Writing Rubric - Adapted from Jo Knowles by Shannon Rigney

Story Elements							
	Quality of Writing	**Voice**	**Characters**	**Plot**	**Pacing**	**Dialogue**	**Setting**
NO – Work might have strengths in one or two categories, but needs a lot of work.	Hard to follow. Doesn't pull reader in. Too much telling rather than showing. Details don't contribute to the story. Too much back story. Reads more like summary than like story. Inconsistent storyline. Reads like a series of vignettes.	Lacks voice. Sounds too adult/young for intended reader. Author's agenda is too obvious. Voice doesn't match time period.	Characters not believable. No character development. Basic MC info, like age, not clear. No connection to characters. Age of characters doesn't match genre. Characters are too perfect.	Unclear conflict. Too far-fetched. Inconsistencies. Not sure what's at stake for character. No real conflict.	Too much info dumping. No action. Slow-paced. Too much action without context. Too fast; no scene setting/character building.	Sounds forced. Too much dialogue that doesn't move story forward.	Little info about time or place. Setting/time not clearly established.
MAYBE – Work has several good qualities, but many issues.	Well-crafted scenes. Reads more like summary than like story. Format or narrative perspective might not work for narrative. Too much telling rather than showing. Inconsistent voice. Loses threads.	Author's agenda is distracting. Inconsistent voice. Needs to be more engaging.	Some nice character development.	Story takes too long to start.	Too much info dumping. Too long before action begins. Slow-paced. Too much backstory, rather than letting story unfold.	Too much dialogue that doesn't move story forward.	Lovely setting descriptions.

	Story Elements						
	Quality of Writing	**Voice**	**Characters**	**Plot**	**Pacing**	**Dialogue**	**Setting**
YES – Strong work, considered for win.	Beautiful language. Tension, heart, longing – all nicely conveyed.	Original voice. Engaging tone. Great storytelling.	Reader cares about the MC. Good character development.		Good balance between action, character, and setting.		Rich details about the time/place.
WINNERS – Writing works well across all categories.	Original and ambitious story. Beautiful writing. Reader gets lost in the story. Powerful opening. Rich descriptions that fit the scenes and don't slow down the story. Perfect word choice with surprises that are a delight.	Amazing voice!	Reader invested in character, immediately cares about his or her plight. Great character development from the first page. Strong protagonist. Secondary characters are also believable.	Balance between moving the story forward while giving enough backstory and setting the scene/developing the character. Hints at what's to come.	Wonderful balance between tension/action/suspense.	Well-written, believable dialogue, including any idiosyncratic speech or dialect.	Strong sense of place. Reader can see and feel every scene.