Guidelines for Teen Reviews

A review can be many things. It can recommend a book you liked or was well-written. It can help promote an author's work. It can also tell people why you didn't like a book. Remember, though, a review is a piece of writing. This is your contribution to the book, so it is your mission to provide an honest, fresh review of what you read. Ready to go? Submit your review HERE. (This all applies to video reviews as well!)

Parts of a Review

Title, Author, Genre (fiction or nonfiction, and type: fantasy, science fiction, realistic, etc.)

Summary: Write a few sentences describing **what the book is about** (plot, main characters, etc.). Don't give an entire synopsis, as you would in a book report—this is more like a movie trailer, a teaser to make people want to read it. Also try to avoid spoilers!

Try answering these questions about the plot progression:
Somebody—Who is the main character(s)?
Wanted—What does the main character want?
But—What is standing in the way of the character getting what they want?
So—How does the character try to get what they want? Do they succeed?
Then—What is resolved at the end? Where does the character plan to go from here?

Here's an example from a popular story, *The Lord of the Rings*, by J.R.R. Tolkien:
Somebody—Frodo Baggins, a Hobbit, lives in the Shire with Bilbo, who has a magic ring.
Wanted—Frodo wants to destroy the One Ring, so Sauron cannot use it to gain power.
But—Frodo and the Fellowship face a perilous journey with many dangers to overcome like the Ring Wraiths and the Orcs.
So—Frodo and Sam bravely sneak into Mordor and destroy the Ring by throwing it into Mount Doom.
Then—The friends return to the Shire.

Opinion: Write a few sentences giving **your opinion of the book**. This part of the review is ***not*** fulfilled by saying "It was awesome!" Try to answer some of these questions: What was the most compelling aspect? Were you disappointed at any point? Why? What thoughts or feelings did the book inspire? To whom would you recommend the book? Remember, this isn't a school assignment—it's you, talking about a book you chose to read, and recommending it to your friends (or not). Don't be afraid to add your own personal style to your review!

Rate this book—the higher the number, the better the book!

5 Hard to imagine a better book
4 Better than most
3 Readable/entertaining
2 Needs more work—weak plot, poor writing, whatever
1 How did this book get published?!

Review Resources

YouTube:
"How to Write a Killer Book Review in 5 Easy Steps | YaashaMoriah.com"
In this 7-minute video, learn to discuss the pros and cons of the book and pull out a quote or excerpt that will hook any potential readers. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0t78opcFHAM

"How to Write a Book Review 2020—EasyPro"
"Follow the time-codes to view the parts that you are interested in the most: "01:46" Step 1 - Summary "04:28" Step 2 - Overview "06:32" Step 3 - Strengths and Weaknesses "08:36" Step 4 – Closing summary" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FtqaKl6H6M

"How to Write a GOOD Book Summary—David Ramos"
Ramos uses the "Somebody, Wanted, But, So, Then" method of breaking down the review into simple questions to answer. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aUCQ8OHPBsM

Websites:
"How to Write a Book Review"--BookTrust.org
This website breaks down 5 simple tips, short and sweet. https://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/tips-and-advice/writing-tips/writing-tips-for-teens/how-to-write-a-book-review/

"How to Write a Book Review"-- BookRiot.com
BookRiot gives 6 simple steps to follow. https://bookriot.com/how-to-write-a-book-review/

"How to Write a Book Review in 3 Steps"--Reedsy.com
This website starts with three simple steps, then gives some great in-depth advice about each step with examples and resources. https://reedsy.com/discovery/blog/how-to-write-a-book-review

Examples:

Teen Video Review from Glendale Library Arts & Culture:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2yKCtPef0XE

TikTok: