

Writing About Film

Film Reviews



resources



SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRÌN ALBA

Film Review Guide: **First Level**

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRIN ALBA



- Use the writing frame on the following slide to write a film review.
- These are your own opinions on the film. There are no wrong or right answers.
- Think of your answers before writing. Do you need to make notes first?
- You can watch parts of the film again to help you.
- Ask someone to check your work when you are finished. Look for any mistakes in SPAG: Spelling, Punctuation, Paragraphs and Grammar.

A Film Review by _____

Your five star rating:



Title: _____

Director: _____

Plot

What happens? Are there any plot twists?
Did you find the plot interesting?

Characters

Who are the main characters?
Who was your favourite character? Why?

Your opinion

Did you like the film?
What was your favourite part? Why?

Recommend

Who would you recommend this film
to? Why?

Film Review Guide: **Second Level**

SCREEN SCOTLAND
SGRIN ALBA



- The frame on the following slide will help you to write a film review.
- These are your own opinions on the film. There are no wrong or right answers.
- Think of your answers before writing. Do you need to make notes first?
- You can watch parts of the film again to help you.
- Ask someone to check your work when you are finished. Look for any mistakes in SPAG: Spelling, Punctuation, Paragraphs and Grammar.

Film Review Guide: Second Level

PARAGRAPH 1: Introduction

- What is the title of the film?
- Who is the director of the film?
- When was the film released?
- Who are the stars of the film?

PARAGRAPH 2: Plot summary

- What are the main events in the film?
- Which moment in the film did you find most interesting? Why?

PARAGRAPH 3: Character

- Who is the main character in the film?
What are they like? What is their life like?
- What is the most interesting or unusual thing they do or say in the film?
- Would you want to meet this character?
Why/Why not?

Film Review Guide: Second Level

PARAGRAPH 4: Setting

- Where and when is the film set?
- Which setting do you think was the most interesting?
- Would you want to visit this place?
Why/Why not?

PARAGRAPH 5: Film Techniques

- When in the film was there a clever use of a filmmaking technique like colour, costume, lighting, camerawork, editing, music, sound effects...?
- What technique was used? What was so good about it?

PARAGRAPH 6: Evaluation

- Did you like the film? Why/Why not?
(Give at least two reasons and try to use interesting words to describe how you feel.)

Film Review Guide: **Third/Fourth Level**

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- The frame on the following slide will help you to write a film review by guiding you through the process.
- This is your chance to share your own opinions on the film. There are no wrong or right answers.
- You can write your ideas up as notes first if you like.
- Feel free to watch the film or parts of it again to help you.
- Remember to use the headings to keep your work in paragraphs.
- Check your work when you are finished for SPAG: Spelling, Punctuation, Paragraphs and Grammar.

Film Review Guide: Third/Fourth Level

PARAGRAPH 1: Introduction

- Give the title of the film.
- Say who the director of the film was.
- Say when the film was released.
- Explain why it might be an important film for people to watch.

PARAGRAPH 2: Plot summary

- Explain what the main events in the film are.
- State which moment in the film you found most interesting and why.
- Explain why you think the film was made (e.g. to entertain; to educate; to make a profit; to provoke a reaction; to persuade someone of something...)

PARAGRAPH 3: Character

- Explain who the main character in the film is.
- Explain what we learn about the main character and their life.
- Give an example of something interesting or unusual they do or say in the film.
- Say whether you would want to get to know this character. Explain why you would/would not want to meet them.
- Say whether or not you think this character is realistic. Explain your reasons with evidence from the film.

PARAGRAPH 4: Setting

- Name the different settings seen in the film.
- Explain what impression you get of the settings.
- Give an example of how the setting is made interesting in the film.
- Explain what impression we get of a character's life from the settings.
- Say whether the film made you want to visit this place. Explain why you would/would not want to visit it.

PARAGRAPH 5: Film Techniques

- Choose one scene or moment from the film that makes clever use of filmmaking techniques: colour, costume, lighting, camerawork, editing, music, sound effects...
- Describe what technique is used.
- Explain what effect that technique has on the film. Does it help you understand a character better, make the moment shocking/sad/funny, affect you emotionally?

PARAGRAPH 6: Evaluation

- Explain who you think the film was made for. Give evidence to support your answers.
- What is the film's theme? Give an example of how this is shown in the film. Explain how this made you feel.
- Say whether you did or did not like the film.
- Explain why/why not, giving at least two reasons.
- Try to use a range of adjectives to describe how you feel.



Film Review Guide: Senior Level

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- **Watch the film.** Even if you've seen it before! Be focused and conscious. If you don't understand the film, you can't analyse it - watch it again and/or research the meaning.
- **Take notes.** Record all noteworthy elements. Be meticulous - do not overlook anything.
- **Research the film.** Find out about the filmmaker, what prompted the making of the film, characterisation, casting, location, historical events that led to the film, controversies...
- **Analyse the film.** Critically evaluate the film from beginning to end, noting every detail of what does and doesn't work.
- **Present evidence.** It is not enough to use general statements like "a fantastic movie," "beautiful set," "excellent acting," etc. Support any comment you make with evidence from the film.
- **Remove yourself.** The whole review is your opinion, so you don't need to keep saying "I". Instead of saying, "I think the film is good", say, "The film is good".
- **Proof-read.** Check your SPAG (Spelling, Punctuation, Paragraphing and Grammar). Edit for clarity and fluency - the golden rule is to omit unnecessary words.

Film Review Guide: Senior Level

Para 1: Introduction	Make the opening engaging start. Include important info (e.g. title, director, year released, relevant background info, key cast members...)
Para 2: Plot	Give a concise summary of the story for people who have yet to watch the film. Analyse the plot: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• mention any original elements/twists, engaging use of conventions, glaring inconsistencies/illogical parts...
Para 3: Filmmaker	Mention any important info about them - political stance, background, controversies... Connect this film to other movies the director has worked on, making comparisons.
Para 4: Creative elements	Choose two or three and state how effectively these are used to enrich the viewing experience: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• lighting, costume, hair/make-up, characterisation, camerawork, dialogue, colour, mood/tone, symbols, special effects, music, editing, sets, locations...
Para 5: Actors	Do any stand out – for good or bad reasons? Have the actors been appropriately cast in the role? Does anyone surprise with their performance, steal scenes - or ruin them?
Para 6: Significance	Relate the content of the film to a social or historical issue. Does it help or hinder a current issue (racism, sexism, politics...)? Is it historically accurate? Does this help or hinder the film? Was it based on a book? What changes have been made? Is one better than the other?
Para 7: Conclusion	Comment on the originality – or lack thereof – of the film. If the film takes a conventional approach, does it feel fresh? Can the film still be enjoyed?

Resource Credits

Resource developed by
Gail Robertson on behalf
of Screen Scotland.

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