

Glover Reading Rubric

1) Start by simply looking at the physical story, see how long it is (the better to compare it to your own stories in terms of pacing, event/length ratio, etc.), see if it is divided into sections and how that division is accomplished technically (simple line breaks, numbers, chapter heads, etc).

2) Analyze the point of view structure. What it is and who it is. List other characters and their relationship with the point of view.

3) Summarize the plot of the story. Who does what to whom and what happens after.

4) Keep careful track of words, ideas, images, grammatical structures that repeat (but do not try to draw any conclusions about why they repeat yet). Track, note and number the instances of important repeated elements. Decide if there is a primary image pattern and if there are also subsidiary patterns.

5) Time flow: Only at this step should you begin to even THINK about the larger conceptual/structural (but not thematic) issues. Here you should begin by seeing how the sequence in which events are told relates to the basic chronology of events. What is backfill, what is forward-moving action, and how is the backfill placed in the story (one large section, a dance of little sections, maybe very little)? How much or little does the author "play" with the time flow? If this is a reminiscent narrator, how does the time of the telling of the story interpenetrate the story itself? Etc.

6) More structure: What is the basic conflict of the story? Between what and what? (A vs B)

7) What are the basic steps or event/plot/interactions between A and B? If we conceive of the story as a series of rooms in which A and B get together again and again and again, what are the nature of these rooms/events? Be careful to stick to the text, exactly what the author tells us on the page. Do not move to speculating on what the author means by doing such and such. Stop yourself at simply stating what the author says. Look at scene/event length, how dialogue is played on the page.

8) Make comparisons. Make some judgement as to what type of story this is: love story, historical epic, comic--be naive and even superficial here. Just put a name to things and try to recall other stories that are similar to this in one way or another. In your mind, compare and contrast how different authors handle similar sorts of structures, actions, genres.

–Douglas Glover