



LAURA SHORT FICTION RUBRIC© LAURA SHORT FICTION CONTEST AND AWARDS

| | Ineligible | 4 – 7 points | 8 – 10 points |
|----------------------------|---|---|---|
| 1. Women of the West Theme | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Male main character(s) • Story not set in the West • Does not portray authentic western experience • Theme & content do not reflect WWW's mission & goals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Female main character(s) • Story set in the West but could have happened anywhere; or, story partly set in the West* • Generally portrays authentic experience • Theme & content generally reflect WWW's mission & goals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Female main character(s) • Western setting primary & essential* • Consistently portrays authentic western experience • Theme & content excellent reflections of WWW's mission & goals |
| 2. Characterization | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characters not developed • Stereotypical character(s)** • Dialogue not convincing • Characters generic, not interesting • Reader does not sympathize with main character • Didactic, preachy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main character somewhat developed • Generally no inappropriate gender, ethnic, racial or other stereotypes** • Dialogue at times sounds unnatural • Character(s) interesting • Reader sympathizes somewhat with main character • Character's "lesson" generally well presented | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main character well developed • No inappropriate gender, ethnic, racial, or other stereotypes included** • Dialogue sounds natural • Character(s) original and unique • Reader sympathizes with main character • Any "lesson" subtle and organic |

* WWW defines "the West" as all of North America west of the Mississippi River

** Depiction of a character's biases or stereotypical views, presented in context, may be appropriate.

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LAURA Short Fiction Rubric, continued

| | 0 – 3 points | 4 – 7 points | 8 – 10 points |
|------------|---|---|---|
| 3. Setting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting not important to the story • Setting not described | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting of moderate importance • Setting described in conventional terms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strong sense of place is inherent in story • Setting vividly described, using most of the senses |
| 4. Plot | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main character has no goal or problem she solves, or this is unclear • Story fails to hook readers; ending not satisfying • Implausible • Plot predictable | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main character has goal or problem of marginal importance • Slow beginning leads to more action; or conclusion leaves some questions unanswered; or conclusion is not satisfying • Some points may strain credibility • Plot not new, but shows some freshness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main character has difficulty achieving important goal or solving important problem • Opening draws reader in; conclusion satisfying • Suspension of disbelief consistent • Plot original, fresh |
| 5. Voice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrative voice lacking, confusing, distances readers from the story • Point of view confusing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrative voice dependable • Point of view wavers or occasionally jumps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrative voice engaging, fresh, distinct • Point of view clear, consistent; or POV shifts clear and intentional |

| | 0 - 3 points | 4 - 7 points | 8 – 10 points |
|--------------------------|---|--|---|
| 6. Literary Qualities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor or inappropriate command of language (slang, word choice, figurative language, etc.) • Imagery confusing or nonexistent • Premise conventional, simplistic, expected • Not enjoyable or thought-provoking • Story title ordinary, uninspired | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderate command of language (slang, word choice, figurative language, etc.) • Imagery clear • Premise not new, but well explored • A pleasant read • Title fitting, appropriate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently strong command of language (slang, word choice, figurative language, etc.) • Imagery vivid, fresh • Premise breaks new ground • Thought-provoking • Title intriguing or resonates with meaning |
| 7. Technical Conventions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequent problems with grammar, punctuation, spelling • Sloppy, wordy, repetitious writing • Poor balance between dialogue and narrative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occasional lapses of grammar, punctuation, spelling • Clear writing • Adequate balance between dialogue & narrative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear grasp of grammar, punctuation, spelling; or reader trusts that conventions purposefully set aside • Tight writing • Good balance between dialogue & narrative |

LAURA Short Fiction Rubric, continued