

Appendix 1

An Example of Writing a Critique for a Story or Creative Non-Fiction

1. What specific imagery, turn of phrase, commentary, or description speaks to you directly in this piece?

The child mind is a vision that he couldn't get out of his mind. The part in which he finally sees the screen.

2. What part do you want to know more about?

I wanted to know more about the speaker's mother. The setting was a bit confusing, I never knew of a drive-in that had porno movies.

3. What part confuses you?

The above mentioned confuses me as well as the use of ass, snake, pecker. I am not sure how using these words added to the power of the story.

4. What questions do you have for the writer?

Why did you use the word ass? Was it to set the tone of the story?

5. Does this prose piece follow traditional story form—beginning, middle, end?

Yes, it has a beginning, middle and ending and in that order.

6. If not, what seems to be its focus?

N/A

1. Discuss the use of the following story elements:

Point of View – *Is told through the eyes of a child, seeing something horrible. First-person.*

Conflict – *The child coming to terms with the evil side of this.*

Setting – *The backseat of a car at a drive-in theatre in the dark.*

Description – *The descriptions are pretty detailed, sometimes fairly intense, even.*

Dialogue – *Really only takes place in his mind.*

Characterization – *Characters are very underdeveloped.*

Language – *Is in keeping with the subject; it uses fairly strong verbs and adjectives, reflecting the fact that the story describes a fairly intense happening.*

Symbol – *I failed to find any symbolism here; pretty straightforward, I thought.*

Theme – *Not sure.*

*Use a "Say Back" to the writer to sum up your understanding of the story. (Say back in about 5 sentences what you think happens in this story and what it accomplishes.)

This seems a horrible existence for a five-year-old child, bordering on real cruelty—especially the way he views his mother's punishment. I think you slip out of the mind of the five year old from time to time and become an adult. You have to decide how you are going to tell the story. If you stay in the mind of the five year old, you must rethink the way you say things. Would a child of five say the words "ass" and "predominant," and "bizarre". The language of a five year old is very limited, and you would have to stay with it. From the boy's point of view his position and his view of life seems very sad to me. You might consider using dialogue to get some of the story across too. The movement from the five-year-old mind to the eighteen-year-old mind doesn't really work for me. I

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like many of the images in the child's mind. Some of the analogies he makes are interesting and funny. Emphasizing these things more can highlight the imaginative and often misinformed mind of a child. Good luck with it.

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