

Rubric for Nonfiction Stories

Attribute	Criteria			Points
Level 1: Concept (outline)				
Set-up & Complication	Character and setting are established. Reader is given ways to identify with main character.	It may be hard to care about the character or what is happening. It doesn't seem the people or places are real. Little seems at stake.	The character and setting are absent or too undeveloped to make a story.	
Development	The character acts to reach goals or satisfy desires.	Some events may seem to have nothing to do with what the character wants. What the character wants may not seem important or interesting.	The character's actions don't drive the story.	
Resolution	The complication is resolved. The tension or anxiety of the story dissolves.	The resolution doesn't satisfy, or gimmicky events are used to get an ending.	The main complication remains unresolved. Loose ends are not tied up.	
Level 2: Content (story, development)				
Organization	The story focuses on what the main character does, with at least three developments. The resolution solves the complication.	The story may wander, telling the reader things for reasons that are not clear. What is said at the conceptual level may not be supported by what happens at the story level.	Events seem unrelated to the character's goals. It's not clear what things mean or why they matter.	
Clarity	The sentences and paragraphs are easy to understand. Active verbs. Precise nouns.	Sentences may be confusing. The organization may be unclear. Bad usage or bad spelling may distract from the effect.	Passages may be confusing or disorganized.	
Simplicity	The language is as simple as it can be. Point of view is consistent, as to person and tense.	Sentences may be needlessly complicated. The diction may be unnatural. The tone may be pretentious or pompous.	Words may be used imprecisely enough to interfere with meaning.	
Brevity	There is no dead wood. Unnecessary adjectives and adverbs are rare.	Events or actions may be present that don't seem needed for this story. Unneeded phrases or modifiers may be present.	Lots of padding or filler. Paragraphs may be present that don't advance the story. Language is used sloppily.	
Level 3: Copy Edit				
Conventions	Few or no errors of grammatical usage.	Errors of grammatical usage distract the reader from the story.	The writing is sometimes hard to understand due to grammatical errors.	