



Book Review

Step One: Begin with a bibliographical heading; include information about the author.

- Education
- Nationality
- Time Period
- Professional Status
- Honors and/or recognitions

Step Two: Summarize the subject and state the thesis.

- Subject – what the book is about. You may also want to include some important definitions here.
- Thesis – the book’s main idea or argument

**The thesis and subject of a book are two different things. For example, the subject of the book may be the life of Joseph Q. McGillucutty, but the thesis may be that he was a good leader but a bad husband. Look for the thesis in the “Introduction” or “Preface” of the book; most authors also repeat the thesis in the concluding chapter of the book.

Step Three: Respond to the book with your opinion.

- Significance
- Relevance to today
- What did you learn? Enjoy?
- Evaluate the book’s merit.
- Support response with specific details/reasons.

Step Four: Conclusion

- Restate the author’s purpose; include your opinion.
- Summarize the value of the book.
- Indicate whether you would recommend the book. Why or why not?

Suggestions for writing a Book Review:

- Before reading the entire book and writing the review:
 1. read the first and last chapters first. This will help you gain a better sense of the author’s purposes and direction for the book, making it much easier to read. This will also help you identify the thesis of the book.
 2. Skim the book. Read the table of contents, the first and last paragraphs of each chapter, and look at any illustrations/figures/photographs/charts/etc. This will help you remember the main ideas and arguments better when you read the entire book and your review.
- Read the entire book – all the way through! You don’t want to have a faulty analysis because you skipped a couple of pages.
- The first and last steps should be relatively short. The meat of your review will be the middle two steps: the summary and your evaluation. Normally, the first two steps will be about ½ page each.