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HOMEWORK PROJECT

NAME\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

MEDIA TEACHER \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**How to write a good film review**

You will need to write a review of a science fiction film you have seen in the cinema or at home in the past year. Your review needs to be approximately 250 words long, but remember that we’re looking for quality over quantity.

1. As you are watching the film, be prepared to **make notes**. It’s much easier to write a review if you have some notes about the key scenes and characters to remind you.
2. Focus on explaining **how** you were entertained by the film.
3. Include a few words on each of the following:

– the film’s title

– the director

– the main actors

– the music of the film

– the film’s genre (science fiction)

1. Point out the film’s values – **what message is the director trying to get across?** Is it about how good always overcomes evil, or about family values or what makes a hero?
2. If you have time, do some research into the film's production history. It will help you gain a deeper understanding of the film in question, and you may uncover some **juicy details** to add to your review.
3. Reel in the reader quickly: **spend lots of time on the first paragraph**. Make it dramatic and interesting and your reader might stay with you.
4. **Who would enjoy the film?** Describe which age-group and type of person would go to see the film as this will help the reader determine if the film is for them or not.
5. Don’t gush. Avoid words like ‘awesome’ or ‘great’. **Describe what is good about key scenes from the film rather than just talking about the film as a whole**.
6. Dish the dirt. Don’t be shy – **say exactly what you think**. Tell the reader whether you loved or hated it – and why.
7. Write for a Martian. Imagine your review is an aliens’ first and only experience of this film and tell them as much as possible about it – **without giving the ending away!**

**MAKING NOTES**

Here are a few questions to think about when making notes:

The **WHAT** questions:

1. What film are you reviewing?

2. What is it about?

3. What genre does the film belong to?

4. What is the tone of the film? What is the mood?

The **WHEN** and **WHERE** questions:

1. When was the film made?

2. When does the action of the film take place?

3. Where is the film made?

4. Where is the film set?

The **WHO** questions:

1. Who has directed the film?

2. Who has written it?

3. Who has acted in it? Are there big stars in it? What expectations do you have about the film given the cast.

4. Who do you think would enjoy the film? Children? Adults? Teenagers?

The **HOW** questions:

1. How long is the film? Did you think it was too long or too short?

2. How does the film make you feel? Happy? Sad? Is it funny? Scary?

3. How do you think it achieves this?

Finally, the **IS IT** questions:

1. Is it a good film overall? Did you like it? Why/Why not?

2. What is it specifically that you liked or disliked?

***You don’t need to answer all of these questions, nor do you need to answer them in order.***

***Remember you can be as creative as you like, and overall, it is your opinion that is the most important part.***

As a starting point, you can structure your review into three paragraphs with the following

headings:

1. What do you know about the film and its background?

2. What is the film about?

3. What did you think?

As your review comes along, you can take away the headings and expand on these ideas.

**Film One - Notes**

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**Film One - Review**

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**Film Two - Notes**

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**Film Two - Review**

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**Self Assessment – Checklist**

* Your review helps the reader make a clearer decision based on a fairer, more objective viewpoint.
* Your review is written by a trusted reviewer whose views the reader has found matched their own in the past is more reliable than most information about a film ahead of its general release.
* Your review can help give the reader a clearer view about the genre of a film and whether or not it might appeal to a broader audience than is suggested by its marketing.
* Your review is great to read after seeing a film – it’s a way of confirming how you felt about the film yourself.
* Your review can help the reader share the passion a reviewer has for a film.
* Your review can inspire the reader’s curiosity about a film or director or actor.
* A review is great to read after seeing a film – it’s a way of learning more about a film or deepening your understanding of it.
* Your review is an important part of the ‘public record’ about a film. You can go back years later and find out a great deal about a film from the way it was first, and perhaps subsequently, reviewed.