



www.blackwriters.org

GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS SEEKING BETA READERS

BETA READER BASICS

Beta Readers assist writers by assessing and lending feedback about potential issues in books prior to publication relating to plot, pacing, structure, settings, and characters. They look for character continuity issues, plot holes, setting inconsistencies, and the like. Beta readers offer writers the opportunity to hear from a representative sample of your target reader. Beta readers are not professional editors. They are not to edit copy or correct mistakes such as typos or punctuation. This is, in fact, restricted in our program, so please do not ask or expect beta readers to serve as editors.

REQUESTING A BETA READER

When requesting a Beta Reader, you are asking someone to freely give up their time to read your book or project and lend you feedback to help you finalize your work, so please respect them and their time. Avoid requesting Beta Readers for work that is incomplete or has not been edited for basic grammatical errors. Requests to read partial works or incomplete texts to ‘see how it is going’ are prohibited. If you require this feedback, you may want to reach out to a writing coach at blackeditorsproofreaders.com or you may seek feedback in the BWC critique groups.

All posts for Beta Reader Requests are moderated, so posts will not appear immediately. When your Beta Reader has returned comments, please ensure you show your appreciation for their time and effort.

You will need to supply ALL of the following information when requesting a Beta Reader. Failure to do so will result in your request not being posted. You will also need to supply a first chapter or sample of the work, which will not be posted but used solely for reference by admins.

Expiration

While you will indicate on the form the date by which responses are requested, note that beta reader requests will include an expiration date of 30 days. If you would like to resubmit another request to extend the period, you may do so at that time.

Sensitive/Triggering Content:

Please state in the Required Information if your work contains any of the following hard topics: rape, pedophilia elements, graphic gore, abuse of people or animals, racism, cheating, grief, or domestic violence. Sensitive themes like these have a natural place in

fiction, but because work will be at beta stage where you're 'testing' to see if the themes are portrayed accurately, you need beta readers who are prepared to handle this harder content at testing stage. This isn't the time to leave these elements unmentioned – you want the right beta readers along with you while recognizing the need to safeguard those beta readers who, for their own good reasons, won't handle certain content at beta stage. You do not have to list every sensitivity topic, just those main areas listed above.

Conduct

Any member who acts disrespectfully towards Beta Readers will be ejected from the program.

IMPORTANT NOTE: If a Beta Reader replies to your request, please be sure to respectfully reply to all responses.

REQUIRED INFORMATION

- TITLE (The title of your book or project)
- GENRE (Please include the main genre and sub-genre of the work; do not list multiple genres. If the work is a crossover, explain this in the OTHER INFORMATION section)
- WORD COUNT (Round up to the closest 1K)
- BLURB (Around 300 words, this should be similar to a back cover text. Do not include a synopsis or spoilers as this can impact on the reader experience)
- SENSITIVITY CONTENT: (rape, pedophilia elements, graphic gore, abuse of people or animals, racism, cheating, grief, or domestic violence)
- AUDIENCE DESCRIPTION (A brief typical target reader description: include a minimum age rating (18+, etc.) so you are explicit on who shouldn't be offering to beta read your work)
- EXPECTATIONS (Explain the type of feedback you required and the mechanism that will be used to gather it, such as use of on-line forms, questionnaires with manuscript, etc.)
- DEADLINE (The turnaround time in which you would expect responses. Be realistic with this, but also ensure that you don't end up with Readers that cannot meet your needs)
- AVAILABLE FORMATS (Outline the choices of how Beta Readers can receive the manuscript, such as e-book, PDF, word file, hard copy, etc. Remember that some Beta Readers will be wary of receiving certain types of attachments. Also, hard copy manuscripts will need to be posted and should include an SAE with sufficient postage to receive replies.)
- OTHER INFORMATION (Indicate any other information about the book that may influence a Beta Reader, including any warnings about language, etc.)

Questions

Send any questions to support@blackwriters.org.