Historical Fiction Critique

# Showing vs. Telling

**Sentence Level**

1. Quote a line in the story that tells rather than shows. Look for a place where the author does not paint a specific picture of the action in your mind.
2. Rewrite the sentence so that shows rather than tells.

**Thought Verbs**

1. Quote a line in the story where the author uses one of the discouraged “thought verbs”.
2. Rewrite the sentence so it does not use the thought verb, and so it better develops the character or advances the plot.

# Historical Content Integration

**Elements– Overall Integration**

1. Quote a sentence where an element is represented very well in the story.
2. Discuss why that element is represented well.
3. Describe what element is least integrated into the story.
4. Give one specific suggestion for how to better integrate that element into the story.

**Elements – Plot**

1. Quote a section where an element plays a major role in the setting, rising action, conflict or climax. If this is not done, quote the section where it best could be and give a suggestion for how to do it.
2. Give one specific suggestion for where another element could be integrated into the plot of the story or for how to better integrate that element into the story.

**Elements – Character**

1. Quote a section where an element is integrated into who the character is or into how they see the world. If this is not done, quote the section where it best could be and give a suggestion for how to do it.
2. Give one specific suggestion for where another element could be integrated into the character of the story.

# Round Characters

**Character Traits**

1. Quote the line where the most dominant aspect of the character’s personality comes out, and describe what you think that dominant quality is.
2. Give a specific suggestion for another personality trait that character could have, and describe where that trait could come out in the story. If the main trait you described is positive, choose a negative trait to round out their character. If it is negative, choose a positive trait.

**Internal Conflict**

1. Quote the section of the story that clearly shows the internal conflict of the character, and describe why that is such a good example of that conflict. If there is no internal conflict, quote the section that would be the best place to include one.
2. Give at least 1 specific suggestion for how the author could better show the internal conflict.

# Round Characters, Continued!

**Character Change 1**

1. Quote two lines in the story, one that shows who the character was before the change, and one that shows who the character becomes after. If there is not a major change, quote the section where you think the best place for them to make that change, and describe the change you think the character should go through.
2. Give at least 2 specific suggestions for how that author could better show or dramatize that change for the reader.

**More Character**

1. Quote a section of the story that is most lacking in character development, and describe why it is lacking in character development.
2. Give 2 specific suggestions for how the author could include some character development in that section.

# Plot Arc

**Rising Action**

1. Quote the sentence that best demonstrates the rising action. If there is no rising action, quote the sentence where it would fit best. Skip # 2 if there is no rising action.
2. Explain how the rising action moves the character into the conflict.
3. Give a specific suggestion for how the rising action could better launch the plot and build engagement for the reader.

**Continuing Conflict**

1. Quote sections from the story that show the contrast between what the character wants, and the outside forces that are preventing him/her from achieving it. If this is not done, quote the section that would be a good place to create this conflict.
2. Give one or two specific suggestions for how to make this conflict more clear or more dramatic.

**Climax**

1. Quote the sentence or two that best represents the climax of the story. If there is no climax, quote the section that would best be turned into the climax, and suggest how to do it.
2. Describe how that climax brings the character conflict to a peak.
3. Give a specific suggestion for how to make the climax more dramatic.
4. Give a specific suggestion for how to demonstrate the character conflict in the climax.

**Resolution**

1. Quote the line that shows how the internal character tensions have been resolved. If this is not done, quote the section where it could best happen.
2. Give two specific suggestions for how the author could resolve them better.

# Sentence Craft

1. Quote a sentence that has any of the following sentence craft elements we have studied: active/interesting verbs or a verbal phrase. If you cannot find any of these in the story, do #3 and #4 twice.
2. Explain what craft element the sentence has and how it helps with the meaning or flow of the sentence.
3. Quote a sentence that could be better crafted.
4. Rewrite it, with the author if you need, to include either: interesting verbs or a verbal phrase.