

Self-Critique Form – Humor Writing

This self-critique form has been designed for Dave Fox’s online course, [“Humor Writing: How to Think, Write, Speak, and Be Funnier.”](#)

When you finish writing a humor column, use the questions below to analyze your writing and make sure it’s as funny as it can be. (If you’re enrolled in the course but have not yet completed all the lessons, there might be some concepts and techniques in this questionnaire that you haven’t yet learned. If that’s the case, just answer the questions to the best of your ability based on the context. You can always redo this questionnaire for the same story after you have completed the course.)

More detailed instructions on the most effective ways to use this questionnaire are available at globejotting.com/critique-your-humor-writing/.

Lead

Does your lead paragraph hook your readers and make them laugh right away? How and why is your lead effective?

Is there anything further down in your story that might make for a stronger lead?

Building Your Story

Have you followed the “Hero Up a Tree” formula? If so, who is the “hero” in your story?

What is the “tree” in your story and how does your hero get up in it?

What are the “rocks” you throw at your hero?

Have you “stretched your Silly Putty” for maximum laughs? Is there anywhere you could stretch it further? Anywhere where you’ve overstretched and broken it?

Wording and Structure

Is your writing as crisp and tight as it can be? Are there words, phrases, or sentences that could still be deleted or tightened?

Does each sentence and paragraph have a purpose that moves your story forward?

How is your word choice? Have you examined the words, particularly in your punch lines, and considered funnier alternatives?

Do your punch lines fall in the right spot? Is there anywhere you need to fix this?

Characters and Dialogue

How do your characters' personalities, mannerisms, etc., contribute to the humor?

Is there dialogue in your story? Is there *enough* of it? Does it add to the humor and are there any spots where it could be stronger:

Conclusion and General Review

How does your hero get down from the tree?

How do you feel about the end of your story? Do you leave your readers laughing? Will they feel like reading the story has been worth their time?

Final Thoughts

What do you like best about your story?

Is there anything in your story you are not happy with? Can you identify / describe what *isn't* working for you? Is there anything specific you would like my help with?

If you're enrolled in my [online humor writing course](#), please feel free to post your story in Udemy's online Q&A forums for this workshop, along with a note about what you would like help with.

- **Please be specific.** I'm happy to answer questions such as, "I'm not sure this joke is working. What do you think?" or, "My 'rocks' aren't hitting hard enough. Have you got any suggestions?" or, "What would be funnier in paragraph five: a turtle or a space alien?" (The answer to that last question, by the way, is: A turtle from outer space.)
- A thorough, paragraph-by-paragraph, written critique of a 600-800 word story takes me about an hour. Because Udemy sells my courses at super low prices, and this course includes five story-writing exercises, I thank you for understanding that I can't respond to broad questions such as "Could you please read my story and give me feedback?" If you would like more in-depth help with your writing that I'm able to offer on Udemy, please contact me privately.

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