

Book Review Format

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1. Introductory Paragraph

The first sentence should state for which instructor and class the book-report is being written.

The second sentence should state the title of the book and the author's name.

The third sentence should tell how many pages the book has and the name of the publisher.

The fourth sentence can state basic bibliographic information about the book. Bibliographic information means not only the author and title but also what company published the book, what year it was published in and any other relevant information such as the edition and if the book has been translated, simplified or abridged. (see copyright page and the back of the title page.)

The next sentence should state the reason(s) you decided to read this book. Why did you choose this particular book? Typical reasons might be:

- You like the author.
- You like this type of book (i.e. environmental science, mystery, western, adventure or romance, etc.).
- Someone recommended the book to you.
- It was on a required reading list.
- You liked the cover.

These reasons do not have to be complex. Most people choose the books they read because they like the author, or topic, or somebody recommended it to them. If you chose the book because you like the author, then state why you like that author.

An optional sentence can be used if the cover (back cover) of the book gives you any additional information then add a sentence with that information.

- Was the book a best seller?
- Are there X million copies in print?
- Did it win any major awards?

2. Main Character(s) or Main Idea Paragraph

The first sentence of this paragraph should state who the main character or characters or the main idea of the book are, and why they are important. Refer to this person or these persons as the Main Character or Main Characters, or main idea.

You will need at least a complex sentence for this, and probably more than one sentence.

3. **Other Characters and Ideas Paragraph**

You should compose at least one sentence for each of the other prominent or important characters or ideas in the book. State the name of each of the other important characters, and the key role that each one plays in the book

Most books have five or six prominent characters besides the main character, or ideas along with the main idea so simply listing each one and stating their role in the book will give you a good sized paragraph.

4. **Plot (general overview) Summary Paragraph**

This is perhaps the hardest paragraph to write in five sentences or so. If you have to write a bit more don't worry. Here are the main points to cover:

- State the type of book (Science, Mystery, Western, etc.).
- What place or country was the book set in?
- What time period, if applicable was the book set in? (19th century, the present, ancient Rome, the 23rd century).
- Other physical locations which are important, like: ships, airplanes, houses, or buildings.
- Other notable attributes of the book. (Was it violent, scary, informative, fast paced, etc.).
- What is the main character trying to do or say?
- What is the outcome of the book?
- etc.

Make sure you cover all of the major parts of the plot. You might have to go back through the book, chapter by chapter, and make a few notes.

5. **Personal Impressions and Conclusion Paragraph**

Simply talk about what you liked or did not like about the book. Use this paragraph as your conclusion. It should summarize your overall impressions of the book and bring the report to a close.

- Start with a sentence that states that you are now writing a conclusion. (For example: "My final thoughts on 'A Fine Balance' are that it is a fascinating book but I am not entirely sure if I completely understood the thematic message of the book.")
- Restate your reasons why you liked and/or disliked the book using different words.
- Write two sentences that talk about the books good points and weak points.
- Write a sentence or two about what you learned from the book.
- Close with a sentence that states whether you would recommend the book to others.

Don't be afraid to give your own honest impressions of the book. After all, if you've read the book thoroughly, you are entitled to your own interpretation of it.

Typically, your book report should not exceed two double-spaced pages, and it should be somewhere between 600 and 800 words in length.