What do I think makes it a likeable story?
- What do I think makes it a confusing story?
- What do I think makes me not so keen on the story?

STORY COMPONENTS

BEGINNING PAGES

- Is the opening line or paragraph strong?
- Does it grab my attention immediately?
- Does it make me want to learn more or continue reading?
- Does the setup and description go on forever? Or do I know within the first couple of spreads what the story is “really” about?

- Do I have a good sense of the main character and his desire or problem by the third spread?

CONFLICT

- Does the text move the main character and story forward through his attempts to get what he wants?
- As the main character moves forward, does he attempt and fail to achieve his goal?
- Do his attempts and failures increase the story tension and make me want to turn pages?
- Do I feel like I am in the story, experiencing what the main character is experiencing?

STORY FOCUS

- Is there cause and effect throughout the story, connecting the dots from sentence to sentence, paragraph to paragraph, scene to scene?
- Are there too many obstacles?
- Too few obstacles?
- Do the steps that the main character take make sense?

CLIMAX AND RESOLUTION

- Is there a strong story arc that builds to a turning point or climax?
- Does the main character experience a darkest moment that leads him to resolution?
- Does the resolution come just a page or two before the ending?
- Is the ending connected to the rest of the story and satisfying?
 - Does it offer a twist?
 - A nice tie in to the beginning?
 - A moment of realization or satisfaction that the main character has grown, learned something, or reached his goal?

LINE CRITIQUE QUESTIONS

- All the story dots seem connected
- Time and place is clear throughout
- Tense is consistent
- Point of view is consistent
- Awkward, clumsy, or wordy sentences
- Missing or confusing transitions between scenes
- Is there too much telling and not enough showing?
- Is there too much dialogue and not enough action.
- Are there places where the text is doing the illustrators job?
- Do all passages create visions or move the story forward in some way?