

Critique

Description

Critiques identify and analyze the pros and cons of a product or service to determine whether it is of desired quality or not. They can also help you determine if a product is a good value by comparing its features or benefits to similar products in the same price range. Critiques can be developed on a wide range of products, including books, movies, theater productions, music albums, restaurants, cars, computers, vacation resorts, and amusement parks. If your parents bought you a laptop for school, they probably read lots of critiques or reviews prior to making the purchase to make sure it would do everything you needed it to do at the best price possible.

Planning

1. Look up online reviews of something you are genuinely curious about. For instance, if there is a new music group you have been hearing about, and you want to find out what critics are saying about their debut album, do an online search for reviews/critiques of the album. Find at least two reviews of the same product. Print the reviews and then compare them to see if they agree, or if they contradict each other.
2. In each instance, try to put yourself in the shoes of the reviewer/critic. What kinds of questions do you think the critic would have asked himself/herself before writing the critique? How did this person go about forming an opinion about the product? Write down at least three questions you think this person would have asked himself/herself about the product.
3. Choose a product that you have in your possession and are familiar with (book, music album, movie, laptop, MP3 player, etc.) to review. What do you think are the three most important questions to ask yourself about the product? What would make this a quality product? Write these questions, leaving plenty of space to answer them. First give a simple answer to each question, then give reasons for each simple answer.
4. Go back to the reviews you printed from the Internet and study how the critics organized their thoughts into coherent reviews for readers. Try to organize your answers and reasons in a similar fashion. Now write a review of your product that you think would help readers decide whether or not to purchase the product. When you have a clean draft of your full review typed, have at least one other student read the review and give you feedback about what would make it a stronger review. Take this feedback into consideration when preparing your final review. Your teacher may decide to post the reviews on the class or school website to help other students in making purchasing decisions.

Assessing

1. Carefully analyze your review. If you were thinking about purchasing this particular product, would you find your review helpful in making a decision?
2. Get feedback from several other students to see if they feel your review would help them in making a purchasing decision.
3. What do you think you did well in your review? What do you think you could have done better or in addition to make your review even better? If you are not sure, ask others for input.
4. Now that you have written your own review, will you be more likely to read reviews of products prior to making future purchases? What information will you be looking for in the reviews?

Technology Connections

Here is a list of websites you might find helpful in your search for examples of reviews.

Books

<http://www.teenreads.com/reviews/index.asp>

Professional reviews of young adult literature

Sites where students can post their book reviews:

<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/thumbs-students-writing-publishing-976.html>

<http://www.worldreading.org>

<http://www.spaghetlibookclub.org>

<http://www.buildingrainbows.com>

Cars

<http://www.edmunds.com/car-reviews/car-reviews-road-tests.html>

Movies

<http://rogerebert.suntimes.com>

<http://www.lights-camera-jackson.com>

Music

<http://www.kidzworld.com/entertainment/music>

<http://www.rollingstone.com/music/albumreviews>

MP3 Players

<http://reviews.cnet.com/mp3-player-buying-guide>

Amusement/Theme Parks

<http://themeparks.about.com/cs/attractions1/a/blbestthemed.htm>