

Questions:

What do you think are the most important features of a review?

What types of review do you read?

Most common are reviews for general public published in a newspaper or a magazine such as the following **Restaurant review (see the text)**.

Critical review (systematic review)

A critical review is a complete type of text, discussing one particular article or book/film in detail. **Critical review** aims to demonstrate that the writer has extensively researched literature and critically evaluated its quality. Goes beyond mere description to include degree of analysis and conceptual innovation. Unlike a restaurant review it is published in an academic environment and is thus written by scholars and experts in the given area.

How to organise your writing in a critical review:**Summary**

You first need to summarise the text that you have read. One reason to summarise the text is that the reader may not have read the text.

In your summary, you will

- focus on points within the article that you think are interesting
- summarise the author(s) main ideas or argument
- explain how these ideas / argument have been constructed. (For example, is the author basing her arguments on data that they have collected? Are the main ideas / argument purely theoretical?)

Evaluation

Evaluation is the most important part in a critical review.

Use the literature to support your views. You may also use your knowledge of conducting research, and your own experience. Evaluation can be explicit (direct) or implicit (less direct).

Linguistic features of a critical review

Summary language

- This article / book is divided into two / three parts. First...
- While the title might suggest...
- The tone appears to be...

The author challenges the notion that...

- The article / book begins with a short historical overview of...
- This book / article is aimed at... This intended readership...

This book / article positions itself firmly within the field of...

This book / article nicely contributes to the field of...

- The approach taken by the author provides the opportunity to examine...in a qualitative / quantitative research framework that nicely complements...

Evaluation language

- This argument is not entirely convincing, as...furthermore it commodifies / rationalises the...
- There are difficulties with such a position.
- It might have been more relevant for the author to have written this book / article as...
- This chosen framework enlightens / clouds...
- This analysis intends to be...but falls a little short as...
- The authors rightly conclude that if...
- A detailed, well-written and rigorous account of...
- The beginning of...provides an informative overview into...
- This explanation has a few weaknesses that other researchers have pointed out (see Author, Year; Author, Year). The first is...
- On the other hand, the author wisely suggests / proposes that..
- Less convincing is the broad-sweeping generalisation that...
- There is no denying the author's subject knowledge nor his / her...
- The author's critique of...might seem harsh but is well supported within the literature (see Author, Year; Author, Year; Author, Year). Aligning herself with the author, Author (Year) states that...
- On this well researched / documented basis the author emphasises / proposes that...
- Nonetheless, other research / scholarship / data tend to counter / contradict this possible trend / assumption...(see Author, Year; Author, Year).
- Without entering into detail of the..., it should be stated that Title should be read by...others will see little value in...

- The thread of the author's argument becomes lost in an overuse of empirical data...
- Almost every argument presented in the final section is largely derivative, providing little to say about...

Conclusion language

- Overall this article / book is an analytical look at...which within the field of...is often overlooked.
- Despite its problems, Title offers valuable theoretical insights / interesting examples / a contribution to pedagogy and a starting point for students / researchers of...with an interest in...
- This detailed and rigorously argued...
- This first / second volume / book / article by...with an interest in...is highly informative

**Examples of such reviews to be found in the Moodle bank*

Scholarly peer review (also known as **refereeing**)

is the process of subjecting an author's scholarly work, research, or ideas to the scrutiny of others who are experts in the same field, before a paper describing this work is published in a journal, conference proceedings or as a book. The peer review helps the publisher (that is, the editor-in-chief, the editorial board or the program committee) decide whether the work should be accepted, considered acceptable with revisions, or rejected.

Peer review requires a community of experts in a given (and often narrowly defined) field, who are qualified and able to perform reasonably impartial review. Impartial review, especially of work in less narrowly defined or inter-disciplinary fields, may be difficult to accomplish, and the significance (good or bad) of an idea may never be widely appreciated among its contemporaries. Peer review is generally considered necessary to academic quality and is used in most major scientific journals, but it does by no means prevent publication of invalid research. Traditionally, peer reviewers have been anonymous, but there is currently a significant amount of *open peer review*, where the comments are visible to readers, generally with the identities of the peer reviewers disclosed as well.

Example of a (short) peer review with suggestions for a few minor revisions:

This is an exceptionally good review and balanced assessment of the status of CETP inhibitors and ASCVD from a world authority in the field. The article highlights important data that might have been overlooked when promulgating the clinical value of CETPIs and related trials.

Only 2 areas need revision:

- Page 3, para 2: the notion that these data from Papp *et al.* convey is critical and the message needs an explicit sentence or two at end of paragraph.
- Page 4, Conclusion: the assertion concerning the ethics of the two Phase 3 clinical trials needs toning down. Perhaps rephrase to indicate that the value and sense of doing these trials is open to question, with attendant ethical implications, or softer wording to that effect.