



## LAURA SHORT FICTION RUBRIC© LAURA SHORT FICTION CONTEST AND AWARDS

|                            | Ineligible  | 4 – 7 points  | 8 – 10 points   |
|----------------------------|---|---|---|
| 1. Women of the West Theme | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Male main character(s)</li> <li>• Story 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 main character(s)</li> <li>• Story set in the West but could have happened anywhere; or, story 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>  |
| 2. Characterization        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Characters not developed</li> <li>• Stereotypical character(s)**</li> <li>• Dialogue not convincing</li> <li>• Characters generic, not interesting</li> <li>• Reader does not sympathize with main character</li> <li>• Didactic, preachy</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main character somewhat developed</li> <li>• Generally no inappropriate gender, ethnic, racial or other stereotypes**</li> <li>• Dialogue at times sounds unnatural</li> <li>• Character(s) interesting</li> <li>• Reader sympathizes somewhat with main character</li> <li>• Character's "lesson" generally well presented</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main character well developed</li> <li>• No inappropriate gender, ethnic, racial, or other stereotypes included**</li> <li>• Dialogue sounds natural</li> <li>• Character(s) original and unique</li> <li>• Reader sympathizes with main character</li> <li>• Any "lesson" subtle and organic</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.

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## LAURA Short Fiction Rubric, continued

|            | 0 – 3 points  | 4 – 7 points  | 8 – 10 points   |
|------------|---|---|---|
| 3. Setting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting not important to the story</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 story</li> <li>• Setting vividly described, using most of the senses</li> </ul>   |
| 4. Plot    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main character has no goal or problem she solves, or this is unclear</li> <li>• Story fails to hook readers; ending not satisfying</li> <li>• Implausible</li> <li>• Plot predictable</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main character has goal or problem of marginal importance</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>• Main character has difficulty achieving important goal or solving important problem</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 and intentional</li> </ul>   |

|                          | 0 - 3 points  | 4 - 7 points   | 8 – 10 points   |
|--------------------------|---|--|---|
| 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>Not enjoyable or thought-provoking</li> <li>Story title ordinary, uninspired</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>A pleasant read</li> <li>Title fitting, appropriate</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>Thought-provoking</li> <li>Title intriguing or resonates with meaning</li> </ul> |
| 7. Technical Conventions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frequent problems with grammar, punctuation, spelling</li> <li>Sloppy, wordy, repetitious writing</li> <li>Poor balance between dialogue and narrative</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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>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>   |

LAURA Short Fiction Rubric, continued