Writing a Movie Review

Writing a movie review is a great way to express your opinion of a movie. The purpose of most movie reviews is to help others determine if they want to watch the movie. Learning how to analyze a film also allows you to appreciate films in another way. Reviews analyze the effectiveness of the plot, theme, acting, direction, special effects, musical effects, cinematography, and all other elements that created the movie. There are qualities and guidelines that a critique of a movie should possess.

Steps to Writing a Movie Review:

1. Watch the movie

The first step in writing the review is to watch the movie. Watching the movie a second time usually will help you absorb a lot more detail about the movie. Most movie reviewers take notes as they watch the movie.

Come up with a thesis, a central idea/opinion you have to discuss and back up with your observations on the various elements of the film. Your thesis should be discussed in the first paragraph of your review. Having a thesis will take your review beyond the plot summary stage and into the realm of good film criticism, which is rightfully its own genre art form.

2. Evaluate the movie

Don't leave the reader guessing whether you like the movie or not. Let them know early on, so that you can spend the rest of the time "proving" your rating. Opinions should be explained to allow the reader to determine whether they would agree with your opinion. Detail who is starring in the movie and how well you think they acted. Did the movie follow a regular predictable story line, or did it get you thinking, like a Quentin Tarantino movie? Cinematography and lighting include details about how well the movie was shot and directed. Was the lighting good in the moody scenes? Did the movie have its own score like ET, or did it feature songs from popular artists?

**For this assignment** you will need to write a short plot summary for the movie. Discuss a couple aspects of filmmaking. You may choose from acting, direction, editing, costume design, etc. Be sure that you are specific and cite examples from the movie.

Give your overall reaction to the film as well as your opinion on the quality of the film. Include your recommendations for potential viewers. Avoid the use of generalized opinions such as “it was a great movie” or “the acting was horrible,” but rather give specific reasons and the whys.