



## Guiding Your Beta Reader

*In order to make the most of your beta reader's feedback, it's often best if you guide their attention to the most problematic aspects of your novel - the areas you're most concerned with.*

*The questions below offer a starting point. What area of your novel needs the most work? Have a look, and use some of our prompts to kickstart your beta reader's critique.*

### The Opening:

- Does the manuscript begin in the right place?
- Is there a sufficient hook to convince the reader to keep reading?
- Are the protagonist's motives made clear?
- Is the setting made clear?
- Are enough questions raised?
- Does everything make logical sense?

### The Characters:

- Is there a character the reader can relate to?
- Are the protagonist's motivations clear and believable?
- Is there sufficient backstory to make the characters well-rounded?
- Is the setting made clear?
- Are the stakes high enough? What do the characters have to lose and gain?
- Are the character relationships authentic?
- Are there any unnecessary characters?

### The Plot:

- Are there any gaping plot holes?
- Are the stakes high enough to keep the reader invested?
- Are the plot twists free of cliché, yet still unexpected?
- Are the plot points and conflict in the right places?
- Do the scenes progress naturally?
- Are there any unnecessary scenes or chapters?
- Were there any sections where the reader gets bored?
- Does each chapter end with a hook for the next?
- Are there any sections of 'info dumping' or unnecessary description?



### The Setting:

- Are the settings in the novel clear?
- Are the settings adequately described?
- Do the settings make logical sense in relation to one another and the context of the novel?
- Is there always a clear sense of place and time in each scene?
- Do the details of the setting add to the narrative?
- Is there an aspect of the setting that needs improvement?

### The Subplot(s):

- Is enough time spent developing the subplot(s)
- Do they add to the main plot or detract from it?
- Does the subplot work logically where it's been placed in the manuscript?
- Are there any contradictions between the plot and subplots?
- Do the scenes progress naturally?
- Can anything be done to make the subplots more intriguing?
- Were there any sections where the reader gets bored?

### The Writing + General Reading Experience:

- Is the voice fresh and consistent throughout the manuscript?
- Is the voice appropriate for the intended target audience?
- Is the writing engaging?
- Are there any literary techniques used that don't work in the novel?
- Did you enjoy reading this book? Why? Why not?
- Who's your favourite character and why?
- Who's your least favourite character and why?
- Were there any sections in the manuscript that were confusing or out of place?
- What was your favourite moment in the book, and why?
- What was your least favourite moment in the book, and why?

*Don't forget to ask your beta reader for their overall first impressions of the book!*



