

AP Psychology

**Guidelines for Reviews  
Instructions for Written Reports**

Reviews may vary in length depending on the nature, content and length of the volume or article. Generally, five (double-spaced) pages for a book and half that amount for a scholarly article is an appropriate length. At the top of your review cite the author, full title, date and publisher, etc.

**Selecting a Title**

Outside reading is intended to furnish in palatable form information not available or less pleasantly accessible in your texts. Acquaintance with the great mass of psychological literature can and should be an enjoyable experience. All articles that are not contained in the list of approved publications below must be approved by the instructor. Do not hesitate to discard a work in favor of another if the reading seems disappointing.

**Reading the Account**

As you read, take note on what impresses you, favorably or unfavorably, as well as on material that confirms or challenges previously held prejudices. As you finish the interpretation ask yourself, "What is my reaction to this account?" It would be considered trivial merely to state, "The article is interesting."

**Preparing the Review**

In general there are three functions of a review. (1) To describe content (2) To evaluate the article (3) To offer subjective reflections on the article. A good review is not a recitation of content word-for-word or chapter by chapter. Regurgitation of that type requires no special mental skills. The review should be informative, analytical and critical. It is not advisable to separate content from criticism; they should be interwoven. The following are questions you might consider when reviewing an article:

1. What was the writer's purpose in preparing the work? Did he/she achieve this goal?
2. Is the article convincing? Is it comprehensive? Does it neglect important phases of the topic?
3. Does the author appear biased?
4. What intellectual questions has the author raised in your mind?
5. What seem to be the unique aspects of the account?
6. Is the writing style popular or scholarly?
7. Does the author use primary or secondary sources? Are the sources fully cited?

You should attempt to be fair in your review. Criticisms should not be made in vague and general statements; they should be grounded in specific evidence from the content of the work. Give page numbers. Prepare your review to answer favorably the questions you raise.

Due Date \_\_\_\_\_

Possible Points \_\_\_\_\_