

- 1 When you read a review of a book, film or game, which of the following might the reviewer include? Which information do you think is most / least important?
- their thoughts and feelings
 - a description of the cover
 - general information, e.g. the publisher
 - whether they would recommend it
 - what other people thought about it
 - details about the plot and characters

- 2 Read a review from Xanthe's book blog. Which of the things in Ex 1 does she include?

BOOK BLOG

New post today by Xanthe

A One of the most **original** books I've read recently is *The Old Man and the Sea*, by the US writer Ernest Hemingway. It was first published in 1952 and won the Pulitzer Prize for fiction. It has sold millions of copies worldwide and has been made into a film three times.



B The book is set in Cuba. It tells the **moving** story of Santiago, an old fisherman who hasn't caught a fish for many weeks. One day, Santiago goes out on his boat alone and catches a huge marlin. He fights the fish for two days before killing it and tying it to his boat. On the way home, sharks attack the boat. When he arrives, only bones are left, but everyone sees he has caught a great fish.



C The main character in the story is Santiago. He is **brave** and **experienced**, and very **determined**. The marlin, which represents the sea, is **strong** and **aggressive**, but the old man respects it. At one point, he calls it 'brother'. The **respectful** relationship between them is the most important part of the book.

D I loved this book. The story is **simple**, but the writing is **beautiful** and the book is really **entertaining**. You learn a lot about courage and strength – it really makes you think. My only criticism is that it is too short!

E All in all, I'd definitely recommend it. Try to read it all in one go – it's more **enjoyable** that way. You certainly won't regret it.

- 3 Read the review again and number the things in the order Xanthe does them.
- gives her opinion about the book
 - describes the main characters
 - talks about the book's author and background
 - gives her recommendation
 - describes the story

- 4 Complete the extracts from different reviews with the phrases below. Which points from Ex 1 do they describe?

a very enjoyable definitely recommend for everyone
has sold main characters makes you think
only criticism really loved relationship between
set in tells the story of was first released
you certainly won't regret it

- This film is _____ Mumbai and _____ a poor boy from the streets who becomes a millionaire.
- This game isn't _____, but I'd _____ it – my _____ is the cost of some in-game purchases.
- This game _____ in 2011, and it _____ more than 200 million copies.
- The _____ in the film are a father and son, and the _____ them is very moving.
- I _____ this book, not only because it's _____ read, but also because it really _____.
- If you decide to read this book, _____.

STRATEGY Using varied vocabulary

When you are writing a review, it is important to use a variety of vocabulary to make your writing more interesting. Use descriptive adjectives to talk about the plot, the characters and how you feel about the book.

- 5 Read the strategy above. Look at the adjectives in **bold** in the text. Which ones describe ...

- the book / plot / story?
- the characters?

- 6 Which group of adjectives is a reviewer more likely to use to describe a) a book / plot / story and b) the characters?

- attractive, clever, cold, exciting, friendly, interesting, sensible, strange
- boring, clever, confusing, difficult, exciting, interesting, strange, surprising

- 7 You are going to write a review of a book, TV show, film or video game. First, make notes about the title, the author / director / creator and any background information.

- 8 Plan your work.

- Use the information in Ex 3 to organise your ideas into five paragraphs labelled A–E.
- Decide which useful phrases and descriptive adjectives to use.

- 9 Write your review.

- 10 **CHECK YOUR WORK** Did you ...

- follow the paragraph structure?
- include phrases from this lesson?
- use a variety of vocabulary?
- include a recommendation?