Judging Criteria: Book-Length Fiction (Published or Unpublished)
Each section receives a point score of from 1 to 10. Maximum score: 100.

Plot

a. The plot has a beginning, middle and ending
b. The story has conflict, tension or creates curiosity to pull the reader forward
c. There is a blend of narrative, dialogue and action
d. The plot keeps the reader's attention
e. There are no spots where the plot drags

Character Development

a. The characters are three dimensional, with flaws and strengths
b. There is sufficient description of the characters so that they are more than a name
c. The characters behave appropriately for their backstory and description
d. There are no inappropriate POV shifts in a scene—no head hopping
e. The main character rises to the challenges facing him/her in the novel

Structure and Prose

a. The manuscript or book is formatted correctly
b. The grammar, word usage, spelling and sentence structure are correct
c. There is a minimum amount of typos
d. The voice is consistent and present
e. The prose is of above-average quality

Setting

a. Each setting is described adequately so that the reader knows where things happen
b. The setting creates a mood or color for the piece
c. The writer creates a vivid sensory experience, an environment the reader can enter
d. The setting supports or is a metaphor for the theme of the piece
e. The author uses color, smells, sense of touch, sound, etc. in descriptions

Originality

a. Plot is original and unique
b. Characters are one-of-a-kind, fresh or unusual (not caricatures.)
c. The prose has a unique and individual voice
d. The setting is unusual or gives a new perspective on a familiar place
e. The ending is believable, satisfying and ties up most of the loose ends

Total Score _____