# Writing Reviews

**From Donna Meredith**

**Before reading, consider:**

* Title - What does it suggest?

**Points to ponder as you read the *entire* book:**

* What is the genre?
* From what point of view is the book written?
* Make notes as you read, passages to quote in your review.
* What is the author's style? Formal? Informal? Suitable for the intended audience?

**Writing the Review:**

* Include title, author.
* Hook the reader with your opening sentence. Set the tone of the review.
* Review the book you read -- not the book you wish the author had written.
* If this is the best book you have ever read, say so -- and why. If it's merely another nice book, say so.
* Include information about the author-- reputation, qualifications, etc. -- anything relevant to the book and the author's authority.
* Think about the person reading your review. Is this a librarian buying books for a collection? A parent who wants a good read-aloud? Is the review for readers looking for information about a particular topic, or for readers searching for a good read? Who would like this book?
* Never give away the ending or major plot points that would spoil the reading of the book for others. Instead, interest readers in delving into the story themselves.
* To gain perspective, allow time before revising.

Writing a Fiction Book Review **(**Note: Don't answer every question—these are suggestions!)

**Purpose of your review**

* For a literary journal, the purpose might be to analyze the work. Your language can be high-end.
* For a newspaper or blog, the purpose is to entice readers into checking out the book. Language should be about fifth grade level.
* For Amazon or Goodreads, short reviews are fine. A rating and a few sentences about what you liked or disliked.

**Points to Ponder:**

* What was the story about?
* Who were the main characters? Were the characters credible?
* What did the main characters do in the story? Did the main characters run into any problems? Adventures?
* Who was your favorite character? Why?

**Your personal experiences**

* Could you relate to any of the characters in the story?
* Have you ever done or felt some of the things, the characters did?

**Your opinion**

* Did you like the book?
* What was your favorite part of the book?
* Do you have a least favorite part of the book?
* If you could change something, what would it be? (If you wish you could change the ending, don't reveal it!)

**Your recommendation**

* Would you recommend this book to another person?
* What type of person would like this book?
* In general, don’t write a negative review. It is okay to point out a flaw, but I wouldn’t write a really negative review. Reading tastes are personal, so decline to review a book that doesn’t appeal to you.