

Language of Film Review

A review should include:

● An introduction

- Facts and background information concerning the film, such as
 - the title
 - the name of the artists or actors and actresses
 - the name of the director
 - the type of movie
 - the place where the story in the film happens (i.e. the setting)

● A main body

- Usually make up of 2 paragraphs:
 - 1st – describing the main features of the plot (or summary of the story in the film)
 - 2nd – general comments and opinions on
 - the acting
 - the music
 - the photography
 - the colour / animation (if it is a cartoon)
 - the setting
 - the costumes
 - special effects (e.g. sci-fi movies)

● A conclusion

- Include a recommendation and reasons why you recommend the film

Reviews are normally found in newspapers, magazines or as part of a letter.

The *style* used depends on the intended readers. Therefore, it can be *semi-formal or formal*.

Present tenses are normally used.

A variety of **adjectives** are used to make the review more interesting to readers.

Formal film reviews should see a frequent use of **passive voice**. In a formal review, there should be no short forms of words.

Useful Language : vocabulary / phrases / expressions

Background

- The film is set in ...
- This fascinating film is...
- This film originates from a novel named ...
- The film is directed by...
- The film is based on a novel / a real life story of a...
- This is a comedy / horror film / love story / cartoon / science fiction movie / war film / Kung Fu film / an action film / a thriller / a spy movie /

Main points of the plot

- The plot focuses on...
- The story begins / concerns about / is about...
- The plot / story has a twist in ...
- The film reaches a climax when...
- The plot is absolutely thrilling / exciting / fascinating / touching / romantic / surprising...

General comments and opinions

- It is rather confusing / long / slow / boring
- The cast is excellent / weak / awful / unconvincing
- The script/ story is dull / clever / exciting
- It has a tragic / surprising / dramatic ending
- It does not come across as true / convincing
- The music / sound effect is dull / rich
- It is a catchy tune as backing music
- The theme song is powerful / weak / satisfying
- The colour in the photography is natural / spectacular / dull / dark and frightening
- The acting is true to life / powerful / natural

Useful recommendations

- Don't miss it!
- It is well worth seeing!
- It will change the way you see (e.g. young people) after watching this film.
- It is bound to be a box-office hit.
- I highly / thoroughly / strongly recommend it.
- It is highly entertaining.
- It is certainly at the top of my list of good movies.
- Fans of ... will no doubt be thrilled with this.
- It's a must!
- I would not recommend this because...
- Wait until it comes out on video.
- It 's a boring movie. Don't bother with this one.
- Only watch this film if you have plenty of time to spare.

Sample sentences

- 'Star Wars' has got spectacular special effects.
- It is worth watching for the dramatic scenery / acting of ... alone.
- Thanks to the special effects, the action is totally believable.
- The film has such a tragic ending that you will leave the cinema in tears.
- Most of the film is rather boring, but it did have an interesting twist in the end.
- 'Elizabeth' is a film based on the life of Queen Elizabeth I.
- The film 'Gladiator' has a large cast and spectacular costumes.
- The film is worth seeing. It will touch the hearts of many.

Sample Film Review

'Erin Brockovich' is a true story about one woman's **courageous (adj)** fight against the whole society. The film's director is Steven Soderbergh, and the cast includes Julia Roberts as Erin Brockovich, a single mother of three, and Albert Finney as Ed Masry, her **sympathetic (adj)** lawyer and later her boss.

Set in a small California town, the story begins when, after a car accident leaves her with no money and no job, Erin begs Ed to let her work at his law firm. While working there, she **accidentally (adv)** comes across some medical files. Sensing that something is not right, she convinces Ed to let her look into the matter. Soon, Erin discovers that a power company has been polluting the city's water supply, causing many of its residents to develop **serious (adj)** illness.

The film is full of **emotional (adj)** moments as Erin wins the **trust (n.)** of the **suspicious (adj.)** but **frightened (adj.)** local citizens. The actors, especially Julia Roberts, who won the Oscar award for Best Actress, give **moving (adj.)** and **believable (adj.)** performances, and the directing is **excellent (adj.)**.

This film is **well worth (adj.)** seeing. It will touch your heart and make you cheer for **ordinary (adj.)** people like Erin. Don't miss it!

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