

# Writing About Film

## Film Reviews



resources



SCREEN SCOTLAND  
SGRÌN ALBA

# Film Review Guide: **First Level**

SCREEN SCOTLAND  
SGRIN ALBA



- **Use the writing frame on the following slide to write a film review.**
- These are your **own opinions** on the film. There are no wrong or right answers.
- **Think** of your answers before writing. Do you need to make **notes** first?
- You can **watch** parts of the film again to help you.
- Ask someone to **check** your work when you are finished.
- Pay attention to any corrections in **SPAG**: Spelling, Punctuation, Paragraphs and Grammar.

A Film Review by \_\_\_\_\_

My five star rating:



Film Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Director: \_\_\_\_\_

**Plot**

What happens? Were there any surprises?  
What was your favourite part? Why?

**Characters**

Who are the main characters?  
Who was your favourite character? Why?

**Your opinion**

Did you like the film?  
What was your favourite part? Why?

**Recommend**

Who would you recommend this film  
to? Why?

# Film Review Guide: **Second Level**

SCREEN SCOTLAND  
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- **The frame on the following slide will help you to write a film review.**
- These are your **own opinions** on the film. There are no wrong or right answers.
- **Think** of your answers before writing. Do you need to make **notes** first?
- You can **watch** parts of the film again to help you.
- Ask a partner to **check** your work when you are finished.
- Pay attention to any corrections in **SPAG**: Spelling, Punctuation, Paragraphs and Grammar.

## **PARAGRAPH 1: Introduction**

- What is the title of the film?
- Who is the director of the film?
- When was the film released?
- Who are the stars of the film?

## **PARAGRAPH 2: Plot summary**

- What are the main events in the film?
- Which moment in the film did you find most interesting? Why?

## **PARAGRAPH 3: Character**

- Who is the main character in the film?  
What are they like? What is their life like?
- What is the most interesting or unusual thing they do or say in the film?
- Would you want to meet this character?  
Why/Why not?

## **PARAGRAPH 4: Setting**

- Where and when is the film set?
- Which setting do you think was the most interesting?
- Would you want to visit this place?  
Why/Why not?

## **PARAGRAPH 5: Film Techniques**

- When in the film was there a clever use of a filmmaking technique like colour, costume, lighting, camerawork, editing, music, sound effects...?
- What technique was used? What was so good about it?

## **PARAGRAPH 6: Evaluation**

- Did you like the film? Why/Why not?  
(Give at least two reasons and use interesting words to describe how you feel.)

# Film Review Guide: **Third/Fourth Level**

SCREEN SCOTLAND  
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- The frame on the following slide will help you to write a film review by guiding you through the process.
- These are your **own opinions** on the film. There are no wrong or right answers.
- **Think** of your answers and make **notes** before you start writing.
- You can **watch** parts of the film again to help you.
- Remember to use the **headings** to keep your work in paragraphs.
- **Check** your work when you are finished for **SPAG**: Spelling, Punctuation, Paragraphs and Grammar.



# Film Review Guide: **Third/Fourth Level**

## **PARAGRAPH 1: Introduction**

- Give the title of the film.
- Say who the director of the film was.
- Say when the film was released.
- Explain why it might be an important film for people to watch.

## **PARAGRAPH 2: Plot summary**

- Explain what the main events in the film are.
- State which moment in the film you found most interesting and why.
- Explain why you think the film was made (e.g. to entertain; to educate; to make a profit; to provoke a reaction; to persuade someone of something...)

## **PARAGRAPH 3: Character**

- Explain who the main character in the film is.
- Explain what we learn about the main character and their life.
- Give an example of something interesting or unusual they do or say in the film.
- Say whether you would want to get to know this character. Explain why you would/would not want to meet them.
- Say whether or not you think this character is realistic. Explain your reasons with evidence from the film.

## **PARAGRAPH 4: Setting**

- Name the different settings seen in the film.
- Explain what impression you get of the settings.
- Give an example of how the setting is made interesting in the film.
- Explain what impression we get of a character's life from the settings.
- Say whether the film made you want to visit this place. Explain why you would/would not want to visit it.

## **PARAGRAPH 5: Film Techniques**

- Choose one scene or moment from the film that makes clever use of filmmaking techniques: colour, costume, lighting, camerawork, editing, music, sound effects...
- Describe what technique is used.
- Explain what effect that technique has on the film. Does it help you understand a character better or make the moment shocking/sad/ funny or affect you emotionally?

## **PARAGRAPH 6: Evaluation**

- Explain who you think the film was made for. Give evidence to support your answers.
- What is the film's theme? Give an example of how this is shown in the film. Explain how this made you feel.
- Say whether you did or did not like the film.
- Explain why/why not, giving at least two reasons.
- Try to use a range of adjectives to describe how you feel.



# Film Review Guide: Senior Level

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- **Watch the film.** Even if you've seen it before! Be a focused and conscious viewer. If you don't understand the film, you can't analyse it - watch it again and/or research the meaning.
- **Take notes.** Record all noteworthy elements. Be meticulous - do not overlook anything.
- **Research.** Find out about the filmmaker, what prompted the making of the film, characterisation, casting, location, historical events that led to the film, controversies...
- **Analyse the film.** Critically evaluate the film from beginning to end, noting every detail of what does and doesn't work.
- **Present evidence.** It is not enough to use general statements like "a fantastic movie," "beautiful set," "excellent acting," etc. Support any comment you make with examples from the film.
- **Remove yourself.** The whole review is your opinion, so you don't need to keep saying "I". Instead of saying, "I think the film is good", say, "The film is good".
- **Proof-read.** Check your SPAG (Spelling, Punctuation, Paragraphing and Grammar). Edit for clarity and fluency - the golden rule is to omit unnecessary words.

## Film Review Guide: Senior Level

<b>Para 1: Introduction</b>	Make the opening engaging start. Include important info (e.g. title, director, year released, relevant background info, key cast members...)
<b>Para 2: Plot</b>	Give a concise summary of the story for people who have yet to watch the film. Analyse the plot. Mention any original elements/twists, engaging use of conventions, glaring inconsistencies/illogical parts...
<b>Para 3: Filmmaker</b>	Mention any important info about them - political stance, background, controversies... Connect this film to other movies the director has worked on, making comparisons.
<b>Para 4: Creative elements</b>	Choose two or three and state how effectively these are used to enrich the viewing experience: lighting, costume, hair/make-up, characterisation, camerawork, dialogue, colour, mood/tone, symbols, special effects, music, editing, sets, locations...
<b>Para 5: Actors</b>	Do any stand out – for good or bad reasons? Does anyone surprise with their performance, steal scenes - or ruin them? Have the actors been appropriately cast in their roles? Why?
<b>Para 6: Significance</b>	Relate the content of the film to a social or historical issue. Does it help or hinder a current issue (racism, sexism, politics...)? Is it historically accurate? Does this help or hinder the film? Was it based on a book? What changes have been made? Is one better than the other?
<b>Para 7: Conclusion</b>	Comment on the originality – or lack thereof – of the film. If the film takes a conventional approach, does it feel fresh? Can the film still be enjoyed?

# Resource Credits

Resource developed by  
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of Screen Scotland.

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