



5 PRINCE PUBLISHING

To best write a book review, it is essential to read mindfully. Things to take note of can then be incorporated into your review. Here are a few tips to keep you on track (below, in green), and to guide you in what we're really looking for (below, in blue).

HOW TO BETA-READ MINDFULLY

Characters

Is protagonist likeable? Actions consistent with logical motivations?

Is antagonist appropriately menacing? Actions consistent with logical motivations? Was the identity a surprise?

Do secondary characters advance the plot? Do they steal the show? Who is your favorite/least favorite character and why? Could any characters be combined or deleted?

Voice

Does each character have a distinct voice? Does anyone say or think something out of character at any point? Is the dialogue at any point unclear or unrealistic?

Deep POV

Are there any cases of author intrusion, or does every scene stay in the POV character's head? Is there any head-hopping?

Emotional Response

Does any situation stand out as particularly funny/sad/pulse-racing? How did you feel after you finished the book? Did you at any part feel like your reaction didn't match the author's intention? If so, when?

Plot

Did the hook come fast enough? And capture your interest? Did the story start at the right place? Did it start with the right person? Was there too much or too little backstory? Are the actions fast-paced? Are the expositions slower? Is there a proper ratio between the two, or is it heavy on action or description? For every scene (proactive: goal, conflict, disaster) is there an appropriate sequel (responsive: reaction, dilemma, decision)? Is there any place you found yourself skimming out of boredom? Or where you wished to slow down for more clarity? Are there any loose ends?

Setting

Is the story's era and locale established early enough? Is the reader grounded in each scene, or are some unexplored (white room syndrome)?

HOW TO WRITE A GREAT REVIEW

Narration

- Who narrated the story?
- Was it first-person or third-person narration?
- Was the narrator a reliable source of information?

Setting

- Note the era and location the book is set in.
- How did setting drive or influence the plot?

Theme

- Note the overall theme or message of the book.

Genre

- What genre of literature was it?
- How did it compare to another work in this genre?

Author

- Name the author.
- Discuss any previous works.
- How did previous works compare with this work?

Plot

- Give a brief plot summary without giving away any key details.

EVALUATION

Your Opinion This is the most important part of the review.

- Did you like or dislike it? Explain.
- Would you read more by this author? Explain.
- Would you encourage others to read this book? Explain.