

## How to Read Like a Writer

If you're new to this, start with the 3-5 things you want to improve most.

1. Pay attention to the first paragraph. How did the author start? What drew you in? Did they start with a character, a description, dialogue, or action?
2. How were the main characters introduced? How many at a time? What's made it easy or difficult to recall the characters? How were they described in a way that gave you an image of their appearance and their general personality?
3. How many kinds of conflict were there? Great novels have lots of different kinds of conflict.
4. How did each scene and/or chapter contribute to the rising action?
5. How did each scene and/or chapter contribute to character growth? What was revealed about the character? What weakness and strengths?
6. Is there any foreshadowing?
7. What is the tone of the book?
8. Is there symbolism? Why?
9. What motifs are used and why?
10. How many lines or words or adjectives are used in descriptions? How does the writer describe something? Does it get its own paragraph? Is it embedded in action?
11. How many struggles do the main characters face during the rising action?
12. How many surprises were there? Were they cliché?
13. What qualities about the main character made you root for them?
14. How does the author move through gaps in time or time jumps?
15. What emotions are most prevalent in the characters? How are they shown?
16. How does the author end scenes? How does the author make you want to turn the page?
17. How long or short are the scenes?
18. How long are the chapters? Are there breaks within the chapters?
19. What makes the pacing fast or slow? Where did you find yourself reading fast or lingering? Why and how did the author do that?
20. How is dialogue used? When is it used and when is not?
21. When is 'he said, she said' used and when is action used instead of a dialogue tag?
22. What dialogue tags are used?
23. Did we feel like we know peripheral characters? Why or why not? What did the author write or not write that makes them feel real to us?
24. How close to the last page is the climax?
25. How many pages is the falling action and resolution?
26. What is the last sentence? How does it *work* emotion or plot or character wise?
27. Looks at sentence length. Shorter sentences make for a 'faster' read.

