

# Best Banter Contest Score Sheet



*Mid-Michigan  
Romance Writers  
of America*

**Judge #** [Click here to enter text.](#)

Credentials: •Agent/Editor \_\_\_\_•Published \_\_\_\_•PRO \_\_\_\_

**Entrant #** [Click here to enter text.](#)

**Total Score:** [Click here to enter text.](#)

**Scores are 1 - 5**

**5 is the highest possible rating in 5 key areas.**

**Partial scores, in 0.25 increments, such as 4.25 or 3.75, are accepted.**

**Characterization.** Characters are well-rounded and believable. The right amount of emotional content made me want to read more.

1	2	3	4	5
Characters appear shallow and/or one dimensional, do not come across as fully developed.	Characters come across as stilted or wooden, takes the reader out of the scene.	Some sense of characters' emotions, motives, etc., but reader feels like an observer rather than a part of it.	Each character has an individual voice revealing their characters traits.	Compelled by the character's emotions, wounds, motives, needs, etc. They have distinct personalities, virtues, and/or flaws.

Score: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Comments: [Click here to enter text.](#)

**Dialogue.** Dialogue reads naturally, not stilted. Each character's voice is unique which helps to shape their personality. Easy for the reader to understand POV.

1	2	3	4	5
Hard to follow, feels like two talking heads, meaning not clear.	The conversation flow or choice of words doesn't work smoothly, appears forced or contrived.	Dialogue is okay but doesn't fit the characters' personalities.	Dialogue flows fairly smoothly, each personality is distinct. May be a few flaws or irregularities in the conversation.	Dialogue flows, meaning is clear, easy to understand who is speaking.

Score: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Comments: [Click here to enter text.](#)

**Narrative.** Narrative flows naturally within the scene and connects ideas, concepts or events. It adds to the story without weighing down the pacing.

1	2	3	4	5
Excessive narrative, insufficient use of dialogue/banter.	Entry weighted heavily in narrative and slows the pacing. More dialogue is needed.	Doesn't give the reader a sense of place or promote the character's dialogue or banter.	Some narrative could be eliminated to strengthen the scene but still maintain time and place.	Use of narrative is balanced and enhances the scene; dialogue does not detract from voices and actions.

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**Style/Voice.** The author's style/voice makes for an enjoyable, compelling read.

1	2	3	4	5
Reads very stiff and stilted. Do not get a sense of the author's ability to craft the story.	Neither style nor voice is consistent. Could have some unclear moments.	Inconsistent style and voice. Better phrasing or word choice could improve this entry.	Entry is nearly perfect but may have one or two areas that need tweaking.	Great choice of words. Total clarity. Matches the characters nicely. Very well polished.

Score: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Comments: [Click here to enter text.](#)

**Grammar.** The author's attention to detail regarding grammar and punctuation allows for easy reading.

1	2	3	4	5
Problems with grammar and/or punctuation so extreme (nearly every sentence) that it becomes distracting to the reader.	A variety of repeated grammar and/or punctuation mistakes distracting the reader.	A variety of grammar and/or punctuation errors, but not repeated. It may or may not be distracting to the reader.	Just a few grammar and/or punctuation errors. Editing and proofreading are evident.	No errors in grammar or punctuation. A polished submission, ready for publication.

Score: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Comments: [Click here to enter text.](#)

**Banter.** At the core of the dialogue is "banter" which enlivens the scene and makes the reader want more. This is the emotional side of what your characters are saying. Is the conversation sparkling, playful?

1	2	3	4	5
There is very little banter or it's missing completely.	There is some banter but sounds like bickering. It needs more banter to be a satisfying scene.	Half bickering, half banter. Underlying emotion is not translating well.	They're bantering well with words but the underlying emotion isn't coming across.	The banter moves well. The exchanges are vivid and quick-paced. I'm engaged! I want more!! I feel their emotions easily.

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Comments: [Click here to enter text.](#)