Part 2 - Review

A REVIEW is usually written for an English-language magazine, newspaper or website. **The main purpose is to describe and express a personal opinion about something** which the writer has experienced (e.g. a film, a holiday, a product, a website etc.) and to give the reader a clear impression of what the item discussed is like. **Description and explanation** are key functions for this task, and a review will normally **include a recommendation** to the reader.

Hints

- It is a good idea to give your review an interesting title.
- In the first paragraph, say what you are reviewing and try to get the reader's interest.
- Give your opinion of what you are reviewing linked to the question in the second paragraph. Remember a review is not just a list of facts - it's largely your opinion.
- Give more details of what your are reviewing linked to the questions in the input in one or two more paragraphs, but only focus on those you've been asked to develop.
- Summarise your view, using different words from the introduction, and include a recommendation.
- Remember.
    - Use a personal or more neutral style, according to the target reader.
    - It is important that you show a range of structures in the language of opinion, description and recommendation.
    - Add vivid language to add interest.

USEFUL LANGUAGE FOR A REVIEW

What I liked

- What I liked most was .....
- The thing I liked most was ....
- I was pleasantly surprised by .....
- ..... would appeal to .....
- If you get a chance to ....

What I disliked

- What I disliked most was .....
- I was disappointed by/with .....

Reviews of exhibitions

- painting / sculpture / handicrafts
- gallery / catalogue / display

Reviews of books

- Fiction: science fiction / thriller / fantasy / mystery / historical / romance ...
- Non-fiction: cook book / travel book / textbook / manual / coffee-table book ...
- main character
- is set in
- atmosphere / plot
- author
- written by
- chapter
- factual
- unbelievable
- bestseller
- ending

Reviews of concerts

- artist / band / musician / (bass/lead/rhythm) guitarist / (backing/lead) singer / drummer / soloist / trio / orchestra
- auditorium / hall / venue / lyrics / (catchy) tune / score / gig

Reviews of films

- (As for fiction books +): animation / adaptation / comedy
- Costumes / design / photography / script / special effects / soundtrack
- lead role
- star role
- star
- star actor/actress
- starring
- secondary role
- He plays a .....
- written by ....
- cast/director/producer
- is set in .....
- based on a true story .....
- believable
- true to life
- not very believable
- far-fetched
- ending

Reviews of TV programmes

- Chat shows / current affairs programme / debate / documentary / series / soap opera/ sitcom (situation comedy)
- Host / presenter

Reviews of hotels, restaurants, etc

- location
- service
- setting
- attractive / disappointing setting
- owned by
- run by
- head chef (restaurant)
- waiters (restaurant)
- staff .....
- staff at reception .....(hotel)
- hotel facilities ....
- reasonable prices .....
- good/excellent/poor value for money .....
- (a bit/somehow) expensive
- overpriced
- not worth the money
- always fully booked
- book in advance

Criticism

- The script seemed rather conventional/predictable to me.
- The plot struck me as completely bizarre/absurd/incomprehensible
- The characters are appealing and true to life
- The dancers were quite brilliant/amateurish

Recommendations

- Judging from this CD / show ...
- Overall, if you like ..., you'll love / you should ...
- Although some of ... he/she/it's still a great...
- You really must/should buy/see/read/visit ...
- I would definitely recommend seeing/visiting/reading/having a look at ...

REVIEW 1 - MODEL QUESTION

TASK

You have seen this announcement in your college English-language magazine.

Music reviews wanted

Have you been to a great music concert recently?

Write us a review of the concert, telling us about the band or singer and their performance. Say whether you would recommend seeing them perform live.

We will publish the best reviews next month.

Write your review in 140-190 words in an appropriate style.

REVIEW 1 - MODEL ANSWER

A GIG TO REMEMBER

Without doubt, the British rock band Arctic Monkeys have given this year's best live show. As teenagers a few years ago, they made the fastest selling album ever but seemed shy and awkward on stage. Now they have matured and become an amazing live act.

Since the frontman Alex decided to cut his hair and dress like a skinny rock star of the 1950s, he moves confidently around the stage, waving his arms and encouraging us to shake our hips. The crowd were ecstatic!

The set began with their hit, Do you wanna know. The guitar playing was tight, as always, and the rhythm supported by Matt's powerful drumming. The band were on top form throughout, winning fans with a list that combined older with new hits.

My only reservation is that although the songs have clever lyrics and great melodies and sound fresh every time, some lack the emotional and poetic force of their best.

But this is a minor criticism. Overall, it was a performance to remember and all fans should try and catch them while they're on tour.

[+/- 185 words]

REVIEW 2 - MODEL QUESTION

TASK

You have seen this announcement in an international magazine.

Book reviews wanted

Have your read a book recently with a story that has held your attention? Write a review of the book, explaining what the story is about and whether the characters are convincing. Tell us whether or not you would recommend it both to younger and older readers

The best reviews will be published in the magazine.

Write your review in 140-190 words in an appropriate style.

REVIEW 2 - MODEL ANSWER

ANIMAL FARM, BY GEORGE ORWELL

This is an unusual book, set on a farm. The characters, led by the pigs, are mainly animals, who get rid of the cruel, drunken human owner and take over the farm. They set up a government of their own.

The story isn't exciting but it's clever. At first, after the revolution, the animals are equal but later the pigs become more powerful and start to change everything. By the end of the novel, the animals realise they have gone back to where they started.

In one way, the story is obviously not a true story but in another way, it is meant to tell the story of communism from a satirical point of view.

The characters are very convincing. Napoleon, the leader of the pigs, is strong and corrupt. Other animals are honest but weak. They all represent people and the events in Russia in the 1920s and 30s.

Although I enjoyed this book, I can imagine older people who were brought up when communism was still strong in the world and have probably read a lot about the Russian Revolution, would enjoy it even more.

[+/- 190 words]