



Reviews. Goals of writing a book review.

PhD. Meiram Atamanov

Lecture 13

Department of Chemistry

Institute of Natural Science

Kazakh National Women's Teacher Training University



Before You Begin

- Remember, there is no right way to write a book review. Book reviews are highly personal and reflect the opinions of the reviewer.
- A review may be as short as 50-100 words, or as long as 1500 words, depending on the purpose of the review.
- Before writing the review, be sure that you understand what type of review is required for your assignment.
- Keep your audience in mind! This will help define the emphasis you put on various parts of the review. (*Memorial University Libraries*)



The Function of a Review

Your review should do 3 things:

1. Describe what is on the page.
2. Analyze how the book tried to achieve its purpose.
3. Express your own reactions to the book.

Summary or Review?

- A book review is distinct from a summary in that it demands an analysis of and reaction to content that a summary does not.
- Whereas a summary is a report of what is written, a review both reports on and evaluates a book.



What to Put in a Book Review

- Identify your book.
- Identify the author.
 - Identify yourself.



Identifying the Book

Be sure to give your readers this information:
The author
The full title
The publisher
The place and date of publication
The edition
I'll include this in the updated presentation to provide guidance on how to properly identify a book when writing a review.



Identifying the Author

- Where appropriate, identify the author's qualifications, and any other personal information that is relevant to your discussion of the book. This may apply more to non-fiction works.
- If you have read other works by the same author, try to place the book with reference to the author's other writings.



Identifying Yourself

People's reactions to and opinions of a book will vary according to what they bring to the book. Let your audience know anything about yourself that may color your experience of the book. This may help your readers determine how to evaluate your opinions of the material. For example, "As a recent graduate student and new teacher, I found the author's descriptions of classroom interaction to ring true, as the students in the book..."



Ways to Approach the Review

Outline the contents of the book. Evaluate and make critical comments on the book. Use quotations or references to the new ideas in the book to illustrate your theme. Compare the book with a similar work by a contemporary. Point out the author's intentions, including the audience for which the book is intended. Relate the work to a social or literary trend.



Example Reviews

Here is a link to an example academic book review. Other examples of academic book reviews may be found at <http://edrev.asu.edu>. Of course, some reviews are far less formal, such as these reviews of Life of Pi.



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Thank you for your attention!