

Film Review

A. Opening: Catch the Reader's Attention

Think about how advertisements sell films: Trailers show you a few seconds of the film to get you interested.

When you begin your film review, make your own "trailer". If you liked the film, then your trailer should make people want to see it; but if you didn't like it, the trailer should be something that shows why you didn't like it. **Don't explain why you liked it or didn't like it;** make the reader like or not like the film by what you describe. Begin your review by retelling an incident or moment from the film which you think captures the spirit of the film as you understood it.

Alternatives:

Begin your review with another kind of story or interesting fact--about one of the star actors, or about the making of the film, or about the director. This may require additional research.

Begin your review with a quote from the film or the tagline. Make a strong connection between this and your thesis.

B. Take Care of Business

Near the beginning of the review, tell the reader the obligatory information: the title of the film, the director, the main actors, the year it was made, the rating, etc. This tells the reader the things they have to know about the film. Things that are not common knowledge will require internal citations. Also, briefly explain what the film is all about--not necessarily what happens, but the overall concept.

C. Character and/or Plot Summary

What happens in the film? You shouldn't tell everything that happens--and especially not the ending. But you want to summarize the basic plot of the film, in more detail than you above.

You could also focus on the development of one or two main characters. How and why do they grow or change over the film?

D. A Key Moment, Technique, or Idea

Using your notes, go into detail about something important that interested you about the film. If it was a musical, you should say something about the songs. Or if the soundtrack was particularly good, you could write about that. Or write about a specific film making technique that the director used. Or retell and analyze a key scene from the film and explain why it is important. If you think the "idea" behind a film was really interesting, explain that idea. In this section, you must go into depth about **one** aspect of the film.

E. Evaluate the Film

Do you recommend this film or not? What type of audience will appreciate it? The most important thing here is that you must also explain *why* you are making your recommendation. You must justify your opinion--and that opinion should grow out of what you write in the rest of the review. Give at least two reasons why you liked or didn't like the film. End with a solid clincher sentence.

*Include an MLA Works Cited Page after your review. This should include the film and any outside sources you used.

	Exceptional (A) 100	Proficient (B) 85	Approaching (C) 75	Below (D) 60	Well Below (F) 0
CONTENT					
• Introduction with thesis	Engaging introduction that contains hook. Contains a strong, well defined thesis (last sentence of introductory paragraph!) Paper has direction	Coherent introduction contains some general background info. Clear thesis defined, provides direction for paper	Intro is weak, doesn't give reader general background or hook. Thesis is not clearly stated, perfunctory, simple unclear.	Vague introduction, reader has little sense of what film is about. No clear thesis, incomplete	No attempt
• Support & evidence	Detailed, accurate, specific, convincing and appropriate examples or quotations from film. Fully developed throughout essay	Sufficient, accurate examples or quotations from film. May not be fully developed throughout essay.	Uneven, general, often brief support. Minimal examples used from film. Not fully developed throughout essay	Vague, missing or inappropriate support. Little or no examples from film used.	No attempt
• Ideas, analysis, & argument	Reasoned, insightful ideas. Show critical thinking and analysis. Shows thorough knowledge of film topic, themes, and/or production values. Thesis is well developed, interesting, and clear,	Shows some critical thinking and analysis. Shows knowledge of film topic, themes, or production values. Thesis is clear and thoughtful.	Shows limited critical thinking and analysis. Shows limited knowledge of film, theme, or production values. Thesis is simplistic, inadequately developed, or lacking in relevance.	Minimal analysis. Doesn't demonstrate knowledge of film, theme, or production values. Thesis is obvious, unsound, or inaccurate.	No attempt
• Conclusion	Stylishly and subtly returns to thesis. Extends main ideas, connects and comments on topic.	Returns to thesis and summarizes main points and ideas. Effectively concludes but doesn't extend	Summarizes previously stated information, but lacks closure or extension	Incomplete, Fails to conclude, adds nothing in many words	No attempt
ORGANIZATION					
• Follows Format of a good essay. Includes Topic Sentences and Transitions	Perfectly follows format of essay. Topic sentences clearly related to thesis and comprehensive. Fluid, engaging and varied transitions made between paragraphs	Follows format of essay. Topic sentences are related to thesis. Clear, functional "bridge" transitions made between paragraphs	Somewhat follows essay format. Topic sentences are a restatement of position, narrow or inaccurate, may not be appropriate for paragraph's content. Awareness of transitions but seems mechanical or forced.	Doesn't follow format of essay. No topic sentences or not appropriate for paragraph's content. No clear connections between paragraphs	NA
EXPRESSION					
• Sentence Structure	Complete, varied, interesting, evident command of technique, style and grace	Complete and correct, some style	Some variety, some errors present	Repetitious, fragments and run-on's frequent	NA
• Vocabulary	Varied and sophisticated	Effective, appropriate to task	Adequate, uneven or "Thesaurus syndrome"	Limited, monotonous, inappropriate, lazy words	NA
• Mechanics	Contains minimal to no errors in conventions (grammar, punctuation, spelling, capitalization)	Contains few minor errors in conventions	Contains errors that are distracting or cause confusion	Many convention errors interfere with communication or meaning	Errors are so profound they prevent readability.
RESOURCES					
	Works Cited and internal citations complete and in proper format. Film is properly cited.	Works Cited and internal citations are complete, with minor errors. Film is cited.	Works Cited and internal citations complete, not in proper format. Film is cited.	Works Cited is incomplete or missing some internal citations.	No attempt at Works Cited or Internal Citations