

# Writing A Theatrical Review

"...A WORTHY TRIBUTE TO THE LONG AND RICH PARTNERSHIP OF MR. KANDER AND MR. EBB, ONE OF THE TOUGHEST ACTS TO FOLLOW ON BROADWAY."

"Here's a return to old-fashioned musical comedy, complete with rousing production numbers, a cast of veteran Broadway stars at the top of their game, and a book meant only to tickle the funny bone. The show has audiences cheering long before the curtain comes down."

"*Curtains* features a charmingly homey detective, an improbable and convoluted plot and the mossy but glamorous archetypes you expect of an in-the-wings story: whip-cracking producer, demanding diva, effete director, suspiciously sweet understudy and the stage manager who knows too much."

All actors and production teams eagerly and anxiously await their reviews. The cast and crew of our production is no exception. Here's your chance to review the performance you have just seen.

**Read** a review of the original production of *Curtains*.

**Write** your review of the production you just saw.

**Opening Paragraph** should include

the name of the show you saw

main members of the creative team (composer, lyricist, director)

clear statement of your opinion

**Middle Paragraph(s)** forms the support for your argument. Should include:

brief summary of the show

specific examples of strengths and weaknesses

opinions of performers

thoughts about stage design and other technical aspects of production

**Conclusion** should restate the main points of your argument

- Be sure to use correct theatrical terminology (see glossary)
- Remember to consider your audience carefully. Your review should let the reader understand not only if you liked the piece, but also if they would enjoy it based on your descriptions and explanations.
- Keep your playbill/program handy when writing your review. You can make sure you are crediting the right people (and spelling their names correctly)

**Review** A rubric follows to help you evaluate your effort

## RUBRIC – WRITING A REVIEW

Topic: Curtains  
Audience: Teacher/Peers

Tone: Formal/Academic  
Purpose: Persuade/Inform

Criteria	4	3	2	1
Opinion	I give a clearly stated opinion of the play. I explain my criteria.	I give an opinion but don't explain my criteria fully.	My opinion is buried, confused and/or unclear	I don't give an overall opinion
Reasons in support of claim	I give clear and accurate examples that support my opinion. Examples are specific and well-chosen	I support my opinion, but I may have given obvious or simple examples	I give one or two comments that don't support opinion, or I may have given irrelevant or confusing examples	I do not give convincing reasons in support of my opinion
Citations	I creatively credit the author, director and other members of the cast	I credit the director and at least one member of the cast	I credit only the director, or I improperly credit members of the production	I do not credit any members of the production
Organization	My writing has a compelling opening, an informative middle and a satisfying conclusion	My writing has a beginning, middle, and end. It marches along but doesn't dance.	My writing is basically organized but sometimes gets off topic.	My writing is aimless and disorganized.
Voice and tone	It sounds like I care about my argument. I show how I think and feel about my hero.	My tone is OK but my paper could have been written by anyone. I need to tell more about how I feel and think.	My writing is bland or pretentious. There is either no hint of "me" in it or it sounds like I'm "faking it."	My writing is too formal or informal. It sounds like I don't know much about my topic.
Word choice	The words I use are striking but natural, varied and vivid	I make routine word choices	The words I use are often dull or uninspired or sound like I'm trying too hard to impress.	I use the same words over and over again.
Sentence fluency	My sentences are clear, complete, and of varying lengths.	I have well-constructed sentences	My sentences are sometimes awkward, and/or contain run-ons and fragments.	Many run-ons, fragments and awkward phrasings make my essay hard to read.
Conventions	I use correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.	I generally use correct conventions. I have a couple of errors I should fix.	I have enough errors in my essay to distract a reader.	Numerous errors make my paper hard to read.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_