

## COMPOSING EVALUATIONS

Another significant reason for reading texts is to evaluate them. Usually, evaluating texts is a mostly subjective task, which relies on a person's personal experiences, biases, and personal feelings about the text/topic. Oftentimes, evaluations discuss how the author/writer likes or dislikes something. Unlike summaries, which attempt to be unbiased, an evaluation allows the writer to inform the audience about good or bad qualities of a text or other medium being evaluated.

EX:

In the media, professional evaluators are everywhere, whether they be film critics, literary critics, political commentators, comedians, talk-show hosts, or even the writers themselves. In college, the task of evaluating texts, films, and products and services, is no foreign affair. Many professors require students to evaluate (or review) a number of different things in order to familiarize themselves with different texts in their discipline and other materials.

Recently, a student of mine had an assignment for a health/nursing course, which required that she evaluate/review different products at a pharmacy and compare them based on their price, product design, and chemical components. Another student had a professor who required a four-page review of a foreign film for a cultural literacy course.

### How to Evaluate Texts and Other Materials

Use the following steps to introduce and discuss your text:

- 1) Read/View the text/material one time without interruption.
- 2) Summarize the text/material
- 3) List the good qualities/facets of the text
- 4) List the not-so-good qualities/facets of the text
- 5) Compare and contrast the text/material to other existing texts/material with similar characteristics, if needed or applicable. Ask: How is it reminiscent, similar, or different to the other texts/materials?
- 6) Discuss your overall interpretation/feelings about the text/material.
- 7) Comment on how the text is superior/inferior/better/worse compared to other texts/materials in the same genre (or which are similar).