

# Sample feedback report: Lite

The following is a full report as originally presented to the author, except that character names and other identifying features have been removed to protect the author's identity.

I had previously critiqued an earlier version of the same manuscript, so the aim of the report was to address the changes and to answer the author's specific questions. I'm not trying to cover all the main bases here – just the most important aspects of my reading experience.

Note that this is just one way that an "essential feedback" report might look. Sometimes it will be more clearly structured. Other times it might be made up of a general overview of my experience followed by a list of minor points. It really depends on the manuscript and what the author is looking for.

The Lite package lends itself particularly well to second reads: being able to refer to my previous feedback means I can cover more ground in fewer words, and whole topics can potentially be left out.

First-read projects are fine too, though do consider if this report will give you enough feedback. Authors who are fairly confident in their manuscripts and in themselves as writers and/or those who are employing multiple readers often benefit the most. If you're feeling a bit "at sea" with your project, the longer feedback report will likely serve you better.

The word count is a rough guide. It's not unusual for me to go over 750 words (indeed this sample report does), and I take it as read that authors don't mind!

Finally, feel free to contact me on [luca@lucafossum.co.uk](mailto:luca@lucafossum.co.uk) with any questions or comments.

| LITE  | STANDARD   | PREMIUM  |
|---|--|--|
| <b>£0.65</b><br>PER 1,000 WORDS   | <b>£0.95</b><br>PER 1,000 WORDS  | <b>£1.75</b><br>PER 1,000 WORDS                                      |
| Essential feedback (500–750 words):   | Expanded feedback: (2000–3000 words):  | <b>Everything in Standard, plus</b>                                  |
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| 10% off second reads (must be recognisably same project)  | 20% off second reads (must be recognisably same project)   | Guaranteed 10-day turnaround for standard-length manuscripts (<100K) |
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## MINI FEEDBACK REPORT FOR

# [Manuscript title]

by [Author]

It's clear, both from reading the manuscript and from the comparison analysis I had Word run on this and the previous version, that you've done quite a bit of revision on the project – adding, deleting, moving, tweaking. And the benefits are certainly there:

- The prologue (now chapter one), with the extra scenes and details, now works much better.
- [A] reads as a "stand-in" for [B], the relationship between him and [protagonist] more clear.
- A number of scenes and sections involving characters besides our main two have been cut or shortened, and while there was good character detail in there, in the grand scheme of the novel, I don't think they will be missed.
- A number of narration-heavy sections, particularly at the beginning of chapters, have been cut/shortened, minimising the lecture-like feel I mentioned in my first report.

Overall, however, I'm afraid I still have many of the same reservations that I did the first time. Primarily, with so many characters and POVs, the manuscript feels a little sprawling and unsettled, though I do appreciate that non-[protagonist] characters' "screen time" *has* been condensed in places. And, of course, having many POVs is not inherently a problem, but this being a relatively short manuscript, it feels to me that it's struggling to carry the weight of them all.

Can you streamline it further? Really digging into [*protagonist's*] experience and/or having a single other POV-character to cover the things in the narrative that he isn't privy to, ideally with their *own stakes and character arc*, such that their scenes are driven by more than the need to give the reader information. This could be [antagonist 1] or [antagonist 2], or even someone more on the sidelines like [X, Y or Z]. So you'd have just two main POV-characters and only venture elsewhere when it truly

cannot be helped. Admittedly, this would probably require a large-scale restructuring of events and which character does what and when etc., which you may or may not be up for, but I think it could really help bring the story into focus.

I'm also still not quite sold on the narrative style and POV. It seems to me that it slips back and forth between a neutral, omniscient storyteller-narrator – the one that likes to share details of [redacted] – and a close third-person narrator, where we watch the world through the eyes of the current POV character. Neither is necessarily better than the other (though I personally favour the close third, both for reading and writing, as omniscient is so very hard to get right and, even then, it tends to create a distance between your readers and the characters), but I think you'd ideally stick with one or the other – and if you pitch it as YA, I'd definitely go with close third, or even first person if you felt so inclined, over omniscient.

I do think that there is much of potential interest in the first three chapters: by then, you've introduced [protagonist] and his situation, his grief and regret over what happened to [B]; you've introduced themes of kindness and love, and [redacted] etc; and then there's the [setting] where something shifty is clearly going on. There is potential here, I think, to make an agent want to read more.

And on the whole, yes, I do think that the manuscript delivers what the beginning promises. That is, it reads as cohesive and logical, not veering off into completely unexpected places. In the sense of broadly what happens, yes, it delivers – but further into the manuscript is also where, for me, the many different "players" become more of a hindrance, the POV inconsistencies more evident.

Genre-wise, I would probably place it as adult historical for the simple reason that a substantial amount of time is spent with a lead- or POV-character who is not a young adult. In YA, you may get away with *some* adult POV (and even that may be a stretch for some agents/publishers), but a book with this much, I think, is unlikely to be accepted as YA.

Title-wise, I'm leaning towards *[third title option]*. *[original title]*, as you say, does not wholly encapsulate the story. Meanwhile, *[current title]* does encapsulate the fact that [two main characters] have very different backgrounds, but I think it feels a bit, well, bland? I like *[third title option]* because it can at once refer to [redacted] (I wouldn't worry about it spoiling what happens in the very first chapter) and to [redacted].

I'm sorry if this is all more negative than you were hoping for, but hopefully at least it'll help you move forward from here – and, as usual, your mileage may vary etc. And to be clear, all the positives highlighted in my first report still apply, so I do encourage you to keep going with the project!