

Critique

Definition of Critique

Critique is a literary technique that means to critically evaluate a piece of literary work, or a political or philosophical theory in detail. A critique could be a critical [essay](#), an article evaluating a literary piece, or a review. It may be just like a summary that identifies the central issue, raises questions, takes notice of theoretical and experimental approaches, and reviews the significance of the results. Apart from that, its purpose is to highlight both the shortcomings as well as strengths of a literary piece or a work of art. Moreover, critical evaluation or assessment requires sufficient knowledge about the subject matter.

Examples of Critique in Literature

Example #1: *The Guardian* (By Philip Hope-Wallace)

In *The Guardian*, critic Philip Hope-Wallace has portrayed Beckett's play, *Waiting for Godot*, as "inexplicit and deliberately fatuous." He also claimed this play to have "bored some people acutely. [while] Others found it a witty and poetic conundrum." Godot would possibly be a God, and the dresses of tramps are like Chaplinesque zanies in a circus. Both speak futile cross talks like music hall exchanges. This play bored [audience](#) acutely, while others consider it as a poetic and witty conundrum. Finally, he calls the play a dramatic vacuum. It is without any plot, [climax](#), [denouement](#), beginning, middle and end.

Example #2: *The Washington Post* (By The Washington Post)

A famous writer, Jonathan Yardley, gives a complete analysis of F. Scott Fitzgerald's popular novel, *The Great Gatsby* in *The Washington Post*. He

calls the novel an enormous achievement in Fitzgerald's career. It is his masterwork and seems that no other American novel could ever come close to its literary artistry.

This novel is very popular, and its every passage is famous, thus there is no need to retrace its details and familiar background. Fitzgerald has written it with unusual subtlety and sustained that tone in the entire novel. In the end, he says that this novel is "the most beautiful, compelling and *true* in all of American literature." Then he says, "If from all of our country's books I could have only one, *The Great Gatsby*, would be it."

Example #3: *Hamlet: Poem Unlimited* (By Harold Bloom)

In his book, *Hamlet: Poem Unlimited*, Harold Bloom declares William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* as "unlimited," coming "of no [genre](#)," because its greatness "... competes only with the world's scriptures." This amazing significance cannot emerge from a work, which is about tendentious and politicized things.

Bloom abandons the idea that Prince Hamlet's double shock of his father's death and his mother's second marriage has brought a drastic change in Hamlet. The truth, however, is that "Something in Hamlet dies before the play opens." In fact, the [theme](#) or central idea of this play is "Hamlet's consciousness of his own consciousness, unlimited yet at war with itself." Thus, the play is about awakening of self-awareness, and Hamlet fights with "his desire to come to an end of playacting."

Example #4: *The Daily Telegraph* (By Victoria Lambert)

Victoria Lambert, in *The Daily Telegraph*, writes her critical reviews on Jane Austen's novel, *Pride and Prejudice*. She describes the novel as surprisingly comforting as much as iconoclastic. It is a great story that challenges the people's perceptions, and also draws a line through their thoughts and female history.

Certainly, there is an enjoyment of the Georgian grace, a world where we can solve problems by a ball invitation, a new gown, and scrumptious gossip. The social life at Hampshire Vicarage, its complex social mores,

– especially females – to a point of obsession. The critics appreciate Austen's overall depiction of the way money rules a society. She also admits Austen's ability to describe the human heart in detail, [setting](#) her literary pulse racing.

Function of Critique

Critiques vary widely, ranging from giving reviews of books, as these reviews might determine whether a book is going to be popular or not, to rhetorical analysis of articles and pieces of artwork. Its advantage is that, despite negative criticism and reviews, many books win commercial success. Sometimes a critic serves as a scholarly detective, authenticating unknown books and unearthing master pieces. Thus, obscure scholarly skills could work as a most basic criticism, bringing literary pieces to public attention.

Besides, a critique may antagonize the author. Many authors do not feel that literature needs investigators, and advocates are not happy when they hear that their works are imitative, incomplete, or have unintended meanings. However, most critiques are useful, as they help improve the works of authors.