

Fiction Scoresheet Questions

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Historical Fiction Content

Historical fiction is set in a time period from the past (generally accepted as 50 years or more). The setting is the key element of historical fiction books. Other elements are time-period significance, historical accuracy in known events, and vivid descriptions of historical fiction characters. Actions take place during an authentic period in history and are set in a real historical place. Characters look, act, and talk the way they did in that era. (80,000 to 120,000 words)

Content 1. Appeal/Entertainment/Value. The book is...

1. Credible, entertaining, and/or valuable. It is totally engrossing and engaging for the imagination of its intended audience.
2. Mostly credible, entertaining, and/or valuable. It has a fairly strong story but doesn't have enough historical references to draw in history lovers.
3. Missing some elements of credibility, entertainment, and/or value. It's an interesting story but told in a less than interesting way.
4. Missing many elements of historical fiction and/or the story is lackluster.
5. Has no reason to be set in the past OR there is not a solid story to go along with the historical facts.

Content 2. Organization/Length. The book is...

1. Well organized and easy to follow. The length is approximately 80,000 to 120,000 words. If longer than expected, all parts are necessary to tell the story.
2. Mostly well organized and easy to follow. It could have been edited more succinctly to get within the word count range.
3. Sometimes hard to follow due to poor organization: confusing because of jumping around in the timeline or including unnecessary side stories that take the book outside the expected length.
4. Generally disorganized and difficult to follow, and/or has too many facts thrown in that aren't needed to move the story along.
5. Nearly impossible to follow or finish due to lack of organization.

Content 3. Setting and Plot. The book's...

1. Setting is well drawn in a specific time in history, with no historical inaccuracies. It has a solid story/plot/arc: no holes and all the pieces fit together.
2. Setting is fairly well drawn, with only one or two minor errors in historical events. The story/plot/arc may have a few small holes or inconsistencies, but everything holds together well.
3. Errors in the historical setting or events pull the reader from the story, OR the story/plot/arc has enough holes or inconsistencies that the reader is distracted.
4. Setting is poorly drawn OR the story/plot/arc has enough holes/inconsistencies to distract the reader too frequently to enjoy it.

Fiction Scoresheet Questions

5. Overall effect was a confusing, unsatisfactory, and/or unbelievable read.

Content 4. Characters. The characters are...

1. Easily visualized, and the reader can distinguish between them. They are well developed, credible, dynamic, and believable in speech and manner for the time period.
2. Easily visualized, but some act/sound/look too similar, which makes them hard to distinguish. They are mostly well developed, believable, and dynamic, but at times, there are slips in speech or references outside of the time period.
3. Interesting, but not consistent in their behavior OR they are too good or too bad. They slip out of the time period too often.
4. Not described well enough for the reader to tell them apart and/or are written as a cliché that is inappropriate for the genre. The audience will probably not empathize with them or care about their outcome.
5. Mostly shallow, clichéd, unbelievable, or uninteresting. Whatever the genre, these characters aren't worthy of a reader's attention.

Content 5. Conclusion/Impact.

1. The ending tied together loose ends, felt appropriate, and left me stunned, fully satisfied, impressed, and/or wanting more.
2. The ending tied together most loose ends, felt mostly appropriate, and left me mostly satisfied and ready for more.
3. By the end of the book, most questions were answered, but something was missing and I wasn't sure I wanted more.
4. By the end of the book, I had more questions than answers and/or wasn't sure if it was worth the effort.
5. The book had little or no impact and/or was unsatisfying, frustrating, confusing. It generally was not worth the effort.

Style

Fiction Scoresheet Questions

Literary Fiction Content

Literary fiction is character driven rather than plot driven and explores themes about what it means to be human. It doesn't necessarily display a story arc or have a predictable tidy ending. However, the reader is left with lingering reflections on, and questions about, the character. Most literary fiction is contemporary. The prose may exhibit artistic flare or be simple but meaningful. (70,000 to 100,000 words)

Content 1. Appeal/Entertain/Value. The book...

1. Is a captivating and thought provoking exploration of an internal response to an external struggle of the human condition. It is fully credible, entertaining, and valuable, incorporating a strong character, exploration of the human condition, and a lingering ending.
2. Develops a character's struggle with a life event, but the story leaves the reader with a nagging sense that something is missing. It is mostly credible, entertaining, and valuable.
3. Is an interesting story but mundane in the telling. It is somewhat credible, entertaining, and valuable.
4. Lacks the elements of literary fiction: a strong character, exploration of the human condition, and a lingering ending.
5. Rambles around a theme, but the story lacks conflict and meaning.

Content 2. Organization/Length. The book is...

1. Well organized and easy to follow. The length is approximately 70,000 to 100,00 words. If longer than expected, all parts are necessary to tell the story.
2. Mostly well organized and easy to follow. It could have been edited more succinctly to get within the word count range.
3. Sometimes hard to follow due to poor organization: confusing because of jumping around in the timeline or including unnecessary side stories that take the book outside its expected length.
4. Generally disorganized and difficult to follow, and/or has too many facts thrown in that aren't needed to move the story along.
5. Nearly impossible to follow or finish due to lack of organization.

Content 3. Setting/Story/Theme. The book...

1. Has a realistic setting for this character-driven narrative. The storyline is satisfying, even though it may not have an arc or tidy ending. Rather, the reader is left with more questions. Theme development is good and the conflict has depth.
2. Has a setting that is fairly well drawn, and/or the story/plot/arc may have a few small holes or inconsistencies. However, everything holds together well. Theme development is fairly good and the conflict has depth.
3. Has a setting that is fairly well drawn, but the story/plot/theme has enough holes or inconsistencies that the reader is distracted. Theme development starts off well, but the conflict lacks depth.
4. Has a setting that is poorly drawn, OR the story/plot/theme has enough holes/inconsistencies to distract the reader too frequently to enjoy it. Theme development is poor OR the conflict is minimal.
5. Is a confusing, unsatisfactory, and/or unbelievable read.

Content 4. Characters. The characters...

1. Are well developed and believable for the setting created by the author. The reader will be able to visualize them and distinguish between them in actions and speech. The main character's internal conflict drives the plot, depicting how they deal with an easily relatable life event.
2. Are mostly well developed, believable, and appropriate for the setting created by the author. The reader will be able to visualize the characters, but some act/talk/look too similar, making them hard to distinguish.
3. Are interesting but not dynamic enough to drive the plot. They may not be consistent in their behavior OR they are too good or too bad.
4. Are often NOT well developed or believable. The reader will probably not empathize with or consider them real/appropriate.
5. Are mostly shallow, clichéd, mundane, and not memorable. Whatever the genre, these characters aren't worthy of a reader's attention.

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Content 5. Conclusion/Impact. The book's...

1. Ending was satisfying and thought provoking, conjuring further reflection and the desire to know what happens next.
2. Ending left me satisfied.
3. Ending wasn't satisfying. Something was missing, or I wasn't sure I wanted more.
4. Narrative lacked an intriguing theme, resulting in a flat unmemorable ending.
5. Narrative had little or no impact and was unsatisfying, frustrating, or confusing. It was generally not worth the effort.

Style

Fiction Scoresheet Questions

Mystery/Thriller/Crime Content

Mysteries, thrillers, and crime novels start with a problem (theft, murder, mayhem, explosion, political intrigue) and follow the problem solver or main protagonist (detective, civilian, soldier) through a series of clues/events to solve the mystery/save the world/bring a criminal to justice. A mystery concentrates on solving a puzzle, not necessarily a crime. A thriller is fast-paced, with anticipation of a future crime, action, and suspense. A crime novel focuses on a criminal who must be apprehended and may have a courtroom, military, or law enforcement focus. (70,000 to 90,000 words)

Content 1. Appeal/Entertain/Value. The book is...

1. Fully credible, entertaining, and/or valuable. It is totally engrossing and engaging for the imagination of its intended audience.
2. Mostly credible, entertaining, and/or valuable. It has a fairly strong story but is missing some key elements for the typical reader of this genre.
3. Missing some element of credibility, entertainment, and/or value. It's an interesting story but told in a less than interesting way.
4. Missing many elements of the genre OR is uninteresting.
5. Missing ALL elements of credibility, entertainment, and/or value. It was uninteresting and confusing.

Content 2. Organization/Length. The book is...

1. Well organized and easy to follow. The length is approximately 70,000 to 90,000 words. If longer than expected, all parts are necessary to tell the story.
2. Mostly well organized and easy to follow. It could have been edited more succinctly to get within the word count range.
3. Sometimes hard to follow due to poor organization: confusing because of jumping around in the timeline or unnecessary side stories that take the book outside its expected length.
4. Generally disorganized and difficult to follow, and/or too many scenes thrown in that aren't needed to move the story along.
5. Nearly impossible to follow or finish due to lack of organization or inappropriate length.

Content 3. Setting and Plot. The book's...

1. Setting is well drawn, and the story/plot/arc is solid and believable, with no holes or inaccuracies (e.g. medical, legal, or time-frame issues). All the pieces fit together.
2. Setting is fairly well drawn, but the story/plot/arc may have a few small holes, inconsistencies, or inaccuracies, although everything holds together fairly well.
3. Setting is fairly well drawn, but the story/plot/arc has enough holes, inconsistencies, or inaccuracies that the reader may become distracted.
4. Setting is poorly drawn OR the story/plot/arc has enough holes, inconsistencies, or inaccuracies to distract the reader too frequently to enjoy it.
5. Overall effect was a confusing, unsatisfactory, and/or unbelievable read.

Content 4. Characters. The characters...

1. Are easily visualized, and the reader can distinguish between them. They are well developed, credible, dynamic, and appropriate for the setting created by the author. For this genre, especially, detectives in a series may have a character arc that is slight because the focus is on the story arc.
2. Are easily visualized, but some act/sound/look too similar, which makes them hard to distinguish. They are mostly well developed, believable, dynamic, and appropriate for the setting created by the author.
3. Are interesting but not consistent in their behavior OR they are too good or too bad.
4. Aren't described well enough for the reader to tell them apart and/or are written as a cliché that is inappropriate for the genre. The audience will probably not empathize with them or care about their outcome.
5. Are mostly shallow, clichéd, unbelievable, or uninteresting. Whatever the genre, these characters aren't worthy of a reader's attention.

Content 5. Conclusion/Impact

Fiction Scoresheet Questions

1. The ending tied together loose ends, felt appropriate, and left me stunned, fully satisfied, impressed, and/or wanting more.
2. The ending tied together most loose ends, felt mostly appropriate, and left me mostly satisfied and/or ready for more.
3. By the end of the book, most questions were answered but not in a satisfactory way, or things were wrapped up too quickly without logical lead-up or clues.
4. By the end of the book, I had more questions than answers and wasn't sure if it was worth the effort.
5. The book left little or no impact and/or was unsatisfying, frustrating, confusing: generally not worth the effort.

Style

Fiction Scoresheet Questions

Horror/Fantasy/Sci-Fi Content

Horror fiction relies on scary or shocking events and characters, revolving around themes of death and destruction. It leans toward terrifying and may include aliens, monsters, and evil spirits. Fantasy involves world building of a fictional place and can include magic and supernatural beings. Fantasy has stronger elements of imagination and can include paranormal elements of the supernatural, such as ghosts or witches. Sci-Fi relies on imagined elements derived from scientific principles and theories, often dealing with scientific advancements like time or space travel. It is generally placed in a futuristic setting, which requires additional world building aspects. (90,000 to 120,000 words)

Content 1. Appeal/Entertain/Value. The book is...

1. Credible, entertaining, and valuable: totally engrossing and engaging the imagination. New terms or vocabulary are easily defined within the context of the story.
2. Mostly credible, entertaining and/or valuable. It has a fairly strong story but perhaps doesn't differ enough from general fiction.
3. An interesting story, but told in a less than interesting way. There are not enough differences from the contemporary world to satisfy the reader.
4. Missing many elements of the genre OR occasionally breaks the author's own rules within the world created.
5. Unbelievable for the world the author has created or is not interesting enough to keep a reader's attention.

Content 2. Organization/Length. The book is...

1. Well organized and easy to follow. The length is approximately 90,000 to 120,000 words. If longer than expected, all parts are necessary to tell the story.
2. Mostly well organized and easy to follow. Could have edited more succinctly to get within the word count range.
3. Sometimes hard to follow due to poor organization: confusing because of jumping around in the timeline OR unnecessary side stories that take the book outside its expected length.
4. Generally disorganized and difficult to follow, and/or too many facts thrown in that aren't needed to move the story along.
5. Nearly impossible to follow or finish, due to lack of organization.

Content 3. Setting/Story/Plot. The book's...

1. Setting is well drawn, and the story/plot/arc is solid and believable, with no holes. All the pieces fit together.
2. Setting is fairly well drawn, and the story/plot/arc may have a few small holes/inconsistencies; but everything holds together well.
3. Setting is fairly well drawn, but the story/plot/arc has enough holes/inconsistencies that the reader may become distracted.
4. Setting is poorly drawn or the story/plot/arc has enough holes/inconsistencies to distract the reader too frequently to enjoy it.
5. A confusing, unsatisfactory and/or unbelievable read.

Content 4. Characters. The characters...

1. Are easily visualized and the reader can distinguish between them. They are well developed, credible, dynamic, and appropriate for the setting created by the author.
2. Are easily visualized, but some act/sound/look too similar, which makes them hard to distinguish. They are mostly well developed, believable, dynamic, and appropriate for the setting created by the author.
3. Are interesting but not consistent in their behavior OR they are too good or too bad. Things are too "easy" because of magical abilities or technology.
4. Aren't described well enough for the reader to tell them apart and/or are written as a cliché that is inappropriate for the genre. The audience will probably not empathize with them or care about their outcome.
5. Are mostly shallow, clichéd, unbelievable, or uninteresting. Whatever the genre, these characters aren't worthy of a reader's attention.

Content 5. Conclusion/Impact

Fiction Scoresheet Questions

1. The ending tied together loose ends, felt appropriate, and left me stunned, impressed, fully satisfied, and/or wanting more.
2. The ending tied together most loose ends, felt mostly appropriate, and left me mostly satisfied and/or ready for more.
3. By the end of the book, most questions were answered, but something was missing or I wasn't sure I wanted more.
4. By the end of the book, I had more questions than answers and/or wasn't sure if it was worth the effort.
5. Little or no impact, unsatisfying, frustrating, confusing: generally not worth the effort.

Style

Fiction Scoresheet Questions

Romance Content

Romantic fiction revolves around a love story between two people. There is conflict but it shouldn't eclipse the tale of the characters finding each other, developing a relationship, and falling in love. Issues outside of the central courtship theme are limited. Romance novels usually have a happy ending after following a general formula that includes meeting, conflict (barrier to the relationship), and resolution (mutual respect, love). (60,000 to 80,000 words)

Content 1. Appeal/Entertain/Value. The book is...

1. Fully credible, entertaining and/or valuable. It should be tear inducing and/or heart grabbing. The developing relationship is the ultimate story.
2. Mostly credible, entertaining, and/or valuable. It is mostly tear inducing and/or heart grabbing.
3. Missing some element of credibility, entertainment, and/or value. It is sometimes tear inducing and/or heart grabbing.
4. Missing many elements of romance fiction, going under or overboard in the tear-inducing/heart-grabbing department.
5. Missing ALL elements of romance fiction, credibility, entertainment, and/or value. It was uninteresting and confusing.

Content 2. Organization/Length. The book is...

1. Well organized and easy to follow. The length is approximately 60,000 to 80,000 words. If longer than expected, all parts are necessary to tell the story.
2. Mostly well organized and easy to follow. It could have been edited more succinctly to get within the word count range.
3. Sometimes hard to follow due to poor organization. It is confusing because of jumping around in the timeline or including unnecessary side stories that take the book outside the expected length.
4. Generally disorganized and difficult to follow, and/or too many facts thrown in that aren't needed to move the story along.
5. Nearly impossible to follow or finish due to lack of organization.

Content 3. Setting/Story/Plot. The book's...

1. Setting is well drawn, and the story/plot/arc is solid: no holes and all the pieces fit together.
2. Setting is fairly well drawn, and/or the story/plot/arc may have a few small holes or inconsistencies, but everything holds together well.
3. Setting is fairly well drawn, but the story/plot/arc has enough holes/inconsistencies that the reader may become distracted.
4. Setting is poorly drawn or the story/plot/arc has enough holes/inconsistencies to distract the reader too frequently to enjoy it
5. Overall execution is confusing, unsatisfactory, and/or an unbelievable read.

Content 4. Characters: The characters are...

1. Well developed and believable. The hero, heroine, and other important persons are dynamic and worthy of empathy.
2. Mostly well developed and believable. The hero and heroine are fairly dynamic and generally worthy of empathy.
3. Occasionally not well developed or believable: hero and heroine are either not dynamic or not worthy of empathy.
4. Often NOT well developed or believable. They are clichéd or inappropriate for romance fiction.
5. Mostly shallow, clichéd, unbelievable, or uninteresting. Whatever the genre, these characters aren't worthy of a reader's attention.

Content 5. Conclusion/Impact.

1. The ending tied together loose ends, felt appropriate, and left me stunned, fully satisfied, impressed, and/or wanting more.
2. The ending tied together most loose ends, felt mostly appropriate, and left me mostly satisfied and/or ready for more.

Fiction Scoresheet Questions

3. By the end of the book, most questions were answered, but something was missing or I wasn't sure I wanted more.
4. By the end of the book, I had more questions than answers and/or wasn't sure if it was worth the effort.
5. The book had little or no impact or was unsatisfying, frustrating, confusing: generally not worth the effort.

Style

Fiction Scoresheet Questions

Style

These criteria evaluate readability, redundancy, language, balance of literary elements, narrative point of view, and passive vs active sentences.

Style 1. Readability. The book is...

1. Easy to understand and engaging throughout. Details are specific, concrete, and vivid, engaging the reader's five senses.
2. Mostly easy to understand and engaging. Details are mostly specific, concrete, and vivid, mostly engaging the senses.
3. Sometimes pedestrian or ponderous. Details are sometimes lost, not well conveyed, or don't engage the senses.
4. Lost in the details or muddled. The prose detracted from the read.
5. Difficult to finish, and most readers will not make it to the end.

Style 2. Redundancy/Repetition. The book...

1. Contains no redundancies in information (whether it is plot, dialogue, setting, research, or conclusions), and the copy is clean and free of repetitious words, phrases, or sentences, with the exception of repetition for effect.
2. Contains repetitious words or phrases but generally avoids informational redundancies and overdone words or phrases.
3. Uses the same word multiple times in the same paragraph, or repeats the same phrases throughout the book, along with informational redundancies.
4. Repeats scenes, includes multiple presentations of the same information, and repeats the same words and phrases frequently throughout the book.
5. Is rife with repetition of information, words, and phrases.

Style 3. Language/Diction. The author uses...

1. Precise, colorful, and easy-to-understand language that does not stray into melodramatic, flowery, or ornate writing with excessive emotion, strained metaphors, or an abundance of clichés: a thoroughly engaging read.
2. Specialized/unexplained/bland vocabulary, overuse of fragments, or overuse of repetition for emphasis. These elements sometimes slow the read, but the meaning is clear.
3. Specialized/unexplained/bland vocabulary, overuse of fragments, clichés, or repetition that detract from the story/message.
4. Language or dialogue that is awkward or confusing, which obscures the story/message.
5. Language that is ponderous, pretentious, or inappropriate for the content.

Style 4. Balance of Narration/Description/Dialog. The author...

1. Uses a blend of narration for action, description for setting, and dialogue that allows characters to explain their thoughts and actions.
2. Sometimes uses excessive narration, preaching, info-dumping, or description when dialogue would be more effective OR uses too much dialogue when narration or description would be more effective.
3. Often uses excessive narration, preaching, info-dumping, or description, but the characters interact (or vice versa).
4. Consistently describes unimportant people, places, and things in great detail or is too preachy.
5. Overuses narration, description, preaching, or info-dumping, severely detracting from the book. Characters seldom speak for themselves.

Style 5. Point of View AND Active vs Passive Sentences

Point of View: Fictional books generally have one point of view, whether 1st person or 3rd person omniscient. This consistency is maintained in tone, perspective, and level of knowledge throughout the book. When two first-person perspectives are used, each must be clearly defined, with the best practice being to use a chapter break to change perspective. Lack of a consistent point of view is often called head hopping, which can confuse the reader.

Fiction Scoresheet Questions

Active vs Passive Voice Sentences: Active voice sentences are those in which the subject performs the action (The dog chewed the bone). Passive voice sentences are those in which the subject is acted upon (The bone was eaten by the dog). Active voice provides clearer meaning, while passive voice sentences can become overly complicated, dry, and unengaging.

The book...

1. Uses a consistent discernible tone and point of view, there is no head hopping, AND active voice sentences appropriately dominate.
2. Mostly uses a consistent discernible tone and point of view AND mostly active voice sentences.
3. Sometimes lacks a consistent discernible tone and point of view but active versus passive voice sentences are mostly balanced.
4. Often lacks a consistent discernible tone or point of view OR overuses passive voice sentences.
5. Consistently lacks a distinct discernible point of view so that it is hard to tell who is narrating OR uses excessive passive voice sentences.

Fiction Scoresheet Questions

Visual

These criteria evaluate cover art and layout, cover design and font, interior layout, front and back matter inclusions, and use of artistic elements. Please note that there are e-book break-out selections that are different from print copy versions.

Visual 1. Cover: Art and Layout

All elements are properly aligned, and the color scheme relates to the content and carries through the spine and back cover. Images are high resolution and placed so that the title is easily read. If displayed on a shelf, the book will attract readers and the title will be easily seen. The title and author's name are easily distinguishable from background art. Note: The back cover content does not have to be blocked. It can be left justified or centered.

The book's cover...

1. Is aesthetically attractive and relates to the contents of the book.
2. Is attractive but does not relate to the contents or is unattractive but relevant.
3. Has misplaced spine text, narrow margins on the back cover content, clashing colors, low-resolution imagery, etc.
4. Has background artwork that's so busy or bright that the copy can't be read OR blurry images.
5. Is unattractive AND does not relate to the contents of the book.

Visual 2. Cover: Font and Content

Cover Font: should be appropriate for the genre of the book (e.g. flowery cursive for romance, but not for a thriller). Legible (not so "cute" so as to be difficult to read) and large enough to see at thumbnail size (like on our website's season page). The cover should have no more than two different fonts.

Cover Content: back cover text should be free of errors and hook the reader without too much or too little detail (whether a blurb or author bio or testimonials).

Note: If you have received an e-book, go to the Amazon page and click on the paperback version to evaluate the back cover. Click on the thumbnail for the back cover, located directly under the front cover. While fiction books generally include a blurb on the back cover, nonfiction books often only have endorsements by professionals in the field. For more details, [click here](#).

Referencing the evaluation areas listed above, the book's cover font and content are...

1. Artfully done, definitely attention grabbing, and error free.
2. Reasonably well executed and somewhat likely to attract attention on a bookshelf or when listed online.
3. Pedestrian or run of the mill OR contains elements that are difficult to read or don't grab attention OR include a text error.
4. Problematic, contains noticeable errors, not likely to attract attention.
5. So poorly done that the book is destined to remain shelved or unclicked online.

Visual 3. Interior: Front and Back Matter

Fiction books require a cover, inside title page, copyright page and ISBN. Optional front and back matter inclusions are endorsements, epigraphs, dedications, acknowledgements, author bios, contents page in print copies, and notes. In e-books a content page with links is required.

Fiction Scoresheet Questions

Paper version. The book...

1. Contains a title page on the right, copyright information on the left, and ISBN. Chapter listings are not required for fiction.
2. Provides complete front matter, but out of order or on the wrong side.
3. Includes title page, but some items required on the copyright page (author, city, state, copyright year, ISBN, publisher if there is one) are missing.
4. Missing some front and back matter.
5. Fails to provide basic information about the book.

E-book version. The book...

1. Contains a title page, copyright information, ISBN, and hyperlinked chapter listings. It is not uncommon for the copyright page to be in the back of an e-book.
2. Provides complete front matter, but items run together because they are not separated by hard page breaks.
3. Includes cover and title page, but items such as chapter titles with hyperlinks are missing or broken.
4. Is missing some required front matter.
5. Fails to provide basic information about the book.

Visual 4. Interior: Layout. This book...

Paper. This book...

1. Has margins that are no less than ½ inch and uses serif font of sufficient size. Page numbers are on the outside edge or center (never at the gutter). Odd pages are ALWAYS on the right side. Chapter beginnings generally start ⅓ to ½ way down the page.
2. Contains minor errors, such as indenting the first paragraph in a chapter or inconsistent line or character spacing, but has adequate margins. OR uses sans serif but it's still large enough or appropriate in style for the content and easy to read.
3. Has margins that are too narrow, words that are difficult to read in the gutter, or not enough white space (text is too dense) OR page numbers are near the gutter. Odd pages on the left side
4. Is NOT blocked/justified OR has many layout errors, but the book is still readable.
5. Has so many layout errors that they distract from the content OR uses a typeface too complex or "cutesy" to be read comfortably.

E-book. This book...

1. Has reflowable text, page separations for front matter and chapters, AND table of contents with appropriate links to chapter headings, front matter, and back matter
2. Contains minor errors, such as indenting the first paragraph in a chapter, using both extra line spacing and indentation for paragraph separation, or inconsistent chapter layout elements.
3. Contains distracting or confusing elements (such as misplaced page numbers carried over from print or hard page breaks in the middle of text) OR the book contains occasional junk characters (such as HTML tags, soft hyphens in the middle of a line, or unsupported characters such as a boxed question mark).
4. Cannot be adjusted to reader preferences (font size, spacing, etc.) without a loss of quality
5. Has so many layout errors that they distract from the content.

Visual 5. Interior: Artistic Elements. The book uses...

1. Clean, clear, captioned, and appropriate maps, photographs, and illustrations, if needed. The layout includes consistent use of scene dividers, optional drop caps, and optional chapter-starting artwork or motifs.
2. Maps, photographs, and illustrations, if needed, that are not of the highest resolution but are captioned and appropriate. Other elements are mostly consistent throughout.
3. Maps, photographs, and illustrations, if needed, that are low resolution and not properly captioned. Other elements are sometimes not consistent.

Fiction Scoresheet Questions

4. Maps, photographs, and illustrations, if needed, that are poorly depicted and unidentified but still add to the content of the book. Other elements are inconsistent throughout.
5. Maps, photographs, and illustrations, if needed, that are blurry, undefined, and add nothing to the book. Other elements are haphazard or missing.

Fiction Scoresheet Questions

Technical

These criteria evaluate spelling, punctuation, capitalization, sentence structure, verb tense, and noun-verb agreement. We have included word counts every 20,000 words. Interpolate as needed.

NOTE: Questions 1 through 4 require you to count errors. The number of errors allowed varies with word count. A 120,000-word book is allowed more errors than a 60,000-word book. Use the table to determine which answer to select.

Allowable Error Scoring by Word Count					
Score					
Word Count	1	2	3	4	5
120,000	0-6	7-12	13-18	19-24	>24
100,000	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	>20
80,000	0-4	5-8	9-12	13-16	>16
60,000	0-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	>12
40,000	0-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	>8
20,000	0-1	2	3	4	>4

Technical 1. Spelling/Typos/Wrong Word

See the table above for the allowable number of errors. Count noticeable misspellings, typos, and extra or missing words, but don't go on a witch hunt looking for them. Note them in the comment section (their/they're/there, its/it's, horse/hoarse, cavalry/Calvary, etc.)

Technical 2. Punctuation/Hyphenation

See the table above for the allowable number of errors. Count missing or extra punctuation marks. Commas are tricky, so the major ones would be missing commas of direct address, missing commas between two independent clauses, and missing commas after long introductory dependent phrases. Hyphenation should be consistent throughout, including em dashes, which indicate an interruption in dialogue or a harder break than commas indicate in sentences.

Technical 3. Capitalization/Italics

See the table above for the allowable number of errors. English requires proper nouns to be capitalized (e.g. Pizza Hut, but the library). Military rank is capitalized when accompanied by a name (General Smith, but the general). Sir and ma'am are not capitalized (yes, sir; no, ma'am; but Sir Lancelot). Italics are used for ship names (but not USS) and for internal dialogue. Overuse of italics for emphasis is to be discouraged, as it micromanages the reader. Large portions in italics are more difficult to read. The use of italics for foreign words is not required.

Technical 4. Sentence Structure/Syntax

See the table above for the allowable number of errors. Count sentence sprawls, run-on sentences, awkwardly worded sentences, and lengthy sentence fragments that go nowhere. Generally, count an error if the sentence requires re-reading to make sense to the target audience.

Technical 5. Verb Form and Noun-verb Agreement. The book...

1. Uses the simplest verb form (preferably simple past or present tense) AND has consistent noun-verb agreement.
2. Occasionally uses an inappropriate tense but strives for simplicity OR has several noun-verb disagreements.
3. Uses complicated/inappropriate verb tense forms on a regular basis throughout the book (even if used correctly) OR has more than a few noun-verb agreement problems.
4. Uses complicated/inappropriate tenses throughout the book OR regularly messes up noun-verb agreement.
5. Uses complicated/inappropriate tenses throughout the book AND regularly messes up noun-verb agreement.

Fiction Scoresheet Questions

Tech comment (required).

Do not comment on your interpretation of the editing (e.g., “best editing I have ever seen,” or “really needs an editor”). Instead, use objective language to note the errors you saw. If you did not notice errors, simply say you did not note any tech errors. However, if you lower a tech score, you must list enough of the errors you noted to vindicate lowering your score. Spelling errors can be noted individually (discrete s/b discreet). Others can be noted in greater detail, but we do not want to document the whole book. List enough errors to give the author some guidelines for where he went wrong.

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