

Life is Beautiful Film Review
CP10 World Literature

Writing Task: Compose a film review of *Life is Beautiful*. In your review, evaluate whether or not the film is successful. This claim should be grounded in an analysis of specific scenes from the film that best evidence the film's overall success or failure.

In your review, you should answer the following questions:

- 1) What key idea(s), purpose(s), or emotion(s) are at the heart of *Life is Beautiful*?
- 2) Is the film successful with what you identify as being at the heart of the film?
- 3) What specific elements from the scenes of the film best support this evaluation?

Common potential purposes of a film—

- 1) To convey emotion about an experience to the audience,
- 2) To raise awareness about an issue,
- 3) To educate the audience about a topic or historical event,
- 4) To entertain the audience, and
- 5) To persuade the audience to take a specific course of action.

As you write your film review, be sure you:

- Introduce your claim.
- Support your claim with logical reasoning and relevant evidence from the film.
- Acknowledge and address alternate or opposing claims.
- Organize the reasons and evidence logically.
- Use words, phrases, and clauses to connect your ideas and to clarify the relationships among claims, counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
- Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.
- Check your work for correct grammar, usage, capitalization, spelling, MLA formatting, and punctuation.

DUE: Wednesday, September 26 in class on Turnitin
50 point writing grade

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Writing the Film Review

Adapted from Duke University's Writing Studio

Although there is not a set formula to follow when writing a film review, the genre does have certain common elements that most film reviews include.

1) Introduction - In the opening of your review, provide some basic information about the film. You may include film's name, year, director, screenwriter, and major actors. Your introduction, which may be longer than one paragraph, should also begin to evaluate the film, and it should allude to the central concept of the review.

2) Plot Summary - Remember that many readers of film reviews have not yet seen the film. While you want to provide some mentions of basic plot elements, keep this brief and avoid specific details that would spoil the viewing for others. ***Remember this essay is an evaluation of the film, not a summary of it.***

3) Description - While your introduction will give the reader a general sense of what the film is about, also include a more detailed description of your particular cinematic experience watching the film. This may include your personal impression of what the film looks, feels, and sounds like. In other words, what stands out in your mind when you think about this particular film?

4) Analysis - In order to explain your impression of the film, consider how well the film utilizes formal techniques and thematic content. How do the film's formal techniques (such as framing, editing, lighting, diegetic and non-diegetic sound, sequencing, point of view, genre, or narrative) affect the way the film looks, feels, and sounds to you? How does the thematic content (such as history, race, gender, sexuality, class, or the environment) affect your experience and interpretation? Also, do the director's techniques work to help audiences feel and understand the thematic content? Consider a counterargument.

5) Conclusion/Evaluation - The closing of your film review should remind the reader of your general thoughts and impressions of the film. You should also implicitly or explicitly state whether or not you recommend the film. Make sure to remind the reader of why the film is or is not worth seeing.

Examples of Film Reviews

One of the best ways to learn how to write a film review is simply by reading good film reviews. You can find examples in most major newspapers and magazines. Check out the arts and entertainment sections of *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Guardian*, *The New Yorker*, *The Atlantic*, *The AV Club*, or *Rolling Stone*.