

Writing A Book Report

This particular book report has FOUR (4) sections: connections, writer's craft, aesthetic response and recommendations. Each section is essentially an essay in its own right. Essays have thesis statements that give them focus. You are providing evidence that proves a point you are trying to make.

CONNECTIONS How do you connect to the novel? [300-400 words] Here you must make some connection. Too often, students will simply say that they have no connection. This is a cop-out! As a human being, there is always something you can relate to in a piece of literature (certainly something the Department of Education has chosen for you to read).

However, do not simply connect to minor elements. Some character might put their socks on every morning just like you. However, if it unrelated to the theme of the novel, you will get a low score. Try to make a connection to something in the novel that you feel is important.

The other question is how many things should you mention? If you construct a really good essay, you can get away with mentioning one connection. But, you must make sure that it is a really big connection! If you have trouble finding a connection, ironically, you should force yourself to find three connections. Discuss them in such a way that you find a link between them.

WRITER'S CRAFT How would you describe the writer's style? [300-400 words] Style is a term that applies to character development, plot development, diction, word choice, conflict, and theme. A good writer uses all these tools to develop their novel. Remember that nothing is random. A writer chooses characters for specific reasons. If a character is injured, or blind or young or an ethnic minority it is always for a reason. Nothing is haphazard. Writers craft their novels the way someone might design and build a house or a car. There is always thought behind it. All this is generally referred to as a *writer's style*. In other words, there is a particular kind of reasoning or logic that permeates the novel. All events in the novel stem from this singular vision.

Your challenge in this section is to figure all that out. What is that singular vision? Can you figure out what the writer was trying to do?

Were they totally successful at conveying that theme? Were they consistent or were there elements that did not seem to fit? You will critique each element by comparing it to the one theme.

AESTHETIC RESPONSE Did you like the novel? [150-200 words] Finally, after two sections where you have hidden your true thoughts by being objective, you can let your reader know exactly what you thought of the novel. So, this section is subjective.

As long as you use formal language (school-appropriate language), you can explain to your reader what you really think of the novel. Was reading the novel entertaining? Was it enjoyable? Why or why not?

Maybe you understood the writer's style, but you did not appreciate it. Maybe you knew the central character and could easily connect to them, but hated their choices. Maybe you absolutely loved the novel.

Maybe it was perfect. Maybe you will consider it a classic.

RECOMMENDATIONS (A) What would you recommend to the author? Why? [100 words]

(B) Who should read this novel? What would you recommend? Why? [100 words]