

**WILLA CATEGORY RUBRIC**  
**FICTION** ©  
*(Includes Contemporary, Historical, Original Softcover)*

<b>Novel</b>	<b>Ineligible</b>	<b>4 - 7 points</b>	<b>8 - 10 points</b>
1. Women of the West Theme	Male main character(s) Book not set in the West* Does not portray authentic western experience Theme & content do not reflect WWW's mission & goals	Female characters prominent Book set in the West but could have happened anywhere; or, book partly set in the West* Generally portrays authentic experience Theme & content generally reflect WWW's mission & goals	Female main character(s) Western setting primary & essential* Consistently portrays authentic western experience Theme & content excellent reflections of WWW's mission & goals
	<b>0 - 3 points</b>	<b>4 - 7 points</b>	<b>8 - 10 points</b>
2. Characterization	Characters not well developed Stereotypical character(s)** Dialogue not convincing Characters indistinct from those in similar books Didactic, preachy	Most characters complex Generally no inappropriate gender, ethnic, racial, or other stereotypes** Dialogue at times sounds unnatural Characters similar to others within the genre, but well developed Character's "lesson" generally well presented	All characters complex, well developed No inappropriate gender, ethnic, racial, or other stereotypes included** Dialogue sounds natural Characters distinct, original Any "lesson" subtle & organic
3. Setting	Setting not important to the book Setting not described	Setting of moderate importance Setting described in conventional terms	A strong sense of place is inherent in book Setting vividly described, using all senses



	0 - 3 points	4 - 7 points	8 - 10 points
4. Plot	<p>Plot confusing            Subplots (if used) sporadic, or not well balanced with main plot, or left unresolved            Book fails to hook readers; ending not satisfying            Implausible            Plot predictable</p>	<p>Plot moderately well developed            Subplots (if used) not always balanced or well resolved            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</p>	<p>Plot well developed            Subplots (if used) well integrated &amp; resolved            Opening draws reader in; conclusion satisfying            Suspension of disbelief consistent            Plot original, fresh</p>
5. Voice	<p>Narrative voice lacking, confusing, distances readers from the story            Point of view confusing</p>	<p>Narrative voice dependable            Point of view wavers, or occasionally jumps</p>	<p>Narrative voice engaging, fresh, distinct            Point of view clear, consistent; or POV shifts clear &amp; intentional</p>
6. Literary Qualities	<p>Poor or inappropriate command of language (slang, word choice, figurative language, etc.)            Imagery confusing or nonexistent            Premise conventional, simplistic, expected            Book not suited for intended audience, unappealing            Not enjoyable or thought-provoking</p>	<p>Moderate command of language (slang, word choice, figurative language, etc.)            Imagery clear            Premise not new, but well explored            Book generally suited to the intended audience, moderately appealing            A pleasant read</p>	<p>Consistently strong command of language (slang, word choice, figurative language, etc.)            Imagery vivid, fresh            Premise breaks new ground            Well suited to intended audience, appealing            Thought-provoking</p>



	0 - 3 points	4 - 7 points	8 - 10 points
7. Technical Conventions	<p>Word count, sentence structure, vocabulary inappropriate for target audience</p> <p>Frequent problems with grammar, punctuation, spelling</p> <p>Sloppy, wordy, repetitious writing</p> <p>Poor balance between dialogue &amp; narrative</p>	<p>Word count, sentence structure, vocabulary appropriate for target audience</p> <p>Occasional lapses of grammar, punctuation, spelling</p> <p>Clear writing</p> <p>Adequate balance between dialogue &amp; narrative</p>	<p>Word count, sentence structure, vocabulary excellent for target audience</p> <p>Clear grasp of grammar, punctuation, spelling; or reader trusts that conventions purposefully set aside</p> <p>Tight writing</p> <p>Good balance between dialogue &amp; narrative</p>
8. Presentation	<p>Unattractive cover art &amp; design</p> <p>Interior design features lacking</p> <p>Font &amp; typesetting difficult to read</p> <p>Illustrations (if used) of poor quality, or irrelevant to text</p> <p>E-book improperly bound, loose pages</p> <p>Audio book voice quality poor</p>	<p>Adequate cover art &amp; design</p> <p>Interior design features adequate</p> <p>Font &amp; typesetting adequate</p> <p>Illustrations (if used) of moderate clarity, or not always germane to the text</p> <p>E-book improperly bound</p> <p>Audio book voice quality adequate</p>	<p>Attractive, appropriate, compelling cover art &amp; design</p> <p>Interior design features reflect book's tone</p> <p>Font &amp; typesetting clear</p> <p>Illustrations (if used) appropriate, clear</p> <p>E-book properly bound</p> <p>Audio book voice quality appropriate</p>

\* 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.

WWW defines Historical Fiction as any story set at least 50 years prior to the publication date.

