



## *InkSlingers Writers Group*

**Mission Statement:** Our purpose is to motivate creativity and to critique each other's efforts. We will be open to all styles and genres, but selective in the people we invite into our embrace. We will come together to honor the words we share and the friendships that we build. We will meet at least once a month to maintain contact and encourage each other in our attempts at fulfilling our passions.

1. Size matters: Too many and the work load is too heavy, but too few and there is not a wide feedback pool. While I want us to succeed, we must limit our group to no more than 10 at any given point. We can invite new members to sit in on a meeting and then read one submission of no more than 10 pages. We will then vote to decide if they will be welcomed into InkSlingers.
2. There will be a mediator: In the beginning it will be me, Ticia Metheney. I will see to it that the meetings begin as scheduled and stay on point as best I can. If I am unable to be in attendance, you will vote in a temporary stand-in.
3. Critique, yes...criticize, NO! There are two types of people in this world: those who find fault to hurt, and those who offer suggestions to help build something better. Put-downs and attacks are out of place in a writing group. This is a critical rule that must be enforced, or you risk alienating members and being asked to leave. One mean-spirited comment can cause a talented beginner to lose faith. Keep in mind that the reason for giving feedback is to help the writer improve, not hurt them. Every member should feel safe sharing. Good critique is specific, constructive, sincere and helpful, and inspires the writer to do his or her best work. Be honest and tactful, keep your language positive, and give encouragement and praise when appropriate.
4. Just Listen! Some writing groups actually have rules that prohibit writers from defending their work. The reason is obvious: any attempt to invalidate a comment about your writing subverts the reason why you're there in the first place – to get reaction from readers.
  - We are coming together as a group to try to help each other improve, and to do that you have to be willing to let your work stand on its merits or fall on its face.
  - Each member needs the opportunity to be able to voice their opinions on each piece.
5. All members should be working on something.  
It's easy for non-sharing members to shift from critiquing to criticizing. When you have nothing to be judged, it's easier to judge, and unfair to those being attacked. Be all in or all out.
6. Read each person's submission. All of it.  
We agree as members of this group that we would do just that. It is impossible to have a constructive conversation about someone's work if only a few have actually read it.



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### **So here are some rules.**

- No more than 10 pages should be submitted by any one person within the month.
- Each person will be given the opportunity to state their opinions on each piece discussed.
- Critique the writing not the writer.
- The writer will remain quiet during the critique, but will be allowed to speak freely after and answer any questions posed.
- Be respectful.
- Be committed- Keep your focus on the group and what we are trying to accomplish.
- Writing tips- None of us are perfect so writing tips and corrections will be given. Embrace the learning aspect of it.
- This group is for Active Members. Active Members are those who participate in the reading and writing of the group. If you are not an active member then you may want to reconsider your involvement.
- 2 HOURS- the goal is to keep our meeting within the 2 hour range. I'm not saying that they won't run over or even fall short, but I have a life and so do you.

If you take issue with any of these guidelines, we will discuss them in an open forum at our next meeting. You are free to contact me as you see fit, but when it comes to InkSlingers- I stand my ground.

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- Here is your first learning lesson. According to "The Writer's Market," all submissions should be in the following format and because of that- we should submit our work to each other in this format.
  - Font: Times New Roman - size 12
  - Double spaced
  - Header must contain your name and the title of the piece
  - Number your pages

**The Head Monkey in Charge,**

*Ticia Metheney*