

Writing a Book Critique

What is the Purpose of a Book Critique?

A book critique (it can also be called a **book review**) is a critical evaluation of the content and purpose of a book/journal article. In a critique, you will analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the work you are reviewing.

Structure of a Book Critique

Unless your lecturer has prescribed a particular format for your book critique, you could prepare it using the format outlined below. Each part provides guidance for what you should cover in your book critique. NOTE: the title of each part below also indicates what % of your word count should be dedicated to each section.

Part 1: Introduce Work and Author Details (5%)

- Provide information on the author/s. Be factual and relevant.
- Establish the specific qualifications that qualify him/her to speak on the topic.

Part 2: Purpose of the Book (5%)

- Summarise the aim/s or purpose of the book. Ask yourself why the book was written and who are expected to be its intended readers.
- Outline the author/s thesis statement.

Part 3: Summary of Contents (30%)

- Discuss the content by providing a concise overview of the author's main themes.
- Provide a broad sweep of the issues discussed in the book.

Part 4: Critical Analysis (50%)

This is the most important part of your book critique.

- Provide an analysis and evaluation of the author's content and conclusions by giving your own analysis and comments.
- Analyse the author's writing style, organisation, referencing, clarity and coherence.
- Comment on relevance, who the content is applicable to and how the content is helpful to you in your area of study.

- Critique the author's assertions and conclusions—Do you agree/disagree with them? Is there any evidence to support a counter-argument?

Part 5: Recommendations (10%)

- Give a general opinion of the work.
- Offer your specific recommendations for who should read the work.
- Provide a reference list if you used supporting sources for your position or if you used direct quotes or paraphrased the author.

Remember...

This resource has been created to give you an idea of how to set out a book critique. However, your lecturer may have specific ideas of what should/should not be included in your assignment, or how it should/should not be structured. Always consult with your lecturer if unsure.