

Benbrook Public Library Writing Critique Group: Rules & Guidelines

The purpose of the Benbrook Public Library Writing Critique Group is to provide an encouraging, constructive support system for writers looking to hone their craft as they strive for success and fulfillment in the writing field.

Membership

-The group is free to join and is open to any writer 18 years of age or older who has written work that he or she is willing and able to share.

-Writers of all genres are welcome. However, we do ask that all content presented be kept between "PG-13" and "R."

-The group administrator will keep basic contact for each member on file in order to facilitate the management of the group.

Meeting Times

-The group meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 6:30 PM in the library's meeting room.

-Alternate meeting times may be arranged in the event of holidays or other special circumstances.

-Officially, two hours are allotted for each meeting, though meetings may be slightly shorter or longer depending on attendance and volume of material presented for critique.

Meeting Structure

-Each member who wishes to be critiqued should bring in a manuscript of no more than five double spaced pages in length. Members should bring in enough copies to share with the group. The library is able to assist with copying needs.

-Members take turns sharing their work with the group. Each member is allotted between 20 and 30 minutes to be critiqued.

-On his or her turn, a member reads his or her work aloud while the other members listen, take notes, and plan feedback.

-After a member is finished reading aloud, he or she sits silently while the other members of the group provide feedback one by one. Feedback should be limited to a maximum of five minutes. Some back and forth between the critic and the critiqued is permitted, though in the interest of time, interactions must be kept fairly brief.

-By the nature of the system, not everything said in a critique can be positive. Honest opinions, both positive and negative, are encouraged and expected. However, it is asked that criticism be presented in a constructive manner. Excessive negativity is frowned upon and, if not kept in check, may be cause for dismissal from the group. Our goal is to foster an environment of encouragement and overall positivity.

-After all feedback is given, the member being critiqued is allotted up to five minutes of response time.

-Depending on the number of attendees and the volume of work presented for critique, the group may split into two or more smaller critique groups.

-Members wishing to receive feedback on work longer than the aforementioned maximum length are encouraged to e-mail their manuscripts to group members before the meeting at which they would like to discuss the work.

Administration

-The group is administrated and moderated by Benbrook Public Library's Adult Services Librarian, Cullen Dansby. Any questions or concerns about group maintenance should be e-mailed to him at programs@benbrooklibrary.org