

The Critique "Cheat Sheet"

Exclusively yours, courtesy of The Christian Indie Writer's Podcast

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How to Critique Using "The Sandwich Method"

The Sandwich Method is a great way to soften criticism and build trust

1. Start with a slice of "Bread" - a positive comment.

You can make a positive statement about your feelings on the piece, overall, a particular phrase or word choice that you liked, or even point out a good choice of character name.



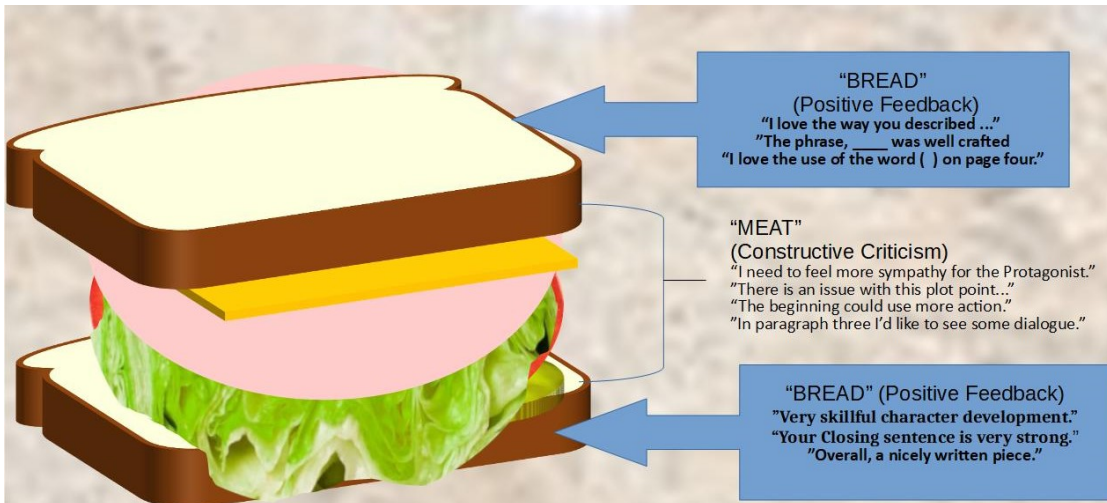
2. Move on to the "Meat" - your constructive criticism.

Focus on two or three key areas for improvement. Make sure to differentiate when you are speaking about your preferences, as a reader, as opposed to a universally recognizable problem with the work. Always remember, the goal is to make the piece better.



3. End with one more slice of "Bread" - a final positive comment

Encourage the writer. The point is for the session to end on a positive note.



How to Recieve Critique

To get the most out of a potentially nerve-wracking process, always remember to **S.M.I.L.E.**

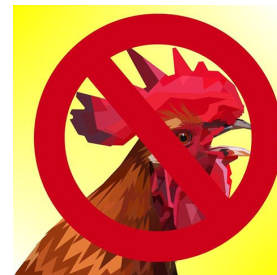
Submit on time - before the deadline, if possible.

Make your expectations clear - what do you need from the group?

Imagine you are not the writer - try to see the piece objectively so that criticisms don't feel personal.

Listen - Frequent interruptions are counterproductive.

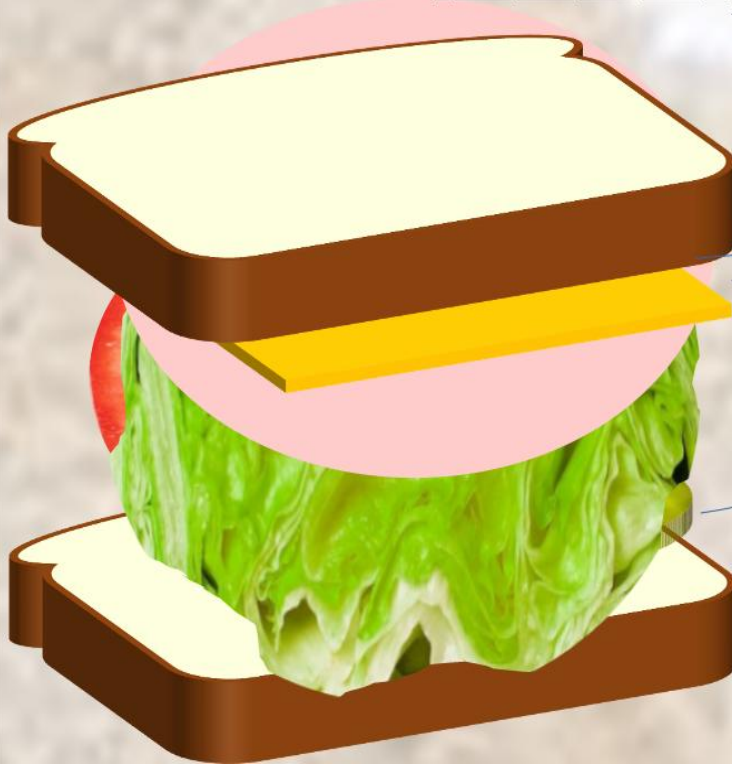
Evaluate what was said - only take the advice that rings true with you.



“Sandwich Method” Critique Note Sheet

Author's Name _____

Title of Piece _____



Helpful Hints for Better “Bread”

- “I really like the use of the word (___) on page 6.”
- “I think, overall, the piece has good pacing.”
- “I like the imagery in paragraph 2 on page one.”
- ”I felt like I was there.”
- ”You did a good job of “show, don’t tell.”
- “Overall, the piece made me feel (_____).”
- “I can see much improvement in your writing.”
- “Good use of descriptive language.”
- “I love the growth of the character over the course of the piece.”
- “I love this character.”
- ”Excellent usage of imagery, especially here...”
- “I appreciate your understanding of the historical setting of this piece.”
- “I can tell you really researched about...”

Helpful Hints for More Meaningful “Meat”

- “Is there a better word you could use here?”
- “I think, overall, the piece is a bit slow.”
- “Can you add more imagery in that scene where...”
- ”I would love to see more action in the opening.”
- ”Instead of telling me (...) can you show me through description and/or dialogue?”
- “There is no “shattering moment.”
- “The Climax is in the wrong spot/absent.”
- “I’d love to see this character experience a bit of growth.”
- “Did they really have curling irons in 1492?”
- “I wonder if you’d considered eliminating these sentences to tighten up the prose.”
- “There is a mechanical error repeated throughout the piece. Let’s address it...”

Always Remember

Everyone in your group should feel safe enough to share, and should be expected to do so.
The goal of a critique should always be to improve the piece.