

# How to write a book review

Author **Luisa Plaja** offers her top tips for how to write a brilliant review of the latest book you read - whether you liked it or not.

Other readers will always be interested in your opinion of the books you've read. Whether you've loved the book or not, if you give your honest and detailed thoughts then people will find new books that are right for them.

If you're stuck on what to say in a review, it can help to imagine you're talking to someone who's asking you whether they should read the book.

## **1. Start with a couple of sentences describing what the book is about**

But without giving any spoilers or revealing plot twists! As

a general rule, try to avoid writing in detail about anything that happens from about the middle of the book onwards. If the book is part of a series, it can be useful to mention this, and whether you think you'd need to have read other books in the series to enjoy this one.

## **2. Discuss what you particularly liked about the book**

Focus on your thoughts and feelings about the story and the way it was told. You could try answering a couple of the following questions:

- Who was your favourite character, and why?
- Did the characters feel real to you?
- Did the story keep you guessing?
- What was your favourite part of the book, and why?
- Were certain types of scene written particularly well - for example sad scenes, tense scenes, mysterious ones...?
- Did the book make you laugh or cry?
- Did the story grip you and keep you turning the pages?

## **3. Mention anything you disliked about the book**

Talk about why you think it didn't work for you. For example:

- Did you wish the ending hadn't been a cliffhanger because you found it frustrating?
- Did you find it difficult to care about a main character, and could you work out why?
- Was the story too scary for your liking, or did it focus on a theme you didn't find interesting?

## **4. Round up your review**

Summarise some of your thoughts on the book by suggesting the type of reader you'd recommend the book to. For example: younger readers, older readers, fans of relationship drama/mystery stories/comedy. Are there any books or series you would compare it to?

## **5. You can give the book a rating, for example a mark out of five or ten, if you like!**

*Luisa Plaja loves words and books, and she used to edit the book review site Chicklish. Her novels for teenagers include Split by a Kiss, Swapped by a Kiss and Kiss Date Love Hate. She lives in Devon, England, and has two young children.*