GUIDELINES FOR BETA READERS

BETA READING 101

Beta readers may accept completed works only; works in progress are not eligible for our beta readers program. 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. You should look for character continuity issues, plot holes, setting inconsistencies, and the like. You offer writers the opportunity to hear from a representative sample of their target reader. Please be respectful of the writer and ensure you deliver feedback, whether it is good, bad or indifferent.

You are not expected nor should you be asked to edit copy or correct mistakes such as typos or punctuation, so please refrain from doing so. If you are asked to edit or feel uncomfortable with any request in any way, or if any member acts disrespectfully toward you, please notify us so that the matter can be dealt with immediately. We strive to maintain a positive, helpful, and pleasant environment, so any bullying, harassment or other such behavior will be taken seriously.

Before you accept a project, ensure that you can offer feedback in the agreed manner and time. Avoid over-committing. Be sure to note any sensitivity content themes mentioned by an author in their beta reader request, such as domestic violence, rape, child abuse, etc. Keep comments constructive. If you find the content to be triggering, consult the author and advise where you found it difficult to continue.

ACCEPTING A BETA READER REQUEST
Respond directly to the author for Beta Reader requests. We suggest you do not accept a hard copy of a manuscript to avoid the need to provide personal details to the writer. It is the requirement here that the manuscript be made available for download.

Please strive to ensure you can fulfill every commitment. Maintain open lines of communication with the writer at regular intervals. The worst thing you can do to a writer is fall silent and become unresponsive. This will also not be permitted, and Silent Bob Beta Readers will be addressed up to and including ejection. When considering a Beta Reader request, consider the following:

- GENRE (Is this a genre you would typically read and are familiar with? If not, you probably cannot offer pertinent feedback to that writer.)

- WORD COUNT AND DEADLINE (Do you have the time to read the work and comment in the requested timeframe?)
- SYNOPSIS (Review or request back cover copy. Would you pick up such a book with an intent to buy and/or read it?)
- AUDIENCE DESCRIPTION (Do you fall within the typical reader profile?)
- EXPECTATIONS (Consider how you are going to offer feedback and ensure that the process suits how you want to work)
- AVAILABLE FORMATS (Is there a format you prefer, i.e. hard copy, PDF, MOBI, etc.?)
- OTHER INFORMATION (Is there any sensitive or other content that you might find offensive or impact your reading?)

INTRODUCE YOURSELF!

We invite you to post an introduction to announce your availability as a Beta Reader by emailing support@blackwriters.org. You can use the following as your guide for what to include. Feel free to share any additional information you wish.

Name:
Introduction:
Preferred genres:
Preferred formats:
Beta reading experience, if any:
Additional information:

It is a good idea to also familiar yourself with the authors' guidelines for requesting beta reviewers so you know what to expect.

Questions
Send your intro and any questions to support@blackwriters.org with the subject line "Beta Readers Program."

Thank you for being the heart of the BWC Beta Readers and Reviewers program!