



Writing and Study Skills Services – Laurier Brantford

Writing a Critical Review

A critical review is not simply a summary, but also an evaluation and analysis of the information brought forth by an author in an article. The process for writing a critical review is much like the process described in *Making Sense: A Student's Guide to Research and Writing* for “The Analytical Book Report.”

There are three goals for writing a critical review:

1. Demonstrating your comprehension of the article
2. Providing a close examination of the author’s ideas and arguments
3. Commenting on the usefulness, applicability, or validity of these ideas and arguments

Understanding the article

- Read the article once for its overall meaning without taking notes.
- Read it a second time more closely and make notes of key ideas; try the noting for gist technique (see our *Noting for Gist* handout).
- Identify the thesis and main arguments
- Read it one last time in depth to ensure everything has been understood.
- Note how the author supports his or her claims

Introduction – Inform

- Provide the bibliographic information for the article you are reviewing.
- Incorporate your thesis statement and outline the points you will discuss.

Body – Examine and Evaluate

- Briefly describe the arguments, methodology, research, and claims of the article.
- Provide an evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses or limitations of the article.
- Consider the key points of the article and their relevance to you or your discipline.

Conclusion – Summarize

- Summarize and discuss the broader implications of your argument regarding the article under review.

Work Consulted:

Northey, Margot and Joan McKibbin. *Making Sense: A Student's Guide to Research and Writing*. 6th ed. Don Mills: Oxford University Press Canada, 2009. Print.