

FILM REVIEW

WHAT DOES A GOOD REVIEW DO?

1. Informs. The review needs to tell people who is in the film, who it is by and where or when readers can see it.
2. Describes. The review should describe the story, characters and some of the action - without spoiling the plot or giving too much away!
3. Analyses. A good review gives an opinion on whether the film is good or not and why.
4. Advises. Finally, the review should tell the reader whether or not to go and see the film.

WHICH STEPS SHOULD THE REVIEWER TAKE?

- **Watch the film.** Get a good understanding of the film's purpose and plot.
- **Evaluate the film.**
 - What is the purpose of the film?
 - Is the plot clear and well organised, or filled with holes?
 - Does the film include only what's necessary, or is it piled up with needless events and details?
 - Does it include any particular camera shots?
 - Is the film boring and lifeless, or is it vivid and alive?
 - Is the dialogue colourful and exciting, or trite?
 - Is the film based on a book, historic event, or perhaps a sequel?
 - Did the actors bring the characters to life?

In addition:

- Have the actors and the director work on any other works together?
 - Do they have a particular style?
 - Are they Oscar winners?
 - Did the film win any rewards?
- **Write the review.** A film review has 4 main parts:
 1. Introduction
 - i. Information about the film: the title, director, actors, and genre of film
 - ii. Your thesis statement that shows your attitude towards the film, as well as gives the main ideas that you're going to develop in the film review. A thesis statement gives your evaluation of the film (did you like it, or dislike) and the reasons for that evaluation.
 2. Summary
 - iii. The summary should be brief, without every single detail that happened in the film
 3. Analysis
 - iv. Here you prove your thesis. Its purpose is to let you show that your evaluation was fair and accurate. Prove your thesis by using examples from the film itself. Give specific details.
 4. Conclusion
 - v. Restate your thesis. Include personal recommendation here.

FILM REVIEW

DO'S AND DON'TS

Do

- give some details of personal interest to catch your reader's attention.
- use specific vocabulary about the film that you are reviewing.
- organise your review into clear paragraphs.
- end your review with a recommendation (briefly summarizing the reasons for your opinion).

Don't

- only describe the film, but make sure you give your opinion.
- give away the ending or spoil any surprises in the film.

USEFUL EXPRESSIONS

Beginnings

- It is a fascinating story of...
- I found this film far-fetched and unconvincing
- The film was released in...
- It's a ... production with a cast of about ... actors
- The film was produced by... and directed by...
- The film describes...

Details/ plot

- Made in... the film begins with...
- The events unfold in...
- The story is set in

Characters

- The film introduces us to...
- The principal characters are...
- My favourite character is undoubtedly...
- The story focuses on...
- We experience all this through the eyes of...

Giving your opinion

- The director excels at (showing how...)
- I was impressed by...
- One aspect I found a little disappointing was
- One possible flaw is that...
- One of the strongest things about the film is the plot, which is ...
- The acting is very good, especially the main character

- My favourite scene is...
- The dialogues are very lively and have ...
- The only negative thing I would say about the... is...

Giving a recommendation

- I would definitely recommend watching this film
- I would highly recommend this rewarding film.
- I thoroughly enjoyed this book. In fact, I couldn't ...
- By the end of this film you feel...
- It's an easy watch, and I would say it is perfect for watching...
- If you get a chance, then go and see it as soon as you can.
- I would strongly advise against watching this film.
- I was left unmoved by this film

FILM REVIEW

Title, Author / Director, Actors

The film is directed by
The film is produced by..
It is starred by...
The book is written by ...

Setting

The action takes place in ... (setting)
The action of the film is set in ...
The story takes place in...

Characters and Plot

The main characters are ...
The story is about
The novel tells the story of ...
In the course of the novel the action develops dramatically.
The novel / film begins with...
The novel has an unexpected ending.
The end of ... is ...

Reaction

I am impressed by
I think
The book is terribly / beautifully written
The film is terrible / exciting.
What surprised me is ...
What I liked is...
What I didn't like is...
I liked/didn't like the film / novel because ...

A sample review available at

<http://www.puffchrissy.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/09/Movie-Review.pdf>