

Writing Assignment: Movie Critique

Definition: A movie review or film criticism analyzes and evaluates a film.

Purpose: Your role as a critic is to analyze why a film works, how it works, what it means, and what effects it has on people.

Assignment:

You are to write a critique of the film you just viewed. On the reverse of this page, you will find some guidelines for writing an effective review or critique. Be sure your critique evaluates the film and IS NOT a comparison/contrast of the book and film. The film stands alone, and should be critiqued as a separate piece.

Length: Minimum two pages

Format: MLA

Grading Criteria:

You will be graded on how well you accomplish the following in your essay:

- **Introduction:**
 - Presents the subject of the essay.
 - Introduces the specific focus for the essay.
 - References the novel, if there is one.
 - Offers a clear thesis.
- **Body paragraphs:**
 - Topic sentences are relevant to the thesis.
 - Examples are pertinent to the topic sentence and to the thesis.
 - Analysis and discussion are insightful.
- **Conclusion:**
 - Sums up the key ideas of the essay.
 - Offers a final appraisal of the film.
- Essay uses correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
- Format is MLA (works cited, titles, parenthetical citations, spacing, margins, etc.).

How To Write a Film Review

Become a Movie Critic with These Tips

By B. Danesco

- **Create a good lead.** There are basic tips that apply to most forms of writing. One of those tips is to grab your reader immediately. You want your reader to be interested in what you have to say. Intrigue your reader in that first or "lead" paragraph in one of several ways: Start with a great quote from the movie, and explain how it reflects the plot; refer to the reputation of the actor or director and compare it to how he or she performed; compare this movie to another well-known film in a few sentences or two; or explain what your expectation was, and if it was fulfilled or not. Then, end that first paragraph by writing your opinion statement.
- **Recap briefly, but don't give away anything big.** If you've read professional movie reviews, you know they always include a little bit of recap. Some readers like to know what they're getting into before they lay down their money for a ticket. You can tell people the basic premise of the movie. In fact, you should write the basic premise, and tell them how the story builds, but don't give away key moments - especially not the ending! Keep your synopsis brief.
- **Back up your main opinion with specifics.** The readers now know you think, "This comedy had funny moments but went on too long." It's time for you to prove it. Write about how the teen actors had good timing, as they did in another film. Write about how the writers did a great parody of a famous book. But then add that there were too many scenes involving the family or the boyfriend. Talk about the fact that there were multiple endings and all of them were long. Use specifics to make your readers understand your point of view.
- **Be interesting.** Just because this is a movie review doesn't mean it has to be dull. From lead to ending paragraph, make the review engaging, using metaphors, analogy, specific adjectives and adverbs to create the images you want in the minds of your readers. But also be concise. A review isn't a place for long diatribes or flowery prose.
- **Be honest in your appraisal.** Your reader and the work you're critiquing both deserve an honest opinion, right? So even if you HATE that actor or LOVE that actress, when writing a movie review be sure not to hold back your true opinion of the film. Have some standards in mind. A comedy should be funny, a horror movie should be scary, etc.; judge the movie against those standards, not against any pre-existing opinions you may have. It will make the review more valuable to the reader, and honest writing is always best, isn't it?

Caution:

- Don't spend too much time summarizing the plot.
- Don't give away key moments!

Quick Tips:

- Make sure to have a good strong main opinion.
- Comment on specific details to support your opinion.

Source: <http://www.howtodothings.com/hobbies/a2206-how-to-write-a-movie-review.html>