

## SF Short Story Critique

Using this check list of criteria, assess the quality and power of this short story. Circle your assessment. You may give constructive advice on the back as needed. Do not sign your name.

### This piece is MEMORABLE because...

- The title is perfect for the piece—it tantalizes the reader and makes the story attractive at first glance
- The story has a single focus
- The story has a single point of view
- The story ends quickly and unexpectedly, but is still believable
- The story uses showing vs telling
- The story has tension and a conflict
- The story produces an emotional response—you get goosebumps, laugh, relate, so on.
- The story has at least one character with whom you can identify
- The story requires you to exercise your imagination
- The story is clearly an example of Science Fiction in terms of “What if...”
- The premise of the story is clear. It is: \_\_\_\_\_

### This piece is ADEQUATE because...

- The title works for the piece and still leaves the reader guessing
- The story has mostly a single focus—the author has a few minor tangents
- The story has a single point of view
- The story ends quickly and unexpectedly, but stretches believability
- The story uses showing vs telling most of the time
- The story has tension and a conflict
- The story produces somewhat of an emotional response
- The story has at least one character with whom you can identify
- The story requires you to exercise your imagination to some extent
- The story might be an example of Science Fiction in terms of “What if...”
- I think I know what this story is about. My guess is: \_\_\_\_\_

### This piece NEEDS WORK because...

- The title is obvious and completely predicts the story
- The story lacks a single focus and is difficult to follow
- The story has a shifting point of view—the reader is not quite sure where ideas are originating
- The story ends indecisively or limps and dribbles to a close
- The story tells us all about the character, conflict, and setting rather than shows
- The story has limited tension and requires a conflict
- The story leaves you flat or has limited emotional response
- The story has at least one character with whom you can identify
- The story requires you to exercise your imagination to some extent
- The story is a stretch to be considered an example of Science Fiction in terms of “What if...”
- I still wonder what this story is about

Other items of note: Chekhov’s Gun, exposition, imagery (all senses), dialogue...