

MOVIE REVIEW CHECKLIST

HEADLINE

- Follows guidelines for print headline if it is a print restaurant review
- Follows guidelines for an online story headline if it is being published online

LEAD

- Original and gets the readers' attention
- Appropriate to the movie being reviewed
- Evaluation of the writer is clear from first paragraph
- Written in third person and active voice

THE BASICS

- Name of film
- Genre
- Running time
- Rating
- Plot
- Name of director
- Names of lead actors

FILM REVIEW

- Fairly but critically evaluates important aspects of the film (see critic's notebook)
- Offers a developed, firm, convincing point of view regarding those aspects
- Doesn't give away the ending/secret/mystery/twist
- Goes well beyond simply evaluating the film itself, artfully locating it in its genre, social context and/or relationship to other films from the same producer, director or cast members
- Readers understand how this film fits into the grand scheme of things.
- Develops a middle section and comes to a powerful close
- Vivid writing motivates readers to continue throughout
- No clichés
- Shows, doesn't tell
- Offers support for all claims

CRITICISM & FOCUS

- Uses details to support criticisms both good and bad
- Focus of review is clear; everything contributes to overall theme
- Review is organized in a logical way

PARAGRAPH FORMATTING

- Should have "Skinny" paragraphs (1-3 sentences per paragraph)
- Only one space after a period

WRITING STYLE

- Strong and effective writing with a clear voice and variety of sentence structures/lengths;
- Combines elements of feature and opinion writing;
- Tightly written
- Strong and effective word choice

AP STYLE

- Check commonly missed AP Style format for dates, money, percents and time
- Edited for Oxford commas
- Edited for sports terms and scores (i.e. our school's score in a game is always listed first.
- Identifies all people, including coaches and teachers, by their first and last name on first reference and then last name on subsequent references

GRAMMAR/SPELLING

- Story is well edited and spell checked; NO errors, including the proper spelling of all names
- Punctuation is accurate
- Consistent application of capitalization skills
- Grammar and usage are correct and contribute to clarity and style

ACCURACY/EFFORT

- Details are thorough and factual; there are no errors in content
- Evidence of substantial time; student is working at highest potential

PHOTOS

- Story has a photo or graphic to accompany it
- Photo or graphic follows copyright guidelines. (it is preferred that the photo be a candid, i.e. non-posed photo, that was taken by a student on staff)
- Photo has a caption, which follows caption writing guidelines and gives credit to the photographer

WORD COUNT

- Has a MINIMUM WORD COUNT of 600 words