

THE SCIENCE FICTION SHORT STORY PROJECT

PROJECT INFORMATION:

The difference between mainstream and genre shorts stories

Mainstream stories usually put more emphasis on character growth and personal revelation. It's not unusual to read a mainstream story where the "action" of, consists of say, a dinner party at which the narrator realizes that he's not happy, but neither is anyone else. Incautious readers might miss the point entirely, and be left wondering why they just read 7,000 words on canapés.

There is another critical difference between genre stories and mainstream ones: Genre stories are *speculative*. Genre writers invent *worlds*-technologies, magic systems, alien races-that sit in the foreground of the story. Sometimes, especially in hard SF, the technologies are the story: The plot is constructed around revealing *really cool technology* that the author has dreamed up.

Genre stories are built around a single idea, a single theme. They are one-trick ponies, written to be read in one or two sittings. Novels are three-ring circuses, with the space to meander down side roads and explore sub-plots. The hardest part of short-story writing is picking a single subject and sticking to it.

Beginnings, Middles and Endings

In genre short story-and in most other kinds of literature-there are three parts to the narrative, each with its own purpose: the beginning, the middle, and the end. These all work together to create a sense of rising tension in the reader that pulls them along the story. These plot elements are like a locomotive, pulling a train that contains all the things the writer is trying to accomplish with his story: capturing emotion, exploring a political idea, demonstrating a new technology.

The beginning of a story has to have a "**hook**"-that is, it has to capture the reader's interest. Good hooks are tricky to accomplish. They need to pique interest without confusing the reader. They need to create a sense of action, but that action can't be so hot that there's nowhere to go from there.

Here's a great hook from Bruce Sterling's "Taklamakan," originally published in the October/November 1998 issue of Asimov's *Science Fiction* magazine:

A bone-dry frozen wind tore at the earth outside, its lethal howling cut to a muffled moan. Katrinko and Spider Pete were camped deep in a crevice in the rock, wrapped in furry darkness. Pete could hear Katrinko breathing, with a light rattle of chattering teeth. The neuter's yeasty armpits smelled like nutmeg.

In one short paragraph, Sterling establishes a cast of characters, a setting, danger, and enough weirdness to keep the reader going.

As we've seen, a hook should also work to set the scene for the story and introduce some of the key players. It should hint at the "theme" of the story-the reason that you've decided to write this story. Nailing the hook is one of the trickiest parts of a story.

The **middle** of the story serves to create a sense of escalating tension. Every page of your story needs to have a reason to turn to the next: some sense of danger, some risk, and some mystery that grows closer to resolution.

Finally, the **ending** is the payoff for all that tension. The stakes are as high as they can get, and the writer gives readers what they've been craving since page one: release. The bad guy is vanquished (or the hero dies), the quest is completed (or it fails), the new technology saves the day (or it fizzles miserably).

The climax doesn't have to tie up all the loose ends in a story. Usually, there's a short scene or two that follows the climax in which everyone catches their breath and the writer takes a moment to wrap up all the threads she is created in the story

The Seven-Point Plot

One of the most common and most controversial recipes is writer, critic, and Editor Algis Budrys's Seven-Point Plot. The best thing about a Seven-Point Plot story is that it guarantees that there is a degree of rising tension throughout the story, so that every time your readers finish a page, they have a reason to flip to the next. Here are the seven points:

1. A person
2. In a place
3. Has a problem

These first three points are usually hit in the first paragraph, or even the first sentence. The idea is that for tension to occur, you have to be worried about someone. For you to be worried about someone, you have to identify with that person. By immediately identifying a character, a setting, and a source of tension, you provide your readers with a reason to go on reading.

Note that the "problem" in this case can be something as simple as being late for a train or walking into a job interview. You don't want to make the problem too dire, since the story won't have anywhere to go from there.

4. The person intelligently tries to solve the problem and fails
5. Things get worse

Points four and five are called a *try/fail sequence*. Your character's attempt at resolving his or her problem has to be intelligent; otherwise, your readers will stop identifying with the character. Despite this, the character has to fail, otherwise the story is over. Note that failure in this case need not be a total rout: Your character may accomplish his nominal goal (defusing a bomb), only to discover that this does not meet his long-term objective (there is another, bigger bomb underneath the first one).

[A **try/fail sequence** is a scene or collection of scenes in which character tries intelligently to solve his or her problem and fails. The failure worsens the problem. This is the core of rising tension.]

"Things get worse" is another way of saying that the stakes are being raised for your character: She misses the train and so now has to run across town to deliver an important message to someone who is about to make a terrible mistake. This is the "rising" part of the rising tension." At every turn, your character's personal danger increases, until her entire future rests on overcoming the final challenge.

6. The climax

We call this final challenge the "climax." A climax is just another try/fail sequence, but one in which everything is at stake. Either your character succeeds at this, in which case you've got a happy ending; or he fails, which yields a tragic ending.

7. Dénouement

Dénouement is a French word meaning "outcome." In a Seven-Point Plot story, the Dénouement is what comes after the climax. It's an opportunity for your audience to catch their breath, think about what they've just read, and have any loose ends tied up for them. A good example of Dénouement is at the end of Star Wars, when after blowing up the Death Star, Luke, Han, and the gang is presented with medals by Princess Leia.

The Fork

Another technique is Damon Knight's "Fork." Knight pioneered a storytelling style in science fiction that formed the basis for much of the classic SF we know today, especially Rod Serling's *Twilight Zone*.

➤ In the Fork, the writer's objective is to present two clear possible endings to the story:

- Victory or Defeat
- Life or Death
- Success or failure

However, these two possibilities are actually misdirection. While the author is establishing these two possibilities, he is simultaneously and subtly foreshadowing a third, entirely different ending. Just when the reader thinks he has it all figured out, the writer springs the third ending on him, and it is suddenly, blindingly obvious that the third ending was the author's intent all along.

A great example of this is the *Twilight Zone* episode “Will the Real Martian Please Stand Up?” in which a busload of people is stuck at a roadside diner, waiting for the snow to clear. A quick headcount reveals that there’s one extra person in the diner, and paranoia sets in, convincing the passengers that the extra person is a Martian masquerading as human. The action proceeds as each character explains why they couldn’t be the imposter, and we are led to believe that the least credible of these is the true alien. When the road finally clears and the passengers depart, two men are left in the diner: a dapper old gent and the soda jerk. The soda jerk looks on in alarm as two extra pairs of arms emerge from the old gent’s overcoat, but the alarm changes to smugness as the jerk pushes up his paper hat to reveal a third eye—there were two aliens in the diner all along, each unaware of the other.

This story sets up a couple of possibilities: Either there is indeed an alien, or the passengers are engaging in mass hysteria. The payoff—that there are two aliens is gently hinted at throughout the story, but the other two possibilities overshadow it, until the truth is revealed and the audience slaps its collective forehead and says, “Of course!”

The crucial element of a Fork story is that the third ending must be foreshadowed, but that the foreshadowing has to be subtle enough that no one notices it until the last moment. Simply springing a third ending on the audience at the last moment won’t do. That’s just cheating.

Danger, Danger

The Fork is similar to a horrible writing mistake called a “Deus Ex Machina.” In a Deus Ex Machina, the story is ended by divine (or authorial) intervention. A classic Deus Ex Machina ending is “... and then he woke up. Thank heavens, it was all a dream.” What distinguishes a Fork story from a Deus Ex Machina is that the Fork’s ending is subtly hinted at all through the story.

Important Concepts

Suspension of Disbelief

It really doesn’t matter how preposterous your science is, as long as it’s believable. Once again, look at *Star Trek*. There are about a hundred more elements and elementary particles mentioned in that show than we know exist. Starships move like naval vessels, and of course, there’s the problem of sound in space. People travel by having their bodies torn apart and beamed across space. And almost all aliens are bipedal, breathe the same air as us, are capable of interbreeding, and in fact differ only in the shape of their respective foreheads. It doesn’t matter that all of this is ridiculous from a scientific standpoint. We suspend our disbelief because these elements of the *Star Trek* universe always work the same way. They are internally consistent, and they follow rules that make sense within the framework of the stories told.

Internal and External Consistency

Consistency is the demand that things make logical sense. If you give the hero an invincible weapon in Chapter One, you need to explain why he can’t use it to defeat the villain in Chapter Ten. If a character acts one way all the time, you’ll need to explain why she changes and suddenly acts another way. The demands of consistency in SF extend to the scientific and physical ideas you’re using in your story:

- **Internal consistency** is simply getting the facts of the story itself straight. It applies to the characters, situations, timing, and setting of the story. These things are internal because they don’t rely on history, physics, or geography that exists independently of the story.
- **External consistency** is the demand that you fit the facts of the world we know. Thus, if you say you are setting a story in the earth we know, you can’t place the island of Sumatra between Greenland and Iceland. You can’t have faster-than light travel in 1960s America and still say it’s the America we know. That’s a violation of external consistency.
- **Narrative consistency** is most familiar to us from watching bad movies. When the hero runs out of a room wearing one shirt, and we cut away to outside the room only to see him emerge wearing a different shirt, that’s a consistency problem. Or, in movie-speak, a continuity problem.

Conventions: The Story’s Framework

In order to move the story along, SF authors typically use conventions. Here’s a short list of common conventions, any one of which could stop a story dead if the author had to explain it:

- Starships that travel at faster-than-light speed
- Artificial gravity in space
- Inhabited planets with earth-like environments
- Hand-held energy weapons (lasers, blasters) with tremendous power
- No advancement in political science in the future; future politics always resembles our own

Most SF stories are 90 percent conventional elements, with 10 percent innovation. It has to be this way; otherwise, the reader is left at sea, unable to decide what to focus on. You can think of the conventions as the conceptual skeleton or framework of the story. The key ideas that make this story unique are added on top of that framework, like the unique facade of a building.

Time-Honored Expository Tricks

- **The “infodump.”** An infodump is where, like Verne, you stop the action and lecture. It’s generally frowned upon, as the following snippet should make clear:

“Blastula, you villain, I have you now!”
“Ha-ha, Dirk, what you fail to realize is that you are not standing on an ordinary throw-rug, but rather a particularly ravenous member of the species Mixumpli!”
The Mixumpli’s tendrils whipped around Dirk’s torso, and he screamed as it dragged him down.
The Mixumpli was first discovered in the year 2145 by an explorer named Markey, during his travels on the planet Armstrong. During the planet’s unusually strong spring rains, an odd celestial phenomenon occurs, which Markey called the . . .
Well, you get the idea.

- **The “Rod and Don” conversation.** This technique involves two characters telling one another something both already know. They are speaking strictly for the reader’s benefit. Check out the following example:

“There it is,” said Rod. “Mars!”
“Yes,” agreed Don, “and as you know, Rod, the Red Planet was aptly named after the Roman god of war. Aptly, because you and I are even now leading the invasion force that will bring wrack and ruin to the inhabitants of this warlike planet!”
Rod: “Ha, ha!”
Don: “Ha, ha, ha!”
And so on.

- **The walkthrough.** This is a thinly disguised lecture. In it, a character from outside the action is given a guided tour by another character. It’s Rod and Don, with one character that is ignorant. Actually, walkthroughs can be very effective: *Brave New World* is one big walkthrough. They can also be cleverly disguised; many SF novels open with characters waking or arriving in strange circumstances, and having to learn where they are. As they learn, we learn.

- **Acclimatization.** This technique is one of the most subtle ways of introducing ideas. You let the reader get comfortable with character and situation, while dropping hints that there is more to know. William Gibson does this sort of thing extremely well. The first time you introduce the technology or idea that will be central, you do so casually, almost as an afterthought. Perhaps the thing is only named, not explained. Later, you see a character using the technology or catch the edge of a conversation involving the idea. But it’s still not central to the scene. Finally, after a few repetitions like this, you have the main characters engage the technology or idea fully. By this time, the reader is comfortable with it. Done right, this technique can be used to educate the reader without the reader even knowing that it’s happening. For an example, read the opening chapters of William Gibson’s novel *Neuromancer*, and trace the explanation of cyberspace, cyberdecks, and “jacking in.”
- **Redefinition and example.** This is the most ambitious and difficult way of presenting new information. Quite simply, you invent a new language for your ideas, or remap existing words, and just start using them. Readers have to puzzle it out for themselves. In *Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand*, Samuel Delany remaps our words for gender, so that “she” refers to any person, asexually, while “he” refers to the object of desire, of either gender. It takes a while to figure out what’s going on, as the world is full of she’s who sometimes become he’s for a while. It’s up to us to figure out what it means.

What Makes a “Good” SF CHARACTER?

- If SF uses ideas rather than character to communicate its meanings, then a good is one that supports or exemplifies those ideas. This isn’t the SF character same as saying that SF characters should be simple mouthpieces author. The function of character may be a bit different in SF than the mainstream, but it is no less important that your characters be credible.

- Your characters are the gateway into the worlds of your stories. The reader enters the story by identifying with the characters. The stronger the identification, the more vivid the experience. For this reason, it doesn't matter how detailed and wonderful the futuristic world you've created is by itself. Without an inviting and open gateway, that world will be forever closed to the reader.
- The best SF characters are those who are accessible to us, but also very much a part of the worlds they inhabit. The vivid characters of the Star Wars movies, for instance, are successful even though they are relatively two-dimensional. Han Solo doesn't just inhabit his world -- he helps define it for us.
- In science fiction, you have all the normal responsibilities that a writer faces for creating strong characters. You also have the responsibility to make the character fit your invented world.

Creating Vivid Characters in Science Fiction and Fantasy

You can be happy about the characters you create if they are engaging, believable, and sympathetic. This is true of any literary creation, naturally.

No matter how engaging your characters are, in a SF story they'll be fighting with your setting and ideas for the reader's attention. The results of this battle of priorities have traditionally been:

- Flat, stock characters (for instance, crusty space captains) that need no real introduction. Such characters let you get on with the plot and ideas without worrying about character.
- Flat, stock settings (for instance, the standard Dungeons-and-Dragons-type fantasy world) that also need no introduction. In this case, the hackneyed setting lets you concentrate on character because you don't have to worry about the world.
- Rigid separation of character and setting, resulting in the author having to stop the action every now and then to lecture about the setting or ideas.
- "Rod and Don" conversations where the characters tell each other stuff they already know so the reader can catch up.
- Characters who act for no apparent reason, because the writer can't find anywhere in the narrative to stop and explain their motivations.
- Idiotic plot devices necessary to get the characters to do something they otherwise wouldn't do, just so we can get them to Neat Planet B or fulfill some other agenda.

Note that some of these techniques will actually work to strengthen a story in certain circumstances. Taken together, however, they pretty much catalog all the worst habits of SF writers.

NOTE: Stock (or "flat") characters can be useful. When you need to use a walk-on character (say, a pizza delivery boy) in a scene, making that character as typical as possible lets you keep the reader focused on the characters that the scene is really about. If your delivery boy turns out to be wacky, unique, and eloquent, he'll distract the reader. So stock characters can be good--just not as your heroes.

Strategies for Success

It should be clear by now that every SF story presents its own challenge to characterization.

Avoid Clichés: The Strangely Familiar

From a list of plots and themes of stories submitted "too frequently" to Strange Horizons, an online magazine of "speculative fiction." The document was compiled in order to provide guidance to potential contributors.

1. Person is (metaphorically) at point **A**, wants to be at point **B**. Looks at point **B**, says, "I want to be at point **B**." Goes to point **B**, encountering no meaningful obstacles or difficulties. The end.
2. Creative person is having trouble creating.
 - a. Writer has writer's block.
 - b. Painter can't seem to paint anything good.
 - c. Sculptor can't seem to sculpt anything good.
3. Visitor to alien planet ignores information about local rules, inadvertently violates them, is punished.
4. Weird things happen, but it turns out they're not real.
 - a. It turns out it was all in virtual reality.
 - b. It turns out the protagonist is insane.
 - c. It turns out the protagonist is writing a novel and the events we've seen are part of the novel.

5. The future is soulless.
 - a. In the future, all learning is electronic, until kid is exposed to ancient wisdom in the form of a book.
 - b. In the future, everything is electronic, until kid is exposed to ancient wisdom in the form of a wise old person who's lived a non-electronic life.
6. Protagonist is a bad person. (We don't object to this in a story; we merely object to it being the main point of the plot.)
 - a. Bad person is told he'll get the reward that he deserves, which ends up being something bad.
 - b. Terrorists (especially Osama bin Laden) discover that horrible things happen to them in the afterlife (or otherwise get their comeuppance).
 - c. Protagonist is portrayed as really awful, but that portrayal is merely a setup for the ending, in which he sees the error of his ways and is redeemed.
7. A place is described, with no plot or characters.
8. A surprise twist ending occurs.
 - a. The characters are described as if they are humans, but in the end it turns out, they are not humans.
 - b. Creatures are described as "vermin," "pests," or "monsters," but in the end it turns out they are humans.
 - c. Person is floating in a formless void; in the end, he is born.
9. Someone calls technical support; wacky high jinks ensue.
 - a. Someone calls technical support for a magical item.
 - b. Someone calls technical support for a piece of advanced technology.
 - c. The title of the story is 1-800-SOMETHING-CUTE.
10. Scientist uses himself or herself as test subject.
11. Evil unethical doctor performs medical experiments on unsuspecting patient.
12. Office life turns out to be soul-deadening, literally or metaphorically.
13. Protagonist is given wise and mystical advice by Holy Simple Native Folk.
14. In the future, criminals are punished much more harshly than they are today.
 - a. In the future, the punishment always fits the crime.
 - b. In the future, the American constitutional amendment prohibiting cruel and unusual punishment has been repeated, or is interpreted very narrowly.

◆ The final product of this project is a science fiction short story.

SPECIFICS:

1. The story must be at least **FOUR** complete pages in length. The story must either be typed (**and double spaced**) or written *neatly* in pen (**and single spaced.**) [NOTE: if you put large spaces between your words or extra wide margins, your story must be **six** pages long!]
2. The Story should be no longer than **EIGHT** pages.
3. FONT: Standard Print Type (i.e. Times New Roman, Ariel) - 12 Point
4. The story must be a specific Sub-Genre of Science Fiction. For example: Time Travel, Dystopia/Utopia, Alien Encounter, Alternate Universe, Alien Invasion, Future Wars, Cyberpunk, Doomsday, Alternate Earth, Space Opera, Robot Story, Future invention, Psychic Powers, Conquest/Colonization, Speculative, Science Fantasy, etc.
5. Must Have a **Scientific Link**: What scientific theories/facts/principles are included to make this seem credible or convincing? What scientific terminology is used during this story? Define at least **THREE** terms.
6. The story *must* follow either **The Seven-Point Plot** or **The Fork** format.
7. Also, The story *must* have:
 - A. **A BEGINNING**
 1. Which clearly reveals setting*¹ and character and most importantly a problem or a **CONFLICT**.
 2. It must also have a Hook!
 3. It must also follow a specific type of Exposition [See the top of Page FOUR.]
 - B. **A MIDDLE**: *In which the suspense is created about how the CONFLICT or The Problem will be resolved.*
 - C. **AN ENDING**: *Which includes a CLIMAX and Falling Action.*
8. The sequence of events in the story must seem natural and the characters' actions need to be believable.
9. The story must focus on *only* **ONE** major event.
10. The story follows the concept of "**SHOW DON'T TELL**" and utilizes the five senses.
11. The Characters must be of specific types, as per the list. [**You put these in your notebook**]
12. You must have **dialogue** and it has to be written in the proper format. (See the example.)
13. Every time there is a change of idea, scene, or action, there needs to be a change of paragraphs.
14. Proper grammar rules need to be followed. (Examples: No sentence fragments or run-on sentences. No spelling, capitalization, punctuation, or usage errors.)

NOTE: FAILURE TO FOLLOW THE REQUIRED FORMAT (See Project Description) WILL RESULT IN A "NO CREDIT" FOR THE ASSIGNMENT. YOU WILL THEN HAVE TO RE-DO THE ASSIGNMENT TO RECEIVE ANY CREDIT.

ROUGH DRAFT DUE _____

FINAL DRAFT DUE _____

¹ Setting includes: time, place, mood, and preliminary situation.

Science Fiction Short Story Project - Preliminary Brainstorming Worksheet

- A. Sub-Genre of Science Fiction:
- B. Seven Point or Fork:
- C. The Setting of the Story:

- D. Scientific Link (scientific theories/facts/principles) - Define at least THREE terms.


- E. The Atmosphere I'll Create in My Story:

 Words and Phrases I Might Use to Create the Atmosphere:

- a. Sounds:

 - b. Odors:

 - c. Sights:

 - d. Touch:
- F. Main Characters for My Story
-  Protagonist
 - o Name:
 - o Type:
 - o Physical and Emotional Description

- ☒ Antagonist:
 - Name:
 - Type:
 - Physical and Emotional Description

- ☒ TWO -THREE Secondary Characters (Name and describe each one.)

G. Plot Ideas:

I. Setting

A. Type of Exposition.

B. Time

C. Place

D. Preliminary Situation

H. Details of any different worlds, aliens, governments, etc.

<u>Plot: Standard</u>	<u>Seven Point</u>	<u>Plot: Fork</u>
A. Initial Incident	1. A person	A. Initial Incident
	2. In a place	
	3. Has a problem	
B. Rising Action (List Try/fail.)		B. Rising Action (List Try/fail.)
	4. The person intelligently tries to solve the problem and fails	
	5. Things get worse	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Victory or Defeat <input type="checkbox"/> Life or Death <input type="checkbox"/> Success or failure
C. Climax	6. The Climax	C. Climax/Twist
D. Falling Action (List.)	7. Dénouement	D. Falling Action (List.)
E. Conclusion		E. Conclusion

Dialogue Examples:

Assessing Writing – The Science Fiction Short Story Project

1. Review the criteria on the Handout. Rank papers from 0 as lowest to 135 as highest using the provided rubric. Carefully consider the explanations for each.
2. Mark the errors on the rough draft - WITH EXTRA INFORMATION.
3. Keep in Mind: Does this story follow the description of the project? Is it Sci-fi?
4. Average your scores.
5. Write down, at least, **FIVE** ways to improve your paper, using what you have noticed or others have.
6. Rewrite your paper making those changes.
7. Hand in this sheet and your Rough Draft (with the changes marked.)

<p>1. <u>Things that need fixing</u>(Mark the number on the paper)</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p>	<p>4.</p> <p>5.</p> <p>6.</p> <p>Name _____</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Score _____</p>
<p>2. <u>Things that need fixing</u>(Mark the Letter on the paper)</p> <p>A.</p> <p>B.</p> <p>B.</p>	<p>D.</p> <p>E.</p> <p>F.</p> <p>Name _____</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Score _____</p>
<p>3. <u>Things that need fixing</u>(Mark the Symbol on the paper)</p> <p>#.</p> <p>+</p> <p>*</p>	<p>=.</p> <p>@.</p> <p>%.</p> <p>Name _____</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Score _____</p>
<p><i>Total the score and divide by the number of scores=</i></p>	
<p>Avg.</p>	

Changes you are going to make on your own paper (List at least Five)

RUBRIC FOR THE EVALUATION OF SHORT STORY

NOTE: PAGES MUST BE NUMBERED or Minus TWELVE Points

Objectives	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
1. The story is at least FOUR pages in length.	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. The story is typed (double-spaced) or written neatly in pen (single-spaced) and on one side of the page, which is numbered accordingly.	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. The Story either follows The Seven-Point Plot or The Fork format.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. The story utilizes a Scientific Link with at least three terms.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. The <i>Beginning</i> of the story reveals setting through a specific type of exposition.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. The <i>Beginning</i> of the story clearly shows a conflict or a problem/Hook	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. The <i>Middle</i> of the story creates suspense about how the problem will be resolved.	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. The <i>Middle</i> of the story has a series of try/fail sequences.	_____	_____	_____	_____
9. The <i>sequence of events</i> in the story seems natural.	_____	_____	_____	_____
10. The <i>Ending</i> of the story includes the climax and the falling action.	_____	_____	_____	_____
11. The story focuses on <i>only ONE</i> major event.	_____	_____	_____	_____
12. The story follows the concept of “ <i>SHOW DON'T TELL</i> ” and utilizes the 5 senses.	_____	_____	_____	_____
13. The <i>Dialogue</i> is used and written in the proper format.	_____	_____	_____	_____
14. The <i>Characters</i> were fully described and the main characters fully realized	_____	_____	_____	_____
15. The <i>Characters'</i> actions are believable within the conventions of the story.	_____	_____	_____	_____
16. The <i>style</i> resembles that of a specific Science Fiction <i>Genre</i>	_____	_____	_____	_____
17. Every time there is a change of idea, scene or action there is a change of paragraphs.	_____	_____	_____	_____
18. The sentences are neither awkward sentences, nor run-ons or fragments.	_____	_____	_____	_____
19. The paper is free of spelling, capitalization, and punctuation errors.	_____	_____	_____	_____
20. The paper is free of grammar and usage errors.	_____	_____	_____	_____

The writing is engaging, original, clear, and focused; ideas and content are richly developed and supported by details and examples where appropriate. Control of organization and transitions move the reader easily through the text. The voice and tone are authentic and compelling. Control of language and skillful use of writing conventions contribute to the effect of the presentation.	40
The writing is generally clear, focused, and well developed; examples and details support ideas and content where appropriate. The presentation is generally coherent, and its organizational structure support meaning. Use of writing conventions is not distracting.	30
The writing has some focus and support; ideas and content may be developed with limited details and examples. The presentation shows some evidence of structure, but it may be artificial or only partially successful. The tone may be inappropriate or the voice uneven. Sentence structure and diction are generally correct but rudimentary. Limited control of writing conventions may interfere with meaning some of the time.	20
The writing has little focus and development; few, if any, details and examples, support ideas and content. There is little discernible shape or direction. The writing demonstrates no control over voice and tone. Faulty sentence structure and limited vocabulary interfere with understanding. Limited control of writing conventions (such as spelling, grammar/usage, capitalization, punctuation, and/or indentation) makes the writing difficult to read.	10

Holistic Scoring

THE SCIENCE FICTION STORY - ASSIGNMENTS

1. THE SCIENCE FICTION STORY PAPER (Final)	140	_____
2. THE SCIENCE FICTION STORY PEER EVALUATION	20	_____
3. THE SCIENCE FICTION STORY PAPER (ROUGH)	50	_____
4. THE SCIENCE FICTION STORY BRAINSTORMING WORKSHEET	25	_____
TOTAL		235

⌘ **Note: I will not accept any paper that is difficult to read!**