

# SAMPLE EVALUATION COMMENTS

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## Overall Evaluation

1. Is the entry presented in an acceptable book organizational layout (i.e., introduction, preface, foreword, afterword, and/or author biography) and in format (i.e., margins, spacing, chapter/section divisions, overall readability, etc.)?
2. Please rank the aptness of the book title in relation to the themes and content of the book.
3. Please provide additional information regarding your assessment.

The title was relevant to the storyline however the ebook is badly formatted. There are large empty spaces in the middle of a page making it difficult to read.

## Opening

1. Does the opening draw you in by starting with a compelling narrative or Voice?
2. Have you been intrigued enough to want to read on?
3. Please provide additional information regarding your assessment.

The book starts off with enough unknowns to make the reader want to read more. The main character's dilemma and her actions were cryptic enough to make the premise of the book intriguing.

## Plot Premise

1. Does the plot make sense in terms of the dramatic or overall focus of the book?
2. Is there enough conflict and inherent drama to sustain the story?
3. Does every scene have a purpose in moving the story forward, either in terms of plot or the story journey the character(s) take?
4. Did you get to the end and find no plot holes, no plot inconsistencies, and no problems with plot plausibility or believability?
5. Was the "Promise" of the Opening fulfilled by the conclusion of the book so that you got to the end and felt that the author had successfully navigated the culmination of the plot and any subplots?
6. Did the author handle any subplots with skill and effectiveness without letting the subplot overrun the main plot?
7. Please provide additional information regarding your assessment.

The plot makes sense and there's plenty of drama. Each scene moved the reader toward the conclusion of the story. The ending slogged for a bit and there were parts that could have been omitted.

### Setting/World Building

1. Has the author created a strong sense of place and circumstance in such a way that you believe in it?
2. Does the world created in the book feel “real” and “true” to the extent that you can lose yourself in them completely?
3. Do setting and imagery add to mood and tone, and are they woven effectively throughout?
4. Were you able to suspend disbelief in the setting or world in which the tale takes place?
5. Please provide additional information regarding your assessment.

Good descriptions of the setting and environment.  
There were enough details and descriptions that a reader can easily imagine themselves in the town the story is set in. Well done in those aspects.

### Specific Genre/Topic Criteria

1. The work you read by fall into one or more of the following areas: Drama, Sagas, Coming Out, Literary Novels, and/or General Fiction. Has the author written a piece that is successful for its genre and demonstrates thorough research where called for?
2. How well does this book employ clever, imaginative, and/or unique ideas in the genre/topic it falls into?
3. Is the theme/message of the story well handled in subtext, or does the writer tend to understate or overstate it?
4. Is there variety in tone, style, and content where appropriate, or do all the parts, chapters, or plotlines strike the same tone and seem unremarkable?
5. Does the author avoid being moralistic, simple, or overly melodramatic?
6. Please provide additional information regarding your assessment.

The writing is mixed. It is imaginative and evocative but the author sometimes fall into a preachy style. The primary conflict is resolved, but a little too conveniently.

## Characters/Characterization

1. Has the author written a memorable and well-rounded narrator or main protagonist (or two or more main protagonists if the story calls for it) with traits and flaws that make them unique and human?
2. Do you empathize with the main characters and hope for their happiness and success?
3. Does the main character grow as a human being in the story, and is that growth clearly connected to emotional challenge? OR – if the main character does NOT grow (as happens in a Tragedy or plot with an anti-hero), does the character's failure to grow and change make sense in the context of the book?
4. Secondary characters should be distinct and differentiated and should not seem like cardboard clones. Does the author handle the secondary characters well without making them boring or allowing them to take over the protagonist's role(s)?
5. Are the actions of all characters consistent with the manner in which they have been characterized (for example, if a character is presented as a liar and a cheat, is this reflected in her decision and behavior, assuming growth and change may occur)?
6. Are the descriptions of the characters mostly fresh and effective, making use of imagery, metaphor, and apt detail while avoiding clichés and derivative details?
7. Please provide additional information regarding your assessment.

Characters remain true to their characterizations throughout the story. I was rooting for both the MCs throughout. Many of the secondary characters are fully fleshed out and came alive in the book.

## Dialogue

1. Is the spoken dialogue natural sounding and credible for the characters? Does it sound fresh and colorful rather than derivative and flat?
2. Does the dialogue reveal and nuance character interactions while avoiding repetitiveness and unrealistic over-telling?
3. Does the dialogue enhance and move the story, avoiding purposeless “information dumps” and/or rambling?
4. Has the author made good use of interior Voice (especially in the case of the main character[s])? Is there an appropriate balance between the external narrative/exposition and the internal thoughts and the spoken dialogue?
5. Please provide additional information regarding your assessment.

Dialogue flows well for the most part and doesn't repeat information already known. However, the reader is rarely given any insight into the characters' private thoughts.

## Narrative/Structure

1. Narrative consists of the balance between the descriptive exposition (the Telling of the story and the action and dialogue (the Showing) in a book. Is there a balance between the showing and the telling that feels effective and unforced?
2. Are narrative passages necessary and compelling? Are narrative passages balanced well with dialogue and scenes of action?
3. Does the narrative flow well without being too spare, saggy, bloated, or cluttered with trivial detail?
4. Does the writing move you along through the story with mastery and effectiveness within the scope of the structure?
5. Within the structure, do the timelines make sense so that you are grounded and know where you are in time? Where needed, are you given cues (or dateline/chapter headers) that allow you to keep track of when and where you are?
6. Please provide additional information regarding your assessment.

The structure is good but predictable. Author does a decent job of keeping the story moving. The timeline is sometimes confusing and jumps backward and forward.

## Style/Voice

1. Is the author's writing vivid, evocative and, readable, displaying variety in tone, style, and content where appropriate?
2. Are Point of View (POV) and Perspective clear at all times? When Perspective transitions occur between characters, are they purposeful and smooth? Or does it seem the author is using head-hopping without a good reason to?
3. Is the writing grounded in the senses with description balanced between the intellectual and sight, smell, taste, texture, sound, and sixth sense? Are all the senses used in proper proportions?
4. Does the writing (whether hard-edged and difficult or softer and sweeter) have a beauty to it that is striking and attractive, that gives you reading pleasure?
5. Are errors in spelling, grammar, usage, and facts so rare that they in no way interfere with your reading experience?
6. Please provide additional information regarding your assessment.

The author has a distinct voice that is pleasant to read. Point of view is easy to determine throughout the story. Author makes good use of senses in describing people, places and things. There were a few typos in the book.



## Overall Impressions

1. Flaws aside, how intriguing, memorable, and/or touching did you find this book? When you reached the end, did you feel an impact – a powerful cumulative effect – from the reading?
2. Is there a pleasing balance between the emotions evoked and the intellectualism of the book?
3. Did you find a fair amount of universality so that the majority of the target audience for the topic/subject/themes would be satisfied with this book?
4. Even if you found that you did not “like” the book (because of topic or personal reasons), is the book still remarkable and effective for what the author was trying to accomplish?
5. Please provide additional information regarding your assessment.

The story is predictable. The book was well written technically which made it pleasant to read. I was never bored and, had the melodrama been dialed back, would have scored it higher. Most of the target audience should be satisfied.

## Lesbian Content

1. The guidelines for the Goldie Awards require that each work nominated “must contain significant lesbian content, characters, and/or themes.” Lesbian content includes: The main character identifies as a lesbian, and/or the main character is or ends up in a lesbian relationship, and/or the theme or plot deals with lesbian issues and/or lesbian life.
  - a. Significant lesbian content
  - b. Some lesbian content
  - c. No lesbian content

## Judge's Summary

1. Briefly, please summarize what your overall thoughts about this book.

I enjoyed this book very much. It was technically a very well written book, with a fresh, intriguing premise and several interesting characters. A nice way to kill a rainy afternoon.