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## Teacher Guide 95

# Identify structural features in a review

You are learning to:

- Explore how reviews are structured

A good review of a book, play or film is structured so that the reader can clearly understand what the reviewer's opinion is and why.

## Getting you thinking

Read this review of the film *The Hunger Games*.



## The Hunger Games (12A) \*\*\*\*\*

**Verdict: First blockbuster of 2012**

Thank goodness for *The Hunger Games*, which teenage girls are going to love – so much so that I bet it will be the first in a very profitable series [...]

We're in the future, where decadent rulers in the Capitol [...] pick a girl and boy from each of 12 districts to fight to the death on live TV.

It's a lethal, high-tech version of *I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!* The talented Jennifer Lawrence **reprises** the country girl role that won her an Oscar nomination for *Winter's Bone*, as the heroine Katniss Everdeen.

Her frail younger sister is chosen to represent District 12, but Katniss volunteers in her place.

She is handy with a bow and arrow, and hopes this will help her to survive and return to a handsome youth (Liam Hemsworth) who is wooing her [...].

There's much to admire. The make-up, costumes and environment of the ruling class are spectacular, and Gary Ross directs competently [...].

However, I was not sure of the point of it all. Is it to **satirise** the **sadism** of reality TV? To dramatise the uncaring way teenagers are treated by their elders? Those ideas are scarcely developed. Perhaps they will be in future films [...].

Chris Tookey, *The Daily Mail*, 10 April 2012

**1** For each paragraph, write one sentence summarising what it is about.

**2** Where is the writer's opinion on the film made clear?

## Glossary

**reprises:** repeats

**satirise:** to criticise in a humorous way

**sadism:** getting pleasure from hurting others

## How does it work?

3.2

Reviews often include a heading and star rating. The first paragraph gives an overall opinion of the film, then later paragraphs focus on aspects such as plot, actors, costume and direction. Reviews often end by restating or summarising the reviewer's opinion.

## Now you try it

Read this album review.

- 3 Pick out the parts of the review that include
  - a) background information about Jahmene Douglas
  - b) three or four descriptive phrases about his album *Love Never Fails*
  - c) the writer's opinion.

### Glossary

**affecting:** emotionally powerful

**ceding:** giving in to

**a capella:** without instruments

**schmaltz:** sentimentality



## Love Never Fails

Jahmene Douglas

\*\*\*\*\*

**X Factor's pocket soulman has gone for a safe debut.**

His first album is exactly what we might have expected, a selection of well-chosen and beautifully performed soul/pop covers [...].

Douglas has fantastic, forceful pipes and he shows them off impeccably with **affecting**

takes on Sarah McLachlan *In The Arms Of An Angel* and Bob Dylan's moving ballad *Forever Young*. Misgivings centre around the arrangements, which start with voice and piano before **ceding** to plodding beats. It's a relief when Douglas tackles Emeli Sandé's *Next To Me* almost **a cappella** [...] proving he's got the ability to shine without the **schmaltz**. May he stick around to reinforce that.

Matthew Horton, Virgin Media

## Apply your skills

- 4 Write a paragraph explaining how the review is structured and how this helps you to decide whether to buy the album or not.

Look closely at

- the title or headline
- what the reviewer covers in each paragraph
- his final sentence

### Check your progress:

#### Some progress >>

I can recognise when a text is organised and structured.

#### Good progress >>>

I can identify structural features in an opinion text.

#### Excellent progress >>>>

I can discuss how writers develop their ideas in an opinion text.

Identify and comment on the structure and organisation of texts

# Explain how changing contexts affect the way texts are read (part 1)

You are learning to:

- develop your understanding of how changing contexts affect our reading.

## Getting you thinking

Read this **soliloquy** from *Richard III* by William Shakespeare.

**Richard:** Deformed, unfinish'd, sent before my time  
Into this breathing world, scarce half made up,  
And that so lamely and unfashionable  
That dogs bark at me as I halt by them;  
Why, I, in this weak piping time of peace,  
Have no delight to pass away the time,  
Unless to spy my shadow in the sun  
And **descant** on mine own deformity:  
And therefore [...]  
I am determined to prove a villain.

*Richard III* by William Shakespeare



1 Note down all the negative words in the soliloquy.

2 How does it encourage us to think about the speaker?

## How does it work?

Shakespeare's presentation of Richard III fits with how Elizabethans were taught to see him by Tudor **propaganda**. In the play, Richard does 'prove a villain' – he has his nephews murdered in the Tower of London to protect his own claim to the throne.

In particular, Shakespeare's audience would have believed the association he makes between Richard's deformity and his wickedness. We view such medical conditions differently now and are careful about what names we use for them.

## Glossary

**soliloquy:** when a character speaks to herself or himself in a play

**descant:** comment

**propaganda:** persuasive publicity

## Now you try it

6.4

Later in the play, Shakespeare shows the princes Edward and Richard, Duke of York being reassured by their uncle – the future Richard III – about entering the Tower.

- 3 In threes, act out this extract. How will you speak your lines to gain audience sympathy/dislike? What words and phrases suggest the boys' feelings? How will you suggest Richard's two-facedness?

**Richard:** My lord, will't please you pass along?  
Myself and my good cousin Buckingham  
Will to your mother, to entreat of her  
To meet you at the Tower and welcome you.

**York:** What, will you go unto the Tower, my lord?

**Edward:** My lord protector needs will have it so.

**York:** I shall not sleep in quiet at the Tower.

**Richard:** Why, what should you fear?

**York:** Marry, my uncle Clarence' angry ghost:  
My grandam told me he was murdered there.

**Edward:** I fear no uncles dead.

**Richard:** Nor none that live, I hope.

## Apply your skills

In 2013, the bones of the real Richard III were unearthed. Read this extract about the discovery.

- 4 What different view of Richard is presented here?

Richard was murdered and secretly buried. He should be reburied as a war hero not as a child murderer. The Princes in the Tower were murdered but not by their uncle King Richard III. The evidence today would not stand up in court.

- 5 Rewrite the first soliloquy to emphasise Richard's handsome face and courage. For example, find opposites to the adjectives 'deformed' and 'unfinished' such as 'muscular' and 'complete'.

Make clear how Richard was misunderstood because of his medical condition.



## Check your progress:

### Some progress >>

I can identify the reading context of a play.

### Good progress >>>

I can explain the reading context of a play.

### Excellent progress >>>>

I can recreate the reading context of a play

Relate texts to their social, cultural and historical traditions