

How to Write a Book Review That Matters in 5 Sentences

Sentence	Instruction	Example
1. The personal touch	Start your review with a personal comment such as why you chose this book or the feeling it left you with. Was it for a class, a book club, or because a friend recommended it, etc.	<i>I read a magazine review of IN THE WOODS by Tana French that inspired me to read this unusual mystery.</i>
2. Plot	What was the book about? If it was clearly a genre like mystery or a romance, say so. Don't give away a twist ending! For non-fiction state the basic idea.	<i>Adam is a detective in Dublin who doesn't remember how he survived when two friends mysteriously went missing years ago in the same town where he must investigate a present-day murder.</i>
3. Style	How was the writing? Was it mostly dialogue that crackled with the characters' personalities? Was there a lot of action? Did it bore you with long paragraphs or keep you turning the pages?	<i>Adam narrates the book, telling about his childhood trauma and why he drinks too much, puts his job and partner on the line, and is terrified at what he'll find out about the murder case. Nice balance between inner thoughts and action.</i>
4. Characters	Say something about the characters. For example, what stood out about any of them? Did they experience change during the book? Did you have a favorite character?	<i>While often I wanted to shake Adam for being a jerk, I was riveted by how he coped and solved the murder.</i>
5. Recommendation	Who do you think would enjoy this book? Is it for a certain age or reader group?	<i>IN THE WOODS is one I'd recommend to readers who like hard-hitting police procedural mysteries and the occasional chill up the spine.</i>

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