

## The Stories That Grab You

In this course, we'll be looking at a variety of methods and techniques used in fiction writing. Since writers are readers first, you have probably seen the results in books or short stories that you've read.

This handout asks you to name some of the books, stories, authors, characters or scenes that made an impact on you as a reader. It also asks what sort of fiction you are interested in writing.

### **Section 1:**

Most readers have a few favorite characters—the ones they root for because they're funny, clever, brave, tough, talented, etc., or because they have a unique view of the world.

List a few of your favorite characters below, along with a brief description of why you root for them, and the author or the story name if you remember. (*Example: "Sam Vimes, from Discworld. He gets in tons of trouble, but he always tries to do what's right. Also, lots of dry humor."*)

### **Section 2:**

Not all characters succeed in the end, and others barely succeed. Name a few scenes or characters that grabbed your emotions, write a brief description of the scene and/or what about the scene made you react, and say what book or author they're from. (*Example: "The river crossing scene from As I Lay Dying. The father, Anse, was supposed to be in charge, but was bloody useless instead. I felt much sympathy for his kids, who had to put up with it."*)

**Section 3:**

If you were snowed in on a hiking trip and could only bring three books, book series, or short stories along to read while you waited for the weather to improve, what books or stories would they be? Why did you choose them? (For this hypothetical scenario, web serials such as *Fine Structure* or *Worm* count as a single series.)

**Section 4:**

Who are your favorite authors? Is there anything in particular about their work that you enjoy?

**Section 5:**

What kinds of stories would you like to write? What kinds of characters and settings do you like to work with?