

**WILLA CATEGORY RUBRIC  
FICTION ©**

*(Includes Contemporary, Historical, Original Softcover)*

<b>Novel</b>	<b>Ineligible</b>	<b>4 - 7 points</b>	<b>8 - 10 points</b>
1. Women of the West Theme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Male main character(s)</li> <li>• Book not set in the West</li> <li>• Does not portray authentic western experience</li> <li>• Theme &amp; content do not reflect WWW's mission &amp; goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Female characters prominent</li> <li>• Book set in the West but could have happened anywhere; or, book partly set in the West*</li> <li>• Generally portrays authentic experience</li> <li>• Theme &amp; content generally reflect WWW's mission &amp; goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Female main character(s)</li> <li>• Western setting primary &amp; essential*</li> <li>• Consistently portrays authentic western experience</li> <li>• Theme &amp; content excellent reflections of WWW's mission &amp; goals</li> </ul>
	0 -3 points	4 - 7 points	8 - 10 points
2. Characterization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Characters not well developed</li> <li>• Stereotypical character(s)**</li> <li>• Dialogue not convincing</li> <li>• Characters indistinct from those in similar books</li> <li>• Didactic, preachy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most characters complex</li> <li>• Generally no inappropriate gender, ethnic, racial, or other stereotypes**</li> <li>• Dialogue at times sounds unnatural</li> <li>• Characters similar to others within the genre, but well developed</li> <li>• Character's "lesson" generally well presented</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All characters complex, well developed</li> <li>• No inappropriate gender, ethnic, racial, or other stereotypes included**</li> <li>• Dialogue sounds natural</li> <li>• Characters distinct, original</li> <li>• Any "lesson" subtle &amp; organic</li> </ul>
3. Setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting not important to the book</li> <li>• Setting not described</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting of moderate importance</li> <li>• Setting described in conventional terms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A strong sense of place is inherent in book</li> <li>• Setting vividly described, using all senses</li> </ul>



	0 - 3 points	4 - 7 points	8 - 10 points
4. Plot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plot confusing</li> <li>Subplots (if used) sporadic, or not well balanced with main plot, or left unresolved</li> <li>Book fails to hook readers; ending not satisfying</li> <li>Implausible</li> <li>Plot predictable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plot moderately well developed</li> <li>Subplots (if used) not always balanced or well resolved</li> <li>Slow beginning leads to more action; or conclusion leaves some questions unanswered; or conclusion is not satisfying</li> <li>Some points may strain credibility</li> <li>Plot not new, but shows some freshness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plot well developed</li> <li>Subplots (if used) well integrated &amp; resolved</li> <li>Opening draws reader in; conclusion satisfying</li> <li>Suspension of disbelief consistent</li> <li>Plot original, fresh</li> </ul>
5. Voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Narrative voice lacking, confusing, distances readers from the story</li> <li>Point of view confusing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Narrative voice dependable</li> <li>Point of view wavers, or occasionally jumps</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Narrative voice engaging, fresh, distinct</li> <li>Point of view clear, consistent; or POV shifts clear &amp; intentional</li> </ul>
6. Literary Qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poor or inappropriate command of language (slang, word choice, figurative language, etc.)</li> <li>Imagery confusing or nonexistent</li> <li>Premise conventional, simplistic, expected</li> <li>Book not suited for intended audience, unappealing</li> <li>Not enjoyable or thought-provoking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moderate command of language (slang, word choice, figurative language, etc.)</li> <li>Imagery clear</li> <li>Premise not new, but well explored</li> <li>Book generally suited to the intended audience, moderately appealing</li> <li>A pleasant read</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistently strong command of language (slang, word choice, figurative language, etc.)</li> <li>Imagery vivid, fresh</li> <li>Premise breaks new ground</li> <li>Well suited to intended audience, appealing</li> <li>Thought-provoking</li> </ul>



	0 - 3 points	4 - 7 points	8 - 10 points
7. Technical Conventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Word count, sentence structure, vocabulary inappropriate for target audience</li> <li>• Frequent problems with grammar, punctuation, spelling</li> <li>• Sloppy, wordy, repetitious writing</li> <li>• Poor balance between dialogue &amp; narrative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Word count, sentence structure, vocabulary appropriate for target audience</li> <li>• Occasional lapses of grammar, punctuation, spelling</li> <li>• Clear writing</li> <li>• Adequate balance between dialogue &amp; narrative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Word count, sentence structure, vocabulary excellent for target audience</li> <li>• Clear grasp of grammar, punctuation, spelling; or reader trusts that conventions purposefully set aside</li> <li>• Tight writing</li> <li>• Good balance between dialogue &amp; narrative</li> </ul>
8. Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unattractive cover art &amp; design</li> <li>• Interior design features lacking</li> <li>• Font &amp; typesetting difficult to read</li> <li>• Illustrations (if used) of poor quality, or irrelevant to text</li> <li>• E-book improperly bound, loose pages</li> <li>• Audio book voice quality poor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adequate cover art &amp; design</li> <li>• Interior design features adequate</li> <li>• Font &amp; typesetting adequate</li> <li>• Illustrations (if used) of moderate clarity, or not always germane to the text</li> <li>• E-book improperly bound</li> <li>• Audio book voice quality adequate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attractive, appropriate, compelling cover art &amp; design</li> <li>• Interior design features reflect book's tone</li> <li>• Font &amp; typesetting clear</li> <li>• Illustrations (if used) appropriate, clear</li> <li>• E-book properly bound</li> <li>• Audio book voice quality appropriate</li> </ul>

\* WWW defines “the West” as all of North America west of the Mississippi River.

\*\* Depiction of a character’s biases or stereotypical views, presented in context, may be appropriate.

WWW defines Historical Fiction as any story set at least 50 years prior to the publication date.

