

## Writing a Critical Review

A critical review is not simply a summary, but also an evaluation and analysis of the information brought forth by an author in an article. The process for writing a critical review is much like the process described in *Making Sense: A Student's Guide to Research and Writing* for "The Analytical Book Report."

There are three goals for writing a critical review:

1. Demonstrating your comprehension of the article
2. Providing a close examination of the author's ideas and arguments
3. Commenting on the usefulness, applicability, or validity of these ideas and arguments

### Understanding the article

- Read the article once for its overall meaning without taking notes
- Read it a second time more closely and make notes of key ideas; try the noting for gist technique (see our *Reading Strategies: Noting for Gist* handout)
- Identify the thesis and main arguments
- Read it one last time in depth to ensure everything has been understood
- Note how the author supports their claims

### Introduction - Inform

- Provide the bibliographic information for the article you are reviewing
- Incorporate your thesis statement and outline the points you will discuss

### Body – Examine and Evaluate

- Briefly describe the arguments, methodology, research, and claims of the article
- Provide an evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses or limitations of the article
- Consider the key points of the article and their relevance to you or your discipline

### Conclusion – Summarize

- Summarize and discuss the broader implications of your argument regarding the article under review

#### Reference

Northey, M. & McKibbin, J. (2009). *Making sense: A student's guide to research and writing* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Don Mills: Oxford University Press Canada.