# You are going to be writing a film review for the documentary film or nonfiction film ***Triumph of the Nerds.*** This film is available on the media drive for you to watch again on your own.

Please take notes while you are watching so you may refer to them later while you are writing your film review.

**After you have watched the film write a Film Review to the film. The prompts below are to help you but you can comment on other points of interest as well.**

* **What advances made the personal computer possible**
* **Who were the innovators and exploiters.**
* **What were important turning points**
* **What were key technologies**
* **IBM decided to use off the shelf parts and existing OS and software companies. Explain key developments and the consequence of these decisions on the part of all the key players. Who were the winners and losers. Why?**
* **What hardware, OS, and software developments occurred**
* **What were the contributions of Xerox PARC to the development of the PC?**
* **What 3 technologies did Steve Jobs see while at Xerox that changed his life? When did they get implemented**
* **Comment on how IBM, Apple, and Microsoft interacted and how they changed the industry**
* **Now that you have seen all three segments explain how the computer your typing on right now came to be.**

**Film Review Elements**

**The title of the film/documentary**

* Always name the film you are reviewing in the introductory paragraph. Skipping this is one of the most common mistakes

**Summary**

* The whole point of a review is to summarize the film for people who haven’t watched it yet.
* Always assume the person reading your review hasn’t seen the film, then you won’t leave out important details
* As a reviewer, your job is to explain what happened in the film and express whether the filmmaker failed or succeeded.
* Saying you liked or disliked the film isn’t a viable comment on its own. Your opinion has to be supported by specific reasons and examples from the feature itself

**Filmmaker**

* Do a little research on the person who directed the film:
  + Is that person a controversial figure?
  + Is he/she known for a political stance?
  + Does the filmmaker have a significant background?
* Devote a paragraph or two to the person behind the film and their other works in order to establish the significance of the film you are reviewing for the director’s career.

**Significance to your course**

* How does the content of the film fit into your course’s theme/topics?
* Is the film important historically or politically?

**Creative elements**

* How are these elements important to the message of the film?
* Think about how the colors enhance the atmosphere or mood of the film.
* Do the sound effects enrich the viewing experience or detract from it?
* How do the camera movements and angles add to the message of the film?

**Remember:**

* Reviews combine the aspects of straight journalism with the “pizzazz” of personal narratives
* Reviews should be detailed enough to provide assistance in making an honest decision i.e. whether the reader wants to see it or if they’d like it
* **The purpose of a film review is**
* To inform the reader about the film and its ideas
* Allows writers to express their opinions
* To offer an unbiased and objective view of the film
* Help reader determines whether they want to see the film

**Mistakes To Avoid**

* Not focusing on the film – while connecting the plot to some specific historical event is a good idea (when applicable), strive to avoid writing about unnecessary details or introducing irrelevant information such as the history of cinematography or that particular genre, among other things
* Inserting yourself – while the review reflects your understanding and opinion of the film there is no need to write in first person all the time: I noticed this, I saw that I liked this, I disliked that
* Failing to check facts about movie background and release date, director, casting etc.
* Giving out your opinion without mentioning any reason why you think that way
* Talking about irrelevancies
* Writing a review without a structure (Make sure you plan out your review)
* Writing generalities such as great acting, cool effects, a good movie, it was bad etc.
* Writing a review without substance or analysis of the film

**Checklist**

**Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ /20**

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| **Criteria** | **Y/N** | **Comments** |
| The review has a creative and meaningful title. |  |  |
| The review states the filmmaker’s name and background information about film and filmmaker. |  |  |
| The review includes the date of publication and the production company. |  |  |
| The review summarizes the important points of the film. |  |  |
| The review includes analysis of plot and creative elements (i.e. plot, character, setting, and theme for fiction or focus and factual information for nonfiction). |  |  |
| The review gives a clear and powerful statement of the reviewer’s opinion of the film (i.e. clear thesis). |  |  |
| Quoted and paraphrased material has been included to support the points and reactions towards the film. |  |  |
| Factual information has been included and has been checked for accuracy. |  |  |
| The review is geared towards a particular audience. |  |  |
| The review’s style establishes and communicates the reviewer’s voice. |  |  |
| The review incorporates a creative rating system with a key that explains the ranking. |  |  |
| The review leaves the reader with a sense of whether he/she will want to watch the film. |  |  |
| The review has been proofread and is free of spelling, grammatical, and mechanical errors. |  |  |
| All rough work has been submitted. |  |  |