

Manatee Writers Group

INTRODUCTION FOR NEW MEMBERS

And a refresher for existing members

The following guidelines provide information on both the technical aspects of joining a meeting and the formatting recommendations. New members usually need so time to get acclimated to the process and existing member can provide guidance if needed.



Guidelines for the Manatee Writers Group

1. Sandwich Method. Try to start and end your critique with something positive about the writing. Be professional, courteous, and objective.
2. Critique the Writing, Not the Person. A critique is about improving the writing. Critiquing the person will only lead to acrimony.
3. No Arguments with Person Giving a Critique. Remember that the person giving the critique may not understand your work the way you do. You are free to implement or reject whatever comments you receive about your work after the meeting.
4. No Interruptions of Reader or Other Speakers. Unless you're lost as to what page the reader is on, try to avoid interrupting the reader. Save your critique until it's your turn.
5. Try to Avoid Bringing Back the Same Piece More than Once. Please polish your piece as much as possible on your own before bringing it to group. If you've completely overhauled your piece, such as changing the point of view, then it is acceptable to bring it back to the group.
6. Be Aware of Personal Preferences. Everyone has their own tastes in genre. Try to critique a piece as though you are a reader of that genre.
7. Avoid Unhelpful Vague Generalizations. Try to be as specific as possible with a critique. Give examples where possible.
8. Minimize Critiques of SPaG. Spelling, punctuation, and grammar do not need to be emphasized during an oral critique. There are tools to help a writer improve these mechanics. If you spot a missing comma, mark it during your reading and move on. This will help move the meeting along.
9. Be Aware of Style. Try to avoid rewriting for the writer. Examples are fine but rewriting whole paragraphs can destroy an author's voice.
10. Be Sensitive. Recognize that sometimes your writing may stray into certain avoidable stereotypes or lead to cultural appropriation, racial appropriation, etc, which may offend some readers. Be self-aware of these situations to avoid losing readers unnecessarily.
11. Be Patient. We cater to all levels of writing skill. Use whatever knowledge you have of writing to help and encourage those who are just starting out.

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12. **Summarize Your Work.** Remember to give a brief summary of your work before you read. Tell the group if the piece is a part of a novel. Let us know genre. Let us know what the story is about.
13. **Thick Skin.** Remember that you're here to improve your writing. There will be times when a critique stings your pride. Remember that the critique is YOURS. Do with it what you will. Avoid the temptation to give a "revenge" critique.
14. **Be Curious.** Ask questions when needed about any comments that you don't understand. This will help foster your learning and improve your writing.
15. **Keep Complaints Private.** If you have concerns about your fellow writers

CRITIQUE MEETINGS

All our meetings are conducted on Zoom as well as in person. The schedule of in-person meeting locations is listed in the newsletter. If there is a change in venue it will be posted online via our social media pages.

A few words for those new to Manatee Writers on how to participate in our weekly critique sessions. We hold hybrid

ZOOM LOGIN INFORMATION

To join via Zoom click on the link below. **Zoom Link**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/99604842495?pwd=TFZPOE9lc1RhYW4vOVFPMUxPSDRwUT09>

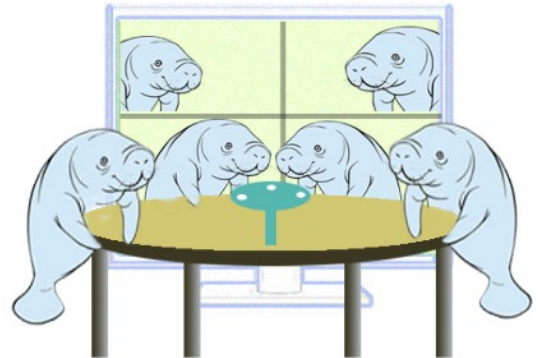
Meeting ID: 996 0484 2495

Passcode: punctuate

LINK TO GOOGLE DOCS FOLDER

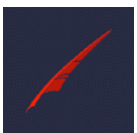
FWA Documents

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1y3gZZDbS89Acl2JwAFgMf8SXYfc-YUIJ>



JOIN US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/manateewriters>)



Scribophile (<https://www.scribophile.com/groups/manatee-writers/>)

Manatee Writers Group (cont'd)

meetings the last Wednesday of the month at 6:00 pm and the second Saturday. They can last from two to three hours depending on the number of submissions being critiqued.

An in-person group gathers at various locations depending on availability, and those who cannot attend join via Zoom. Occasional technical glitches aside, this approach has been very successful.

Members seeking feedback on their work upload them to our shared Google cloud storage here - <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1y3gZZDbS89Acl2JwAFgMf8SXYfc-YUIJ>. Details for how to do that can be found here: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1CCtHXr1HVIv54fdeXLeezK34tlyNe6AT/edit>

Writers joining the in-person sessions also provide hard copies of their work to distribute to others during the meeting. Attendees can also provide their own hard copies. Check our social media pages for last minute information.

We encourage authors to use the following formatting when submitting documents.

- Times New Roman, 12 points.
- Double spaced.
- No spacing between paragraphs.
- Indent the first line of each paragraph ½” using the horizontal ruler (no tabs or spaces).

Please limit your submissions to 2,000 words or less (as rendered using the suggested formatting).

Each author reads their work to the group, then the members in attendance (online and in person) offer their comments and suggestions.

The order in which submissions are read is based on the order in which they are submitted to the shared Google Docs folder.

Hopefully, this answers any questions about how our meetings are organized. If not, feel free to reach out to us. Happy writing!