

Exercise walk-through

Structure and recommendation ■ 7.2

eXercise

You must be able to

- structure a review so description, judgement and recommendation are distinct
- write a title that carries an opinion
- end with a recommendation aimed at a specific reader

Method — The four-paragraph review

- 1 **Opening** — what it is, and a hook that hints at your view
- 2 **Description** — enough to orient, no spoilers
- 3 **Judgement** — what works, what does not, with reasons
- 4 **Recommendation** — who should try it, and who should not

Method — A title that does work

- **Flat:** *A review of The Lighthouse Keeper*
- **Better:** *The Lighthouse Keeper — worth the slow start*

The second tells the reader your verdict and one reservation before they have read a word. That is what a title is for.

Method — The recommendation

Name the reader:

*I would recommend this to anyone who liked quiet, character-driven stories,
and warn anyone hoping for a thriller that the first fifty pages are a test.*

Two clauses. One says who will enjoy it, the other who will not. This is more persuasive than any amount of praise.

Method — Register

A review sits between an article and a report: personal and readable, but not chatty.
Use / freely — a review with no / in it is a description, not a review.

Practice 2.1 ■ 2 marks

Write a title with a verdict in it for a review of:

- (a) a restaurant that is expensive but excellent
- (b) a film with brilliant acting and a weak story

Solution 2.1

Method: A title that does work

Worked steps

(a) e.g. “The Blue Door — you will pay for it, and you will go back” **B1**. (b) e.g. “Brilliant people, nowhere to go” **B1**.

Practice 2.2 ■ 2 marks

Write a two-clause recommendation for a long historical novel.

Solution 2.2

Worked steps

Any two-clause recommendation naming who would and would not enjoy it **B2**, e.g. “I would recommend it to readers who enjoy being immersed in a period rather than hurried through a plot, and I would warn anyone looking for a fast story that the first hundred pages are almost entirely setting.”

Practice 2.3 ■ 1 mark

Put these in the correct order for a review: judgement, recommendation, opening, description.

Solution 2.3

Method: The four-paragraph review

Worked steps

opening, description, judgement, recommendation **B1**.

Exam-style 3.1 ■ 8 marks

A new café has opened near your school. Write a review for the school magazine. Describe it, give your judgement with reasons, and end with a recommendation. Write about 180 words.

Solution 3.1

Method: The four-paragraph review

Worked steps

Content (4): what the café is and where, description without a list, a judgement with reasons including at least one criticism, and a targeted recommendation. Language (4): appropriate register, precise vocabulary, varied sentences, roughly within the limit.

Exam-style 3.2 ■ 2 marks

Read this review ending and explain **two** weaknesses.

Overall it was very good and I liked it a lot. Everyone should watch it because it is amazing.

Solution 3.2

Worked steps

Any two **B1** *each*: “very good” and “amazing” are empty evaluations with no reason attached; “everyone should watch it” targets nobody and cannot be true; the ending repeats the same judgement three times instead of adding anything; there is no reservation, so the praise is less credible.