TITLE:	ENTRY ID #:	JUDGE ID #:

CHARACTERIZATION (Please mark only one answer per question)

Is one of the main characters likable?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

Does one of the main characters inspire curiosity and draw the reader into their life?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

Does one of the main characters feel real and three-dimensional?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

Do the characters' relationships, actions, and reactions seem realistic and logical and not forced by the author?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

Is one of the main characters clearly identifiable from any secondary character?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

Do the secondary characters support rather than overpower the main characters?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

COMMENTS on the answers above:

Does at least one main character show hints of **INTERNAL** and/or **EXTERNAL GOALS**?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

Are there obstacles and/or sacrifices that hinder the character(s) from achieving their goals?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

Does at least one main character show clear and believable **MOTIVATIONS** to reach their goals?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

Do the characters' motivations and behaviors induce sympathy and support from the reader?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

Does at least one main character show deep **INTERNAL** and/or **EXTERNAL POINTS OF VIEW** that give insights into their goals and motivations?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

Do the characters' points of view show their distinct personalities, virtues and/or flaws?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

Does the potential for one of the main characters exist for character growth and development?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

COMMENTS on the answers above:

CHARACTERIZATION SCORE: Count the number of yeses to calculate the points

☐	**10 - ABOVE AVERAGE = 11 to 13 yeses** (The author does a fantastic job creating 3-D characters who have strong Goals, Motivations, and Points of View)
☐	**8 - AVERAGE = 6 to 10 yeses** (The characters are interesting, but could use deeper development)
☐	**6 - BELOW AVERAGE = 5 or less yeses** (Characters are ordinary with no clear goals and motivations)

DIALOGUE (Please mark only one answer per question)

Is the dialogue appropriate for the setting and time period?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

Are the lines of dialogue easily attributable to the character who is speaking?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

Does each character's speech ring true to their position, background, persona, and identity?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

Do the conversations seem natural and not stilted or forced?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

Are expressions and inflections in the dialogue used to reveal the characters' diversities?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

Are the characters' speech patterns and vocabulary (tone, accent, dialect,) portrayed without being obtrusive?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

Are exchanges between characters vivid, quick-paced, and important to the story?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

Is the dialogue enhanced by words, phrases, and arrangements of sentences that advance the plot?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

COMMENTS on the answers above:

Do the dialogues and tags show the **EMOTIONS** the characters are feeling; anger, joy, sadness, regret, etc.?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

Do the dialogue exchanges and tags increase **TENSIONS** for the characters and/or the plot?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

Are dialogues and tags used effectively to promote the characters' goals, motivations, and conflicts?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

COMMENTS on the answers above:

DIALOGUE SECTION: Count the number of yeses to calculate the points

☐	**10 - ABOVE AVERAGE = 9 to 11 yeses** (The author shows an overall skill with dialogue that makes the readers feel they're participating in the conversations)
☐	**8 - AVERAGE = 6 to 8 yeses** (The dialogue is interesting, but is used in some places where narrative or description would be more effective)
☐	**6 - BELOW AVERAGE = 5 or less yeses** (Further study in the use of dialogue to propel the story is recommended)

PLOT AND CONFLICT: (Please mark only one answer per question)

Does the story start in the right place with an opening incident that creates a desire to read more?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

Is there a clear sense of time, place, and theme that grounds the reader in the story?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

Are settings, descriptions, and senses (see, smell, hear, taste, touch and more) used to add depth to the plot?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

Is world building (when, where, who, what, how) used to develop clear visions of the storyline?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

Do the plot situations and circumstances create a believable storyline appropriate for the genre?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

Is the storyline fresh or unique, or are there plot twists that set the story apart from others?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

Does the plot maintain continuity so the readers can easily follow the story from scene to scene?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

COMMENTS on the answers above:

Is there evidence of internal and/or external CONFLICTS (one or both main characters struggle with a problem, deal with a force beyond their control, want something that seems unattainable, etc.) in the plot?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

Are the conflicts strong enough that they cannot be rectified by a little conversation or solved by a simple act of the character(s)?

☐	Yes	☐	No	☐	Somewhat

Do the conflicts develop naturally without feeling forced or contrived?

☐	Yes	☐	No	☐	Somewhat

Is foreshadowing used to hint at the possibility of future conflicts and complications?

☐	Yes	☐	No	☐	Somewhat

Are there enough stakes and/or tension throughout the plot to make it a page turner?

☐	Yes	☐	No	☐	Somewhat

Can the conflict sustain the whole book?

☐	Yes	☐	No	☐	Somewhat

COMMENTS on the answers above:

PLOT AND CONFLICT SECTION: Count the number of yeses to calculate the points

☐	**10 - ABOVE AVERAGE = 11 to 13 yeses** (The author starts the story at a good point and continues with an intriguing plot and strong conflict)
☐	**8 - AVERAGE = 6 to 10 yeses** (The plot is somewhat conventional and the conflicts need to be strengthened)
☐	**6 - BELOW AVERAGE = 5 or less yeses** (The plot doesn't completely engage the reader and the conflicts can easily be solved if the character(s) took a different path)

PACING, STYLE, AND STORY ELEMENT: (Please mark only one answer per question)

Is the pacing appropriate to the story and genre?

☐	Yes	☐	No	☐	Somewhat

Is there a balance of dialogue, action, and narrative that keeps the story moving forward?

☐	Yes	☐	No	☐	Somewhat

Is the story free of unnecessary backstory, narratives, and/or distractions that slow the pace?

☐	Yes	☐	No	☐	Somewhat

Does the syntax structure (sentence order, pattern, arrangement, expression, and inflection) create rhythms that help control the speed at which the story is told?

☐	Yes	☐	No	☐	Somewhat

Are varying sentence lengths used to slow and quicken the tempo the story?

☐	Yes	☐	No	☐	Somewhat

Do the scenes add to the importance of the story and flow in a logical chronology that keeps the pace moving?

☐	Yes	☐	No	☐	Somewhat

Are there hooks throughout the story that quicken the pace and leave the reader wanting more?

☐	Yes	☐	No	☐	Somewhat

COMMENTS on the answers above:

Are sentences concise without using redundant or unnecessary words?

☐	Yes	☐	No	☐	Somewhat

Are incomplete or run-on sentences or clichés and clutch words kept to a minimum?

☐	Yes	☐	No	☐	Somewhat

Does the writing generally "show" the action using vivid, active verbs instead of "tell" in a passive manner?

☐	Yes	☐	No	☐	Somewhat

Does the switch from one character's point of view to another's flow smoothly without head hopping?

☐	Yes	☐	No	☐	Somewhat

Has author intrusion (author injecting their thoughts, viewpoints, and knowledge into the story) been kept to a minimum?

☐	Yes	☐	No	☐	Somewhat

PACING, STYLE and STORY ELEMENT SECTION: Count the number of yeses to calculate the points

☐	**10 - ABOVE AVERAGE = 10 to 12 yeses** (The author has a good grasp of pacing and style so the compulsion to turn the page stays with reader from start to finish)
☐	**8 - AVERAGE = 6 to 9 yeses** (The pacing needs more balance between dialogue, action, and narrative to keep the pace moving at the perfect speed)
☐	**6 - BELOW AVERAGE = 5 or less yeses** (The story is told more like a narrative by the author rather than shown by the characters' actions)

MECHANICS: DO NOT take points off for missing or misplaced commas

Does the manuscript conform to the standards of written English?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

Are spelling and punctuation errors kept to a minimum so they don't affect the overall readability?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

Are serious violations in sentence structure, such as inconsistency of tenses, reference pronouns, misplaced modifiers, etc. kept to a minimum?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

COMMENTS on the answers above:

MECHANICS: Count the number of yeses to calculate the points

☐	**5 – STANDARD = 2 to 3 yeses**
☐	**4 – BELOW STANDARD = 1 to 0 yeses**

PRESENTATION SECTION: DO NOT take points off for formatting errors due to document transfer

Is the manuscript prepared in the generally accepted industry format? (margins, line spacing, fonts, etc.)

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

Overall, is the format clean and easy to read?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Somewhat

COMMENTS on the answers above:

PRESENTATION: Count the number of yeses to calculate the points

☐	**5 - STANDARD = 1 to 2 yeses**
☐	**4 – BELOW STANDARD = 0 yeses**

TOTAL SCORE (The total should add up to an even number between 32 to 50)

Thank you for entering the TARA Contest. We hope to hear from you again next year!

JUDGES, PLEASE ADD ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ABOUT THIS ENTRY: