

HOW TO BE A DYNAMITE CRITIQUE PARTNER

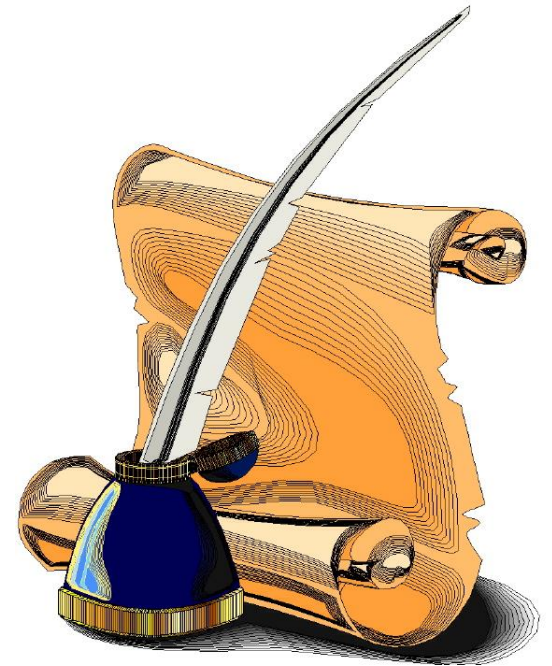
Without Blowing Your Mind





A BRIEF WORD ABOUT WRITERS GROUPS

- ❖ Join one if you can
- ❖ Three types:
 - ❖ Educational/Support
 - ❖ Critique/Evaluative
 - ❖ Combined



HOW IS A CRITIQUE PARTNER DIFFERENT FROM A WRITING GROUP?

❖ Groups

- ❖ have three or more members
- ❖ Organized by a leader
- ❖ Have procedures and guidelines
- ❖ Often include speakers and classes

❖ Partners

- ❖ Two members
- ❖ More intimate
- ❖ Provide a more personalized approach
- ❖ Trade entire manuscripts
- ❖ Often assist with marketing and other non-critique needs

❖ Both

- ❖ Exchange pages
- ❖ Provide support and encouragement

LIGHTING THE FUSE

- ❖ Choosing a partner
 - ❖ Genre

REMEMBER:

**Confine your
search to
writers in
genres you LIKE**



LIGHTING THE FUSE

- ❖ Choosing a partner
 - ❖ Goals
 - ❖ Priorities

REMEMBER:

**Ask the right
questions
BEFORE
you commit.**



LIGHTING THE FUSE

❖ Communicate your expectations

Remember:
Make sure BOTH
of you are on
the same page.



PROVIDING FUEL FOR THE FIRE

- ❖ Trust
- ❖ Consistency
- ❖ Location
- ❖ Routine



WORKING TOGETHER

- ❖ Honesty
- ❖ Respect
- ❖ Detachment



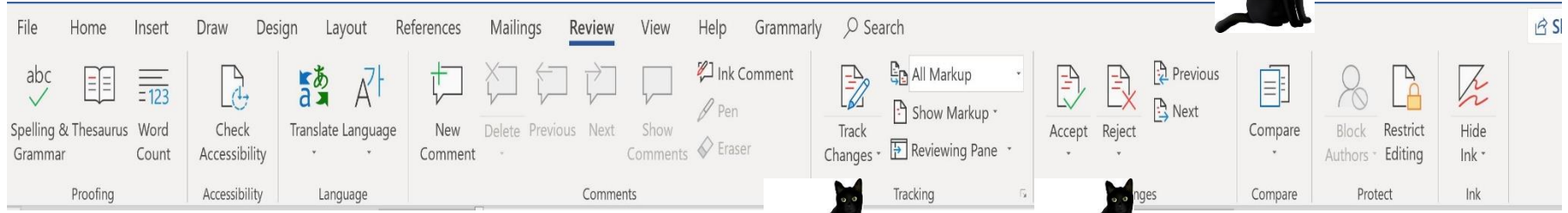
SUGGESTIONS FOR EFFICIENT IGNITION

- ❖ Submit your pages via email at least a week ahead of the meeting



SUGGESTIONS FOR EFFICIENT IGNITION

❖ Use Track Changes and comments



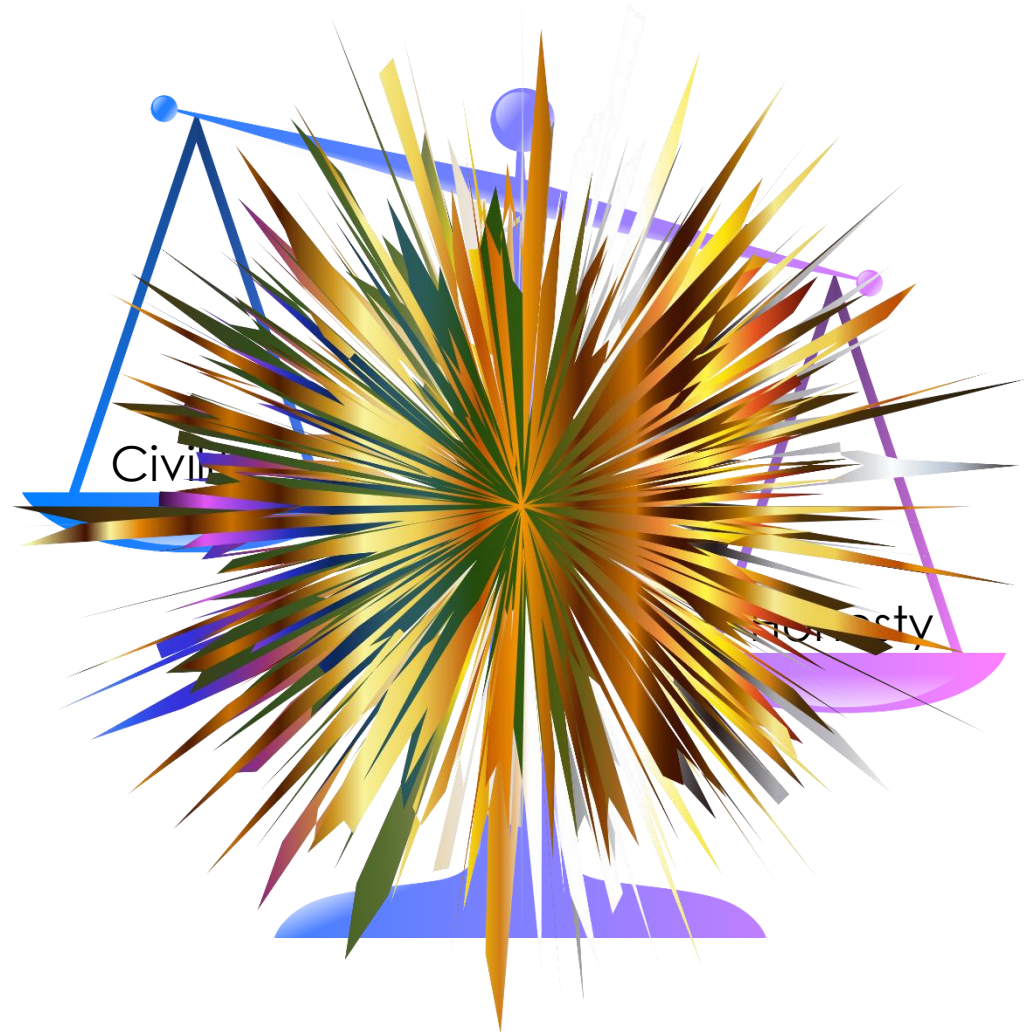
SUGGESTIONS FOR EFFICIENT IGNITION

❖ Adhere to deadlines



ON PREVENTING ACCIDENTAL EXPLOSIONS

- ❖ Be Honest
- ❖ Be Civil
- ❖ Be respectful
- ❖ Be dependable



FLEXIBILITY

- ❖ Remember that life happens.
- ❖ Roll with it when necessary.





METHODS AND MANNERS

The Critique itself



TWO WORDS ABOUT CRITICISM

- ❖ It isn't personal
- ❖ It's a good thing~

- ❖ Definition:

The act or art of analyzing and evaluating or judging the quality of a literary or artistic work, musical performance, art exhibit, dramatic production, etc.
(dictionary.com)



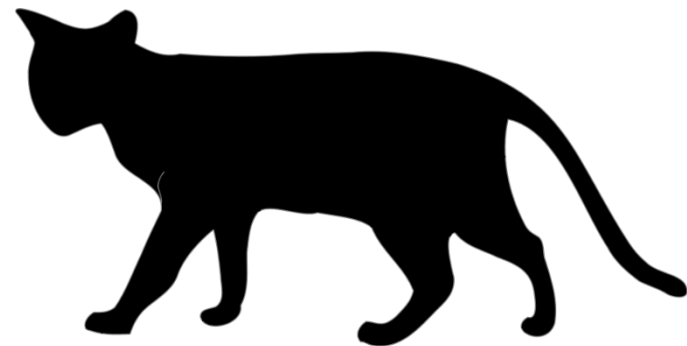


RECEIVING THE CRITIQUE

- ❖ Listen to the entire evaluation in silence.
- ❖ Note any questions you have, but save them until your partner is finished.
- ❖ Keep in mind that the decision to accept or disregard suggestions is yours, and yours alone.
- ❖ Do not argue with the evaluation.
- ❖ DO NOT TAKE THE EVALUATION PERSONALLY

GIVING THE CRITIQUE

- ❖ Avoid the use of pronouns
- ❖ Make suggestions, not changes
- ❖ Preserve author voice
- ❖ Be impartial
- ❖ DON'T TAKE YOUR PARTNER'S
CHOICES PERSONALLY



KEEP THE FIRE GOING

- ❖ The bookend method
 - ❖ Point out something good
 - ❖ Point out something that could improve
 - ❖ Point out something good
- ❖ Keep it impersonal and text focused
- ❖ Only ask questions when you don't understand the story
- ❖ Keep the main thing the main thing
 - ❖ Plot
 - ❖ Pacing
 - ❖ Dialogue
 - ❖ Characterization
 - ❖ Show/Don't Tell



USING GOOD FUEL

- ❖ Comments should be:
 - ❖ Impersonal
 - ❖ Specific
 - ❖ Concise
 - ❖ Content focused
- ❖ Be polite
- ❖ Be sensitive



AUTHOR VOICE

Don't

- ❖ Reword anything
- ❖ Change narration or dialogue
- ❖ Suggest changes to suit yourself
- ❖ Ignore problems due to fear of offending.
- ❖ Forget this isn't your work

Do

- ❖ Gently point out awkward phrasing and word choice in comments (margins)
- ❖ Ask questions designed to help the author clarify anything confusing
- ❖ Use comments to suggest the **author** add imagery, etc.
- ❖ Respect author choices
- ❖ Tell the truth, but gently
- ❖ Point out problems, and let the author fix them
- ❖ Remember this is the author's story, not yours



DON'T USE BAD FUEL

❖ Adjectives one should NEVER use and their better alternatives:

❖ Boring

❖ Stupid

❖ Who Cares?

❖ Trash

❖ Insipid

❖ You

❖ Increase the conflict/tension

❖ Plot hole/Question: Why is...

❖ I'm not sure how this (character, Event, etc.) fits into the plot structure.

❖ None – Do not use this term, ever.

❖ This would be a good place to raise tension.

❖ Avoid pronoun usage and/or use passive voice.

AUTHOR TOOLS

- ❖ Writing Apps:
 - ❖ Any reliable calendar app
 - ❖ Timer Apps
 - ❖ Pomodoro Timer
 - ❖ Writeometer



AUTHOR TOOLS

❖ Manuscript Creation:

- ❖ Microsoft Word
- ❖ Office Libre
- ❖ Open Office
- ❖ Scrivener (<https://www.literatureandlatte.com/>)
- ❖ Google Docs
- ❖ Dropbox



AUTHOR TOOLS

- Websites
 - [Florida Writers Association](#)
 - [Brass Rag Press](#)
 - [Chicago Manual of Style](#)
 - [Grammarly](#)
 - [Dictionary.com](#)

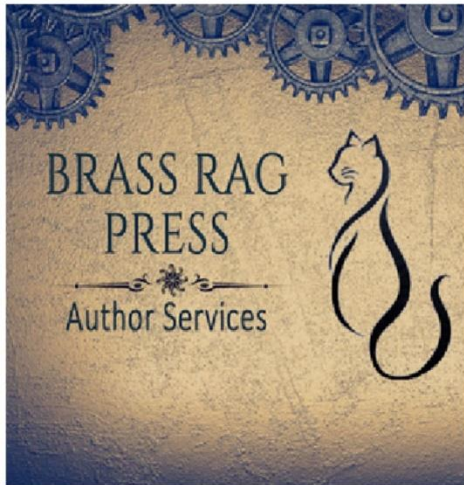


AUTHOR TOOLS

- ❖ Online communities can allow busy authors to stay connected
- ❖ Absolute Write Water Cooler
 - ❖ <http://absolutewrite.com>
- ❖ Critters Workshop (Science Fiction/Fantasy)
 - ❖ <http://www.critters.org>
- ❖ National Novel Writing Month
 - ❖ <http://nanowrimo.org>
- ❖ Scribophile
 - ❖ <http://scribophile.com>



WHERE TO FIND ME



❖ Website:

❖ www.brassragpress.com

❖ www.clroman.com

❖ Blog:

❖ Brassragpress.com

❖ Email:

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C.L. ROMAN
SCI-FI AND FANTASY
WITH A PARANORMAL EDGE



LET'S EXERCISE

- ❖ Write for ten minutes on the following prompt:
- ❖ Picture this: A dilapidated house in a bad neighborhood. Out front is a parked car. Inside the car you see a baseball bat, a laundry basket and a weapon.

