

How to write a film review

A good film review must have these 5 different parts

1. Credits

Just in the first page as an introduction you must write:

A. title and year,

B. genre

C. director,

D. screenwriter

E. music or soundtrack

F. main actors

2. Plot

Synopsis or summary of the plot. Make sure that your summary makes sense to a reader who does not know the movie. Do not refer to specific scenes and do not try to explain everything.

Only a brief summary of the film

You must also include the next items, but not as different parts (they may be included in your description of the story):

Place and time: Where does the action take place? When does the action take place? (Present time, 19th century...) Is the story chronological (according to the order of time) or flash-back.

Background: society, country, kind of people (age, culture social class...), historical time...

Genre: horror, comedy, drama, adventure film, thriller...

3. Characters

Main characters:

Physical description

Psychological description

Age, nationality social/personal background

4. Vocabulary

In this section you must write:

The words you have learnt – chapter by chapter – pronunciation – explanation in English

Nouns must be in singular, adjectives in the positive form and verbs in infinitive

5. Conclusion

In the last part of your review you are asked to think and write about the next questions:

What message is being told? What was the director's purpose or intention or the theme of the film?

Compare with other realities you know (your country, historical fact or event, other film from the same director or genre...)

THINGS TO NOTE BEFORE WRITING A FILM REVIEW

1. If circumstances permit, view the film more than once. It's easy to miss key elements, or even the whole point, after just a single viewing.
2. Express your opinion of the film, but support your criticism. If you are offended or disappointed or embarrassed, provide a valid reason, even if you think it is obvious. A film review that comes across as a personal attack on an actor, director, or screenwriter or a diatribe about a genre is a failed review.
3. Adjust the style of your review for the readership. If you're pitching reviews to a traditional publication, you're expected to be fairly evenhanded.
4. Avoid spoilers. One of the most pernicious fairly recent developments in the review genre is the careless, thoughtless revelation of key plot points. It's a sign of professionalism to refrain from giving such information away. Exception: Reviews of previously released films don't necessarily adhere to this rule, though it's still considered sporting to warn readers to skip to the next paragraph if they don't want to read something.
5. Judge the story. Are the character's actions justified, and are their motives plausible? Is there an internal consistency to the way each person behaves, or do some words, thoughts, or actions ring false? Does the plot make sense? Is the story line logical? Is the narrative arc well shaped, with an economy of form, or is it flabby or drawn out, with time-killing pointlessness?
6. Rate the actors. Do they meet the expectations dictated by the plot and other story elements? If not, is it their own shortcomings, are they hampered by a poor script, or is there something about their performances that makes you believe the director is at fault? What could the performers, the screenwriters, or the

filmmaker have done differently to make the movie work better?

7. Evaluate the technical elements. How do the cinematography, editing, lighting, sound, and other components support or detract from the film? Is music appropriate and effectively employed? You needn't know film-technology jargon to share your thoughts about how these elements contributed to or detracted from the whole.

Writing film reviews is in one way a thankless task: Often, readers will disagree with you, and many people will go to see movies without your wise guidance. How to avoid frustration? Writing about movies, like writing about just about anything else, should be primarily an exercise in enjoyment: You do it because you like doing it. If anybody else out there enjoys the result of your exercise in self-entertainment, so much the better — but you're your own primary audience (and your worst critic).

Film Review [Credits] Sample

Ghajini, 2008

Directed by: A. R. Murugadoss

Screenwriter: A. R. Murugadoss

Music by: A. R. Rahman

Genre: Drama / Crime / Thriller

Main actors:

Aamir Khan as Sanjay Singhania

Asin as Kalpana

Jiah Khan as Sunita

Pradeep Rawat as Ghajini

Riyaz Khan as Inspector Arjun