

# *Critique Group Guidelines*

Pass out copies of your excerpt so that everyone in the group can have a hard copy to mark in as you read.

If necessary, briefly set up what you are about to read by telling us anything we need to know in order to understand the excerpt. Do not ramble or tell us more than we need to know.

Don't apologize for what you've written.

Read your story excerpt to the group. Read exactly what's on your manuscript. Read slowly. Writers who zoom through their stories make it difficult for those listening to process and analyze what they hear.

When you are done, your group will comment on your work. Don't talk during this process. Don't try to defend or explain what you've written. Your peers are giving you their impression of your work. Their comments might be good ... or not-so-good. Either way, respect their opinions and receive their feedback graciously. If someone has a question about what they heard, answer it briefly.

Not every comment will be helpful. You are not obligated to use every suggestion. But do pay attention and consider each one.

Remember that your story is not you. The comments people make have nothing to do with you and everything to do with the words on your paper.