

Advanced Fiction Fluency Retreat with Eric Witchey

February 11th to 17th, 2024

<https://wordcrafters.org/advanced-fiction-fluency-coast-retreat/>

Submission Instructions

Please limit full-text scenes or groups of scenes to **ten pages per day of presentation**.

Meta-descriptions are a separate page count. If presenting scenes that are not anchor scenes, please make them contiguous unless there is a compelling, Fiction Fluency reason not to.

Example of compelling reason for disparate scenes: I'm having trouble with resolving my character's I.S. This scene is where I think my character realizes their I.S. is holding them back. This scene is where I think they first face the failure of their I.S. This scene is where I think they made their first decisions from their new belief system.

Short Stories

Short fiction of 5k words or less can be presented at the retreat as full manuscripts in modern or classic manuscript format. The following link will take you to a site where both are described. This is the gold standard foundation for all fiction submissions.

<https://www.shunn.net/format/>

Contiguous Scenes or Selected Scenes from a Novel

If your problem statement is focused on analysis of text-level material inside a scene or a group of scenes, provide full narrative scenes and sufficient Fiction Fluency context to allow evaluation within the overall dramatic structure of your novel. That means we will need to know where the Scene appears in a Scene Sequence, where the Sequence appears in a Movement, and where the Movement appears in the overall work. Keep in mind that the location is meaningless without the associated Control Statements.

Your problem statement can be, "I have these pages, but I don't know how to create Control Statements for them." That's certainly one of the things we can do during our week.

The Story, Movement, and Scene Sequence meta-description of the novel will be the same as above. However, the actual scene can replace the full scene-level meta-description or, should you prefer to keep the scene-level meta-description, the scene event synopsis. Story, Movement, and Scene Sequence Control Statements will be used as the context in which we evaluate the scene.

A Note on Longer Works and Novels

We only have five days, and we will have multiple people, problems, and pages to discuss. Evaluation of an excerpt from a novel requires consideration of the role of the scenes within the overall context of the story. This requires a meta-description for the discussion to be useful. It can be a sparse, or an incomplete attempt, but analysis does require an object to analyze.

In a seminar week like this one, we have an opportunity to work with novel-length material, but getting everyone on the same page to do so requires preparation. Because we are focusing through the lens of Fiction Fluency, the preparation requires a meta-description of the Work-in-Progress. If you want to workshop a novel or a section of a novel, you must attempt to provide a defined problems statement along with as much of a full meta-description of the novel as possible. While a full meta-description might not be possible, the more you have, the clearer we can be about context when discussing issues.

Ideally, the meta-description should include:

- **Novel-level Control Statements** and a very short synopsis over overarching Sequence Core Conflict and outcome impact on I.S. and Dominant Theme.
 - **Movement-level Control Statements** and a very short synopsis over overarching Sequence Core Conflict and outcome impact on I.S.
 - **Sequence-level Control Statements** and a very short synopsis over overarching Sequence Core Conflict and outcome impact on I.S.
 - **Scene-Level EPST** and a meta-description that captures:
 - POV Character (and Main Character if different)
 - Agendas for all characters on stage.
 - Core Conflict statement
 - Active types of Conflict
 - Character-perceived stakes
 - Reader-perceived stakes
 - A short synopsis describing how events impact character.

***Important:** Your version doesn't have to be a perfect fit for any of the examples, but we won't have time to read ten or more full novels, so we'll need a working format that will allow discussion using Fiction Fluency techniques. Without context, only reader-response is possible. With context, useful analysis can be done.*

Delivering Meta-Descriptions

Meta-description files that exceed 5 pages must be provided as a spreadsheet or .pdf file the week before the retreat in order to give participants time to familiarize themselves with context. If you do this, do not provide actual story text—only the meta-description. We'll look at the actual text during the week. This is recommended.

Meta-description files of 5 pages or less can be provided on paper during the retreat. The number needed will depend on how many people sign up. As soon as we know the final headcount, we'll let everyone know.

Partials are acceptable, but please do your best to provide as much context as possible.

Examples of various meta-description methods appear in the Vol. I-III appendices, in modules, and in the spreadsheets handed out in the Fiction Fluency classes. If you are unsure about how to produce or present a meta-description, contact Eric as soon as possible. He has offered to help prior to the event. Do not wait until the last minute.

Multiple-POV and Multiple-Timeline Novels

If you are working on a multiple-POV and/or multiple-Timeline novel, please provide parallel meta-descriptions for the POV characters and/or storylines. This might be difficult, but that's okay. Engaging at that level will reveal new problems we can address during our explorations. Examples for reference include Bull's Labyrinth from the appendices and the Granny Isekai spreadsheet. Because not all Fiction Fluency groups have seen the latter, contact Eric for that example if you don't have it.