

Writing Book Reviews

How to Structure a Book Review

Purpose: To review a book and inform other readers.

Background Information

Begin with a short summary. This section should only be a few sentences and may include:

- Background information about the author, when the book was written and what was happening at the time the book was written. This gives context to the reader.
- A quote that stuck out to you from the book.
- An explanation of an important word or phrase used in the book, to help the reader understand.
- Interesting facts about the author or the book itself.

Information About the Book

This section should be just under half of your review. Include things like:

General Information:

- What was the genre?
- How long was the book? Was it easy or hard to read?
- How does the book compare with similar books you have read?
- Was there anything interesting about the language used? For example, was it written with poetry or rhymes?

Plot:

- Only give a brief taster of the plot – no spoilers!

Characters:

- Who are the main characters (protagonist and antagonist)? What makes them interesting?
- What problems or conflicts did the main characters face?
- Are they likeable, relatable and understandable?
- How do the characters (protagonist and antagonist) connect with each other?
- Who was your favourite and why?

Theme:

- What is the book about at its heart? Does it have a moral?
- What makes the book worth reading?
- Are there any lines that were memorable and meaningful to you?
- What will the reader remember about this book long after reading?

Setting:

- Is it set in the past, present or future?
- Is it in a fantastical world or the real world?
- Was the setting unclear or fuzzy, or did you have clear images of the setting in your mind?
- How much did the author draw you into the setting? How did they make it believable and detailed?

Your Opinion/Analysis

This section should be about half of your review. Think about including things like:

- Why would others enjoy this book?
- What did you enjoy or not enjoy about it?

- What age group and type of reader would it be good for?
- Did it engage you emotionally – did you laugh or cry, or think about something in the book for days?
- What did you like or dislike about the writing style? Was it funny? Hard to follow? Engaging? Casual? Formal?
- How well do you think the author achieved what they were trying to do?
- Did the book feel complete or did it feel like it was missing key elements?
- How does it compare to similar books that you have read?

Rating

Give the book a rating. Commonly this is out of 5 or 10.

Eg. I give this book 4/5 stars.