Critique

The following table contains categories under which you might comment about a piece of writing. It isn't necessary to make a comment in every category, just those areas in which, in your opinion, the piece would most benefit from more of the author's attention. Try to be helpful and constructive in your comments.

Topic	Pro	Con
Title	Interesting, intriguing?	Flat, boring, gives away the ending?
Opening	Original? Did it grab you?	Was it slow, uninteresting?
Plot	Was it plausible, exciting, clever, memorable, original? Does it fit the characters?	Was there no real plot, was it predictable, too simple or too complex? Familiar, strained credulity, lacked pace or too fast?
Characters	Did they seem real to you? Easy to understand? Did they behave in or out of character?	Too many characters or too few, leading to sketchy, bland cartoons of people, little indication of what kind of people they are or easy to confuse one with another?
Descriptions	Were they vivid, did you feel part of the scene? Can you see the locations in the mind's eye?	Too much description or too little? Too many locations or too few? Too much "telling" rather than "showing", leaving you as an outside observer? Does the reader see things that the characters can't? Is this a bad thing?
Language	Did the choice of words fit the time, place, people? Was the writing economical? Sensitive choice of words.	Did the style jar, seem anachronistic? Did it seem unnecessarily wordy? No memorable phrases.
Emotions	Were your emotions stirred – humour, love, stress, excitement, sorrow, anger, happy, sad? Do you feel motivated to read on.	Were you left unmoved or bored by the people or events in the story? Is it heavy going?
Dialogue	Did it sound natural, believable? Did it help the story along? In period? Is the use of contractions appropriate? Do the characters have different voices?	Too much or too little? Was it stilted, artificial, out of character of the people, time, place? Did they tell each other things they should already know?
Setting(s)	Could you 'see' the locations? Is the reader's view the same as the characters?	Are there too many locations, making the story fragmented? Too few, making the story slow, uninteresting?

		Are descriptions laborious or too brief?
Viewpoint	Does the viewpoint remain the same throughout or does it change?	Does (Do) the chosen viewpoint(s) work?
Ending	Does the ending leave you satisfied, surprised, shocked? Would you want to read a sequel?	Was the ending too sudden, jarring, confusing? Do you wish it had ended sooner?
Impression	Did it hold your interest throughout? Was it an enjoyable experience? Page turner, quality writing?	Run of the mill? Did you lose interest, not care about the ending? Were you relieved when the story ended?
Technical	Does the author show a good grasp of the technicalities of writing and the subject they are writing about?	Are there errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation, layout, facts? Are there clichés, examples of melodrama or preaching? Does it overuse the pluperfect tense?
Help	Finish with some advice – editing, target readership – and/or praise. Identify strengths	