

I'm reviewing the situation

LINKS TO:

Stage 3, Module 3

Learning Object 4: *Write a review*

Exercise 1

Answers:

1.1 Where would you expect to find this review?

I would expect to find this review in a print or online publication. The text is comprehensive and detailed, and is written in complete sentences. The tone of the review suggests it might be found in a family-friendly publication, or on a website that is aimed at families.

1.2 How does the reviewer introduce the review?

The reviewer introduces the review by outlining the history of their visits to the park, the changes that have taken place since their last visit, and their decision to revisit the park.

1.3 What evidence does the reviewer provide for their assessment of the park?

The writer provides a lot of evidence based on their experience and observations, such as the:

- size of the park (10 hectares)
- lack of disabled facilities
- lack of litter/presence of bins
- types of rides (*Merayap-rayap*, *Pontang Panting* and *Luncur Jeram*, for example)
- lack of a park map
- cost of parking
- lack of queues, with the example of the queue for the *Kincir Putar*.

1.4 What conclusions does the reviewer draw about the theme park?

The reviewer concludes that 'altogether [it was] a great day out'. Although the review included some criticisms, it also mentions that the updates have improved the park.

1.5 How balanced or fair do you think this reviewer is in their assessment of the theme park? Explain your answer.

I think the review is balanced and fair. The reviewer provides information on both the positive and negative aspects of their visit, and gives lots of detailed information supporting their opinions.

1.6 Does the review help you decide whether you would like to visit Mitza? Give reasons for your answer.

If I was planning a trip to the area, the review would be quite helpful in helping me to decide whether to visit the park, and how to plan my visit. For example, I would know to download a map of the park before I went. I would also know that it wouldn't be suitable if I was travelling with someone with mobility issues, such as a person with disability or an elderly person, or perhaps even someone with a pram! The review is balanced and clear, and provides lots of information so that I can make up my own mind.

1.7 Writers are often influenced by their cultural backgrounds. Do you think the review was written by an Australian or an Indonesian reviewer? Give reasons for your answer.

I believe the review was written by an Indonesian or, if it was written by an Australian, the writer knows the language and understands the culture very well because the review was written in a reserved way, using polite language and expressions. The reviewer did not openly criticise anything. In fact, when they said something was not right (for example, the food that was not available or the fact that there were no souvenir shops), they said it in a well-mannered way.

Exercise 2

Answers:

2.1 Where would you expect to find these reviews?

These reviews are much more personal, informal and less detailed than the first review. I would expect to find them on a social networking website, or on someone's blog.

2.2 How does the reviewer introduce Review 1?

The reviewer introduces the review by saying that they heard the park was closing, stating when they last went and how much they enjoyed the park on their last visit.

2.3 What evidence does the reviewer of Review 2 provide for their assessment of the park?

The reviewer states that they:

- they think the *Pontang Panting* is still the fastest ride in the country
- they went on the *Pontang Panting* four times
- they got wet on the *Luncur Jeram*.

They also provide some opinions without evidence, such as:

- the rides were a little run-down
- the food was not so appealing.

2.4 What conclusions does the reviewer of Review 3 draw about the theme park?

The reviewer draws the conclusion that 'it is sad to be saying goodbye to the old Mitza'. It isn't very clear whether, on balance, they enjoyed their visit to the park but, since it is closing down for renovations, the lack of a recommendation either way seems to be appropriate.

2.5 How balanced or fair do you think these reviewers are in their assessment of the theme park? Explain your answer.

The reviews are quite balanced in that they give some negative and some positive statements. They are not as impartial or useful as the more formal, detailed review.

2.6 Do the reviews help you decide whether you would like to visit Mitza? Give reasons for your answer.

These reviews don't really help me make a decision. It isn't clear how many rides are in operation, how run-down the park is, or even how the reviewers' visit this time compares to their earlier visits. There isn't enough information for me to decide whether the park would be a suitable venue for myself, or my friends and family to visit.

Exercise 3

Compare the first review in Exercise 1 with those from Exercise 2. What differences or similarities are there between the reviews?

Answer:

All the reviews are of the same park, and refer to some of the same rides. The first review, in Exercise 1, seems more conscious of the needs of the reader, giving them plenty of evidence and information so that they can make up their own minds whether to visit the park, whereas the reviews in Exercise 2 are more personal and reflective.

The first review provides concrete evidence and explicit opinions, whereas the other reviews focus on opinion rather than evidence.

While the reviews are suitable for different audiences, I feel that the first review, in Exercise 1, is more useful for a wider range of readers.

Exercise 4

State whether you believe there is a conflict of interest, in each instance, and decide on a course of action, giving reasons for your decision.

Sample answers:

4.1 The owner of a local restaurant invites you to review his establishment. In return, he offers to have the chef prepare his specialty dish for you, even though the chef usually only prepares the dish on special occasions.

I don't think it represents a conflict of interest to have the chef prepare a special dish for me as the reviewer. Instead, I believe it offers me an opportunity to evaluate the special dish and decide whether to recommend it to others or not. I would want to pay for the meal myself, out of my expense account, to ensure that there was no conflict of interest.

4.2 The promotions manager of the local theatre sends you opening night tickets for a new play, including an invitation backstage after the show to meet the director and the leading actors.

I think this does represent a slight conflict of interest, because the tickets are free. I think that I could still review the show, and perhaps include quotations from the director and the leading actors in the review. This is a good opportunity to write an insightful review that enriches the reader's understanding of the show. Although it does represent a slight conflict of interest, I understand that it is common practice in Australia and Indonesia for reviewers to be sent free tickets to shows in order to review them, and that there is an understanding that reviewers are not expected to be less critical of the show on these grounds.

4.3 The owner of an interstate hotel offers to fly you to their resort and put you and your family up in a luxury suite in return for a full-page review in the Sunday supplement, with pictures.

I believe there is a strong conflict of interest here, particularly because the owner is stating both the length of the review and where, when and how it will be published. I would be concerned that they would also want to have a say in what is said in the review. I don't think it would be right to take the owner up on their offer.

4.4 A publisher sends you a book to review, which has been written by your favourite former teacher.

I think this represents a conflict of interest. I don't think it would be wise for me to review the book myself; perhaps I could pass it on to someone else to review. If I did read and review the book, I think it would be important to state my relationship to the author in the introduction to the review. For example, if it was a children's book, I could write: *Saya sudah lama kenal dengan Ibu Harris. Dia guru SD saya. Rasa empatinya terhadap anak-anak muda bisa dilihat dengan sangat jelas lewat novelnya yang pertama berjudul 'Under the shining stars'.*