

# **BOOK REVIEW – GUIDELINES AND SAMPLE**

## **GUIDELINES**

- **First paragraph** – 1. Purpose of writing the book / background  
2. Some of author's previous works, special mention or adaptation.
- **Second paragraph** – 1. Short summary, without giving out too many details  
2. Main characters
- **Third paragraph** – 1. Style of writing  
2. Theme of the story
- **Fourth paragraph** – 1. Reception of the book by the public  
2. Relevance of the book in contemporary scenario  
3. Comparison with the author's previous works  
4. Own comments in 2-3 short sentences.

## **AVOID –**

1. Classics like Sherlock Holmes or Pride and Prejudice
2. Romance like The Fault in our Stars, Love Story by Erich Segal
3. Drama – E.g. – Hamlet, Macbeth, The Merchant of Venice
4. Vernacular language books
5. Series – Hardy Boys series, Harry Potter series, The Famous Five series. Choose a particular book not the full series.

## **SAMPLE – BOOK REVIEW**

Book – The Kite Runner  
Author – Khaled Hosseini  
Country – United States  
Year of publication – 2003  
Language – English  
Number of pages – 372  
Genre – Historical fiction, drama  
Publisher – Riverhead Books  
Cost – Rs. 499.00

The unforgettable, heart-breaking story of the unlikely friendship between a wealthy boy and the son of his father's servant, *The Kite Runner* is a beautifully crafted novel set in a country that is in the process of being destroyed. *The Kite Runner*, being Hosseini's first novel, creates a firm ground beneath his feet.

It tells the story of Amir and Hassan, the closest of friends, as well as brothers, and experts in the art of kite flying. The two young boys live in Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan, and this year they are going to try harder than ever to win the local kite-fighting tournament—a popular Afghan pastime and this is Amir's one hope of winning his father's love. But just like the kites battling in the sky, war comes to Afghanistan, and the country becomes an extremely dangerous place.

Hosseini's style of writing engages the attention of the reader without being obvious or desperate. The story is fast-paced and hardly ever dull. It introduces the reader to a different world – the world of Afghan life – which is strange, fascinating and yet oddly familiar all at the same time. Hosseini's writing finds a great balance between being clear and yet powerful, and not only is the story itself brilliantly constructed, but the book also explores the very art of storytelling.

The themes of betrayal, guilt and redemption have been developed in the book with much care and skill. Author Khaled Hosseini treats them with power and sensitivity, making the reader feel the depths of Amir's weakness and the horror of his acts. However, the fact that this is a book set inside Afghan culture and much of it taking place in Afghanistan itself makes the book much more powerful for the reader.

It is so powerful because it points at basic humanity. Even if Afghanistan is a faraway land for the reader, Hosseini forces us to see the Afghans to be like everyone else – humans, complex, both defined and crippled by tradition, but no more or less than anyone else. The novel profoundly enriches the reader in further insight to the unity of the human species, and the struggles, even agony, of going forward in life.

The story is about the power of reading, the price of betrayal, and the possibility of redemption; and an exploration of the power of fathers over sons—their love, their sacrifices, their lies. A sweeping story of family, love, and friendship told against the devastating backdrop of the history of Afghanistan over the last thirty years, *The Kite Runner* is an unusual and powerful novel that has become a beloved, one-of-a-kind classic.

In the first two years following its publication, over one million copies of the book were sold. Later as the book clubs began picking it up, it became a number one New York Times best seller in March 2005, maintaining its place on the list for two years. The book has struck a chord with me in its theme of redemption. In our lives, we make mistakes knowingly and unknowingly. However, not everyone is given a chance to walk on the path of redemption. The path, although, is extremely rough but it is the only one that can make one achieve true freedom.

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