

# BOOK REVIEW

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# BOOK REVIEW: MEANING

## BOOK REVIEW

- ❑ A book review describes, analyzes and evaluates
- ❑ It is critical
- ❑ It conveys an opinion, supporting it with evidence from the book

## BOOK REPORT

A book report is a summary of the contents of a book  
It is descriptive

# PURPOSE OF REVIEWING A BOOK

- ❑ An educated, thoughtful evaluation of an author's work, supported by evidence and explanations
- ❑ A vehicle for examining issues the book raises or fails to raise
- ❑ Presents a synoptic and crisp snapshot of the book to potential readers
- ❑ Informs readers about merits or/and shortcomings of the book

# How to write a Critical Book Review

- Read the book carefully [at least twice, and take notes]
- The first reading to be used for familiarizing with the book and the second for gathering evidence to support your conclusions (Draper, 2007)
- Special focus should be laid on its preface or foreword, to gauge the main theme of the book
- As a rule, the review should have one thesis/main point and should be organized logically to support that thesis (Colford, 2000)
- Both positive and negative comments, carefully weighed and balanced against one another, should be made

# How to write a Critical Book Review

- Evaluate the book by assessing how well it achieves what it is supposed to achieve and what the reader would gain by reading it
- Identify the kind of readers who would find the book beneficial and why
- The book review must clearly indicate the following:
  - a) contents of the book
  - b) the special purpose of the book
  - c) reviewer's reaction and evaluation
- Distinction must be made between reviewer's ideas and the author's ideas, to avoid confusion

# How to write a Critical Book Review

- Place the book in the context, i.e. in comparison to other works on the same subject and evaluate
- In a critical book review, it is important to be very specific while evaluating. Any comments must be supported by concrete examples from the book
- One must go through the guidelines for the critical book review and follow these while writing the review
- It is always desirable to give a graceful closing to the review

# Components of a Critical Book Review

1. Provide a complete bibliographic entry for the book, including the title, author, place, publisher, publication date, edition, special features [e.g. maps etc., price, ISBN]

Illustration: *Human Development Strategies, by Mitra, Sandeep, New Delhi: Rainbow Publications, 2005. 350 pages. Reviewed by James C. Schnore.*

2. Background of the author- his/her qualifications, background, previous publications, etc., after gathering information on the profile of the author, should be presented. Within the text, titles should not be used, e.g. Dr., Prof., etc.

# Components of a Critical Book Review

3. Description of the author's main purpose and thesis should be stated next. Then describe how the author attempted to achieve the purpose and develop the thesis. This should be absolutely clear so that readers get a quick and clear idea of the author's purpose and methodology
4. The third step comprises of evaluation on two grounds: i) How effectively did the author develop his/her thesis; and ii) How well did the author achieve the purpose. The critical review evaluating whether the author has been effective in developing the main theme should be based upon the author's performance on scholarship, presuppositions, organization, methodology, accuracy, suitability, comparisons and impact

# REFERENCES

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