

Welcome to The MuseltUp Club

Founded by Lea Schizas September 6th, 2005

Affiliated with Apollo's Lyre
<http://www.apollos-lyre.com>

Guidelines for members when you join:

The aim of **The MuseItUp Club** is to encourage and help you in perfecting your manuscript for publication. Perhaps along the way, you will forge a friendship with several of our members that may last a writing lifetime.

When you sign up, you make a commitment to yourself and to your genre group to help and guide your fellow writer. This means that the weekly schedule of submitting and critiquing should be followed to the tee. There will be occasions such as vacation time, illness and unforeseen circumstances that may take you away from the group. All I ask is for you to please notify your moderator beforehand when you know that on a certain date you will not be able to participate so they may be able to alter the monthly schedule in advance. This will secure a smooth flow to the group.

Critique Submissions:

You have the option of submitting either a flash fiction, short story or even a chapter of a novel, as long as the word count does not exceed 2000 words. However, if the word count exceeds the 2000 limit, each member has the option of either critiquing up to the limit or the full submission handed in. this is up to the discretion of each member. Also, it is up to each individual member to critique a submission over the word count.

If you start with chapters of a novel, it's a good idea to stick with the same novel in all of your submissions. This way, the members get a feel for your character and its plot direction and can better guide you with their critiques. This is only a suggestion and not mandatory.

Submission dates fall on Mondays. The scheduled writer has until midnight Monday to hand in their story. After that, the moderator will bump them to the end of the schedule and the next writer in line will submit. If you cannot submit on your scheduled date, please notify your moderator to make alternate arrangements. At times, submitting the day before is advisable. Your moderator will email the monthly

schedules in advance.

By not contacting your moderator beforehand, a valuable week may be lost whereas another writer could have taken your place.

Any writer that does not contact their moderator beforehand may chance being bumped from their group and placed on the waiting list for the next available group to form. All writers will be given three chances before this procedure takes effect. This may sound harsh but the reason for it is to make sure that everyone commits to one another.

Each member will have until Friday to hand in their critiques, leaving the weekend open for any further discussion on the story of the week or other writing related queries you may have. But I'm sure most will take the weekend off for family and friends.

The careful attention you give to grammar and proper presentation when handing in a manuscript to a publisher should be the same when handing in your submission to your group. Think of this as practice. You will not get the full benefit of a proper critique if your members take up valuable time editing your submission structure and errors.

Unacceptable Items:

When giving a critique, you try to point out areas that can improve the submission. Negative comments such as '*this sucks*', '*are you sure you're a writer?*' and such will NOT be tolerated. There is no reason to be offensive. Critique the story and do not judge the contents or storyline or put more into the storyline than there is. Remember that the purpose of this group is to encourage and help one another, not the reverse.

The biggest factor why most groups fall apart is because of negativity. Have fun, learn in the process, and make valuable friends.

From time to time, **The MuseItUp Club will have a fun writing contest within or amongst the groups, The winning member(s) will be announced in the monthly newsletter, The Muse Marquee. This monthly column/zine is offered FREE to all members.**

As a group, the idea is to give support and to encourage one another. in a polite manner. No insults or derogatory remarks are acceptable at any time.

Critique Guidelines:

Critiques such as: ‘*Good work*’, ‘*Nice story*’, are not helpful. When critiquing, make sure you point out the good and bad points of the story. All bad discourages a writer. Tell them what worked or didn’t and give reasons.

Always suggest a change like ‘what if you...’ ‘how about’ instead of saying ‘I would’ or ‘You must...’

At times, you may come across a piece that needs a major overhaul. Try to pinpoint a few of the major flaws only instead of nitpicking at every single detail. Again, the ALL BAD discouragement rule applies here. Remember to praise where praise is due. And always critique a story the way you would want your story critiqued.

A suggestion when reading is to add comments as you read the story the first time. Then, when you read it a second time around, look over your comments. At times, during a first read, the meaning of the story might not be clear until you’ve read it through again.

When critiquing, make sure you hit all or most of the elements below:

~Hook -- Did it grab your attention right off the bat?

~Conflict/Plot – Was there a conflict that bonded you closer with the character(s)? – Was it strong enough to move the story forward? Were there too many inside conflicts that boggled or slowed down the story? – Did the plot make sense? –

~Character(s) – Did the writer make his character interesting enough for you to care what happens to him/her? – Were the characteristics of the main protagonist consistent throughout the story? Did you get to know the character via a lot of backstory and long descriptions or did the writer present him/her throughout by revealing small tidbits about them as the story moved along?

~Setting – Was it the right one for this particular theme/plot? – Could the writer have chosen another? –

~Dialogue – Was it realistic? – Did it move the story forward? – Was the dialogue necessary in certain circumstances, or would a ‘show’ element been better? Did the various characters have their own distinct voice? In other words, if there were no taglines, would you have picked off who was speaking?

POV – Could the writer have picked another POV to make the story more dramatic/appealing/involved? – Did the writer maintain his POV or did it bounce back and forth, confusing the reader?

Ending – Were all foreshadowing elements tied in by the time you finished the story or did the writer leave you hanging? – Did the character come to a solution to his ‘conflict’? – Did the writer rush his/her ending?

Some other areas to critique:

~ Did the writer submit a clean story or was it riddled with spelling errors? –

~ Could the writer have spruced up his story with a different choice of wording?

~ Did the pace of the story move along evenly or did it drag in some places?

~ How about the old ‘show don’t tell; did the writer follow this rule of thumb?

~ Were there a lot of spelling mistakes?

Critiques are to be placed in CAPITALS instead of a colored theme. This makes it easier to identify right away and less confusing.

If you require any additional information, please feel free to email our Muse Membership Director, Kathe Gogolewski, found on the homepage of The MuseItUp CLub at: <http://museitupclub.tripod.com>

Lea

The MuseItUp Club is the recipient of the Preditors and Editors Most Useful Writing Site Award and Writer's Digest Top Writing Sites of 2005.

Check out my other sites:

MuseItUp Club

<http://museitupclub.tripod.com>

an online writing critique community

Apollo's Lyre

<http://www.apollos-lyre.com>

a writers ezine

The Muse Marquee

<http://themusemarquee.tripod.com>

a monthly 10 column/ezine for writers

The Muse Book Reviews

<http://themusebookreviews.tripod.com>

review site and monthly contest

Coffee Cramp eZine

<http://coffeecrampmagazine.tripod.com>

a reader's eZine filled with stories