**Writing Reviews**

**What is a review?**

- A review is a critical evaluation

(A text, an event, a movie, etc.)

- A review makes an argument

**\*Do assigned reading—critically read!**

* **Describe the work and its topic**
* **Brief Introduction**
  + Author/book title/theme
  + Context/framework
  + Thesis
* **Quick, concise summary**
  + Set the stage—who, what, when, where?
  + Should only be a small portion of review, general
* **Analyze the work**
* **Where is the bar set—what is the criterion?**
* **Critical assessment section**
  + *Ask yourself various questions about the text, such as:* 
    - Why did the author choose this topic?
    - Who is the audience?
    - What sources are used?
    - What arguments are made?
    - How does the author support his/her argument?
    - How is his/her argument structured?
    - What were the author’s goals?
  + *Next, discuss:*
    - Were these goals appropriate?
    - Whether or not the author achieved these goals
    - Why/why not? How?
      * Back with evidence, include specific examples
    - Strengths and weaknesses of reading
* **Conclusion** 
  + Sum up
  + Final assessment/evaluation

**\*Remember: to evaluate, you must first understand**

**Types of Reviews**

* **Book Review**
* Points to consider:
  + What is the genre? Does the book fit?
  + Point of view – do you agree or disagree?
  + What is the author’s style? Is it suitable for audience?
  + Is language clear and convincing?
  + What did the book accomplish?
  + Was the index accurate?
  + Were their footnotes? Did they clarify information?
* Fiction books
  + What was story about?
  + Who were the main characters?
  + Favorite part/least favorite and why?
  + Would you change something?
  + Would you recommend?
* **Film Review**
* Points to consider:
  + Often requires multiple viewings
    - First, enjoy the film cinematically
    - Next, distance from plot and focus on elements of film to highlight
    - Formal techniques (cinematography, editing, lighting, etc.) vs. thematic content (issues such as gender, class, environment, etc.)
  + Develop your central idea/claim and analyze
  + Is it worth recommending?
  + Format:
    - Introduction – basic film information including name, year, director, major actors, and introduce central idea
    - Plot summary – keep this brief and do not include spoilers
    - Description – include a more detailed description of what stands out in the film
    - Analysis – formal techniques and thematic content; how do these affect the film and your experiensce/interpretation?
    - Conclusion/Evaluation – remind reader of general thoughts and why you do/do not recommend film