

Instructions for Manuscripts for Critique

Manuscripts will have 1-inch margins on all sides, double-spaced, 12 point, Arial or Times Roman, black font on 8.5 x 11 in. paper. The first page of the manuscript (title page) should be clearly marked with the participant's contact information and email, as well as genre, age category, and word count. Manuscripts should also have a header (starting on page 2) in the upper left-hand corner (last name/title of manuscript) and a footer noted the page number in the lower right-hand corner (starting on page 2).

Submissions will be one manuscript, not to exceed noted pages. Participants may include a title page as noted above and a one-page query letter, or a one-page cover letter, or a one-page synopsis, while I usually do offer limited suggestions/comments on this additional material, my focus will be on the manuscript (meaning, I'll critique the manuscript and offer limited notes on additional material if I feel there is a need). If submitting additional material please follow proper/standard format (double-spaced, all caps for first mention of a major character for a synopsis, etc.).

A Critique from Victoria Selvaggio

In addition to your SCBWI Gold Form, each manuscript has a combination of Track Changes and Comments. Both are programs within Microsoft Word. If you wish to have the manuscript e-mailed after the event, contact me—this way the full benefit of the comments/changes can be utilized. When contacting me, please put “Critique Request” in the subject line.

When you receive your manuscript from me via e-mail—For seeing Track Changes, you may have to save your manuscript to your computer and enable the editing function in Microsoft Word. After this, you may have to click "Show comments" for Comments and/or click "Show Markup" for Track Changes (I can assist if needed—contact me).

My comments are extensive, so if you don't see them, you may not have enabled the function. Again, I'm happy to assist. Additionally, agents/editors use these editing tools and learning how to use them will be helpful as you continue on this path.

With my notes, PLEASE know I'm thorough. What you received is close to the level of what I offer clients. Comments and suggestions and even my changes on a manuscript are not meant to be offensive in any way. My intention is to encourage a writer to delve a bit deeper, while providing ways of shaping sentences and the story, bringing out the project's full potential.

Finally, this is subjective. As with the many processes in the publishing industry, all agents and editors are different when it comes to connecting to a story. I always encourage ample feedback from agents and editors. I also encourage a writer to use the comments that resonate with his/her vision for this story.