

# CRITIQUE OF A LIVE PERFORMANCE - THEATRE I

One of your summative assessments in this class is your analysis of a live (stage) play or musical. This analysis is called a **critique** and *you* are the play/musical's **critic**.

For this summative assessment, assume you are a newspaper critic for this semester's show.

## WHAT IS A CRITIQUE?

A **Critique** is an essay or article that expresses an individual's opinion of an artist's work (in this case a play/musical.)

## WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF A CRITIQUE?

Not only is a **critique** an expression of a particular person's **opinion**, it also helps **inform other people** of what a particular work of art is like. Of course, the best way to experience a piece of art is first-hand, but a critic's job is to relay *their* first-hand experience of a piece of art to others who may not have seen it...and the critic is relied upon to be honest/fair about his/her thoughts, feelings, likes, and dislikes.

## WHAT TYPES OF THINGS SHOULD YOUR CRITIQUE INCLUDE?

1.) An **OPENING PARAGRAPH** that grabs the reader's attention in a creative way. In this paragraph, the critic should also give the who, what, where, when by...

- 🎧 stating the show's **title** and **playwright** (and/or **director**)
- 🎧 stating the **acting group** that performed it (in this case Oxford High School Theatre) or **venue** in which it was performed (in this case, Oxford Fine Arts Center)
- 🎧 stating the **dates of performance** (and date you attended)
- 🎧 giving **overall impression** of the show (don't give specifics in first paragraph)

2.) A **SECOND PARAGRAPH** that gives a short synopsis of the show for the reader. This paragraph should NOT give every detail or tell any plot points that "give the story away". It SHOULD, however, somehow include the theme of the story without being obvious about it.

3.) A detailed **BODY** that analyzes aspects of the show and specific performances by actors. Be sure to...

- 🎧 avoid generalizations and broad language (things like "it was good" or "I liked it")
- 🎧 support opinions/analysis with **EXAMPLES** from the show (items you *could* discuss include believability of acting; specific characters; set; lighting; use of props/stage; script; development of characters; development of plot; directing, etc.)
- 🎧 use specific character's/actor's names when discussing plot or performance **and** be sure that you use correct spellings for both (It is recommended that you use your playbill while writing your critique.)
- 🎧 **You will NOT get a good grade if the body of your critique is vague, or if you do not truly analyze what you have seen. Be a strong critic by being specific and giving examples for your opinions.**

4.) A **CLOSING PARAGRAPH** that wraps up your ideas (don't repeat yourself, please) and gives a recommendation as to whether or not readers should attend the show and why.

So that you can discuss specifics in your critique, you may want to use this worksheet during intermission and immediately following the performance so that your initial impressions are remembered and recorded. Professional critics have similar habits when reviewing a show or movie.

<b>Acting &amp; Character Development</b>	<b>Set &amp; Props</b>	<b>Lighting</b>
<b>Use of stage / Blocking / Direction</b>	<b>Script / Plot</b>	<b>Overall impressions / What impacted you / specific memorable lines or moments</b>

