

ELEMENTS OF A BOOK REPORT



Book reports are primarily objective in tone. This means that the book should be examined without bringing in your own personal feelings, biases, interpretations, and suppositions when you write your analysis of the contents. Take notes while reading the book so that you'll have all the important information at hand when it's time to write.

Necessary Elements Provide the following information about the book: author(s), title, publisher name and location, year of publication, and the number of pages.

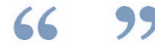
Elements That Should Be Discussed

- Who is the **author**? Does s/he have a reputation? Have you read other books by the same author? Is the book one in a series of books?
- **Genre**: is the book fiction (a made-up story)? Non-fiction (factual material, such as science or history)? A biography (someone's life story)?
- What or who is the **subject** of the book?
- Does the book have a central **theme** or message? If so, what is it? Does the book present the theme in a way that helps a person understand it?
- If fictional, who are the **characters**?
 - What happens to them?

- Does the author make you care for or dislike them? How? Why?
- Do they represent anything, such as ideals or themes that present the **author's message**? Does the title represent the theme? In what way?
- How does the author's **language** and **writing style** support the book?
- If there are **illustrations**, do they contribute significantly to the work? What about the cover of the work?
- **Motivation**--what made you read the book? Did you enjoy it?
- Do you believe the author achieved his or her **purpose** in writing the book?

Element You Might Consider

- Quotes—use them to
 - prove your points
 - share parts of the book you enjoyed
 - illustrate parts you disliked



When You Write Your Report

Begin with the title and author of the book. Next, summarize the work with enough detail so that others know that you read it. Now discuss what you learned from reading the book. Your report should include all the elements listed at left, with the majority of the report taken up by the summary analysis of the plot, characters or themes presented. You may include a brief personal evaluation, too, by choosing a few points to talk about, including whether or not you would recommend the book to others (and why).

ELEMENTS OF A BOOK REVIEW

A book review is a brief appraisal of the book—what it covers, how it is written, and whether or not you enjoyed reading it. Some book review formats require you to include information on purchasing the book. Book reviews generally range from 500 - 750 words (2-3 pages), but may be shorter or longer. Follow the guidelines set by your instructor. Take notes while reading the book so that you'll have all the important information at hand when it's time to write.

Elements to Note While Reading

- Who is the **author**? Does s/he have a reputation? Have you read other books by the same author? Is the book one in a series of books?
- **Genre**: is the book fiction or non-fiction? Biography?
- **Title**: does the title contribute to the understanding of the book? How?
- **Introduction**: does the author provide the reader with information in an introduction or preface? Is the introduction by another author?
- **Arrangement**: is the book arranged in chapters? Is there a table of contents? An index? Appendices? How do these contribute to the use of the book?
- **Illustrations**: does the cover grab the attention of the reader? Does other graphics in the book add to its message? Is the font easy to read?

(Continued on back..)

- **People:** are there real people or characters in the book? Did you relate to them? If the book is fiction, do they seem realistic?
- **Themes:** are there themes or messages that stand out? Are they effective, in your estimation? What is the overall message the author is trying to convey?

When You Write Your Review

Begin by giving the title, author, and date of publication, and then write a short summary or background of the book. If it is non-fiction, you'll probably need to provide an overview of the book's main topic or argument but without a lot of detail.

Next give your own estimation of the book. You might discuss:

- Main characters
- Central themes
- Presentation
- Effectiveness of message

If your review needs to include publishing information and price, it is usually included at the end of the review. You may also need to include the date the book was published and its ISBN (International Standard Book Number).



Source:
The Purdue OWL (Online Writing Lab)

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/comm_on_writing_assignments/book_reviews.html



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