



# THE HAZEL TREE

Edition 1, September 2013

## Dealing with Criticism

I am definitely the type of person who looks at a piece of feedback for their writing and melts a little inside when it is swarming with lines of highlighter pen and scribbles of arrows and corrections. Taking criticism is difficult, no question; however, there are different types of criticism: constructive, opinion based, and just nasty.

We should all take on board constructive criticism, as when something in our work is incorrect, we should change that to make it fit with the rules of the English language, for example 'Their going on holiday.' This is grammatically incorrect, therefore it does make sense to change this type of error. Going through your work and seeing corrections and criticism can be hard to swallow and it can lower your confidence in your ability to write.

You will be glad to know that on occasion, you can accept whether to take criticism on board or whether to simply read it and decide that you do not want to change your work, although you are grateful. This criticism is opinion-based, for example if the critic chooses a sentence or the way you have explained or written something and says that they do not think that you should have done it that way, and if it were them, they would have done something different; or if an idea that you have does not agree with them, and so on. This does not mean

This does not mean that your work is wrong; they are suggesting that you change something. You can change these things if you want to, however because it is from somebody else's point of view, if you are happy with something the way you have written it, then you can simply say 'I appreciate your advice, but I'm happy with this the way that I have done it.'

The third type of criticism is, from my point of view, 'nasty' criticism.

An example of this is when you have written something and the critic does not give constructive criticism, instead saying things like, 'this is rubbish', 'a child could have written better than this', or 'I do not like that at all'. This is not useful criticism; it is offensive and belittling.

The key to dealing with this is not to lash out at the person who says these things about your work, but simply ignore it. It is not helpful, and it is not true.

All writing is different, and everyone has their unique way of writing. Criticism can be very useful and can help to improve your work. Criticism can also be useless and a way to dampen your writing spirits. I hope that the next time you receive some criticism on your work, or at any point in your life, about any matter, that you will know the difference between the good and the bad.

(Katie Parsley)

