13. A Book/Film Review

1. Read the following extracts from 3 different books and give the names of the books and their authors. What do all these texts have in common?

A *The second part of the novel is narrated by Miranda in the form of fragments from a diary she keeps during her captivity. Clegg scares her, and she does not understand him in the beginning. Miranda reminisces over her previous life throughout this section of the novel, and many of her diary entries are written either to her sister, or to a man named G.P., whom she respected and admired as an artist...* <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Collector>

B *Snowball attempts to teach the animals reading and writing; food is plentiful, and the farm runs smoothly. The pigs elevate themselves to positions of leadership and set aside special food items, ostensibly for their personal health. Napoleon takes the pups from the farm dogs and trains them privately. Napoleon and Snowball struggle for leadership.*

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Animal_Farm>

C *For ten years, Harry is repeatedly tormented by the Dursleys. Shortly before Harry's eleventh birthday, a series of letters addressed to Harry arrive, but Vernon destroys them before Harry can read them. To get away from the letters, Vernon takes the family to a small island. As they are settling in, Hagrid bursts through the door to tell Harry what the Dursleys have kept him from finding out: Harry is a wizard and has been accepted at Hogwarts.* <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harry_Potter_and_the_Philosopher's_Stone>

2. Answer the questions:

What is the purpose of book reviews? Who reads them?

What are the questions the reader might have about a book?

Do you sometimes read book reviews? Why?

3. This is a common structure of a book review. Match parts of a book review with their content:

**Introduction:**

A This part summarizes what happens in the book

B Information about the style, language, form etc

C Your opinion, recommendation and reasons why to read/not to read the book

D A brief description and a few comments on the main characters

E The title, the author and other relevant information such as the setting and time

**Plot:**

**Characters:**

**Other relevant information:**

**Conclusion:**

4. Read both the summary of book review writing and the review on the link bellow and identify individual parts of the review.

<http://www.readingmatters.co.uk/book.php?id=240>

**Useful ideas:** Always think about your audience, your readers; do not include too many details and **do not give away the ending of the book** (the reader has not read the book); you may recommend the book but you may also include some criticisms if appropriate; try to use synonyms and not to repeat the same words all over again.

The present tense is often used to tell the story.

**Book Review SUMMARY:**

**1. Introduction:** General comments (the title, the author and other relevant information such as the setting and time)

**2. Plot:** A summary of what happens in the book(not too much detail)

**3. Characters:** A brief description and a few comments on the main characters

**4. Other information:** Other important details you want to say about the book (style, language, form...)

**5. Conclusion:** Summarize your opinion and recommendation and give reasons why to read/not to read the book

The text is divided into (5) paragraphs.

5. Write the introductory part of your favourite book by an English writing author; make some research to get all the necessary information.

6. Read the text on this link and compare it with the book review summary. Suggest the organisation structure of this text.

<http://www.anthonysfilmreview.com/Film/A/Animal_Farm.htm>

7. Read the text on this link and compare it with the book review summary. Is it different? What is the organisation structure of this text?

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/music/reviews/pdj9>

**References and Bibliography:**

Berwick G., Thorne S., Writing Activities, Scholastic, 2011

Bowen T., Marks J., Inside Teaching*, chapter 10 Write on:,* Macmillan, 1994

Brook-Hart G., Complete First Certificate, Cambridge University Press(CUP), 2008

Harmer J., English Language Teaching*, chapter 18 Writing*, Longman, 2001

Hedges T., Writing, Oxford University Press (OUP), 2005

Hornby A. S., Oxford Advanced Learner´s Dictionary 8th edition, OUP, 2010

Team of authors (Gryca, Sosnowska…), Exam Excellence, OUP, 2006Exam Excellence, team of authors, OUP

<http://www.anthonysfilmreview.com/Film/A/Animal_Farm.htm>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/music/reviews/pdj9>

<http://www.readingmatters.co.uk/book.php?id=240>

**Answer key:**

1) A The Collector – John Fowles; 2B The Animal Farm – George Orwell; 3B Harry Potter and the Philosopher´s Stone – J. K. Rowling. All the short texts describe the main characters.

2) Students´ own answers

3) 1E, 2A, 3D, 4B, 5C

4) Text - Introduction – some details in the headlines, some subjective comments

Plot

Harry’s character

Relevant information – style, humour

Conclusion

5) Students´ own answers

6) Similar layout to a book review – longer part of the plot

7) CD review – introduction; history of the songs, playlist; style of the sound; performance; conclusion – different to the previous texts – no plot, no characters; focus on the content, individual songs, musicians, atmosphere