Book Critique or Non-Fiction Analysis

A *critique or analysis* emphasizes the strengths and weaknesses of a book and encourages personal opinion.

Summarize the book in one paragraph (what does the author attempt to do?) Usually the author explains his or her purpose in a preface or early in the book. It may be a history, an analysis of a process, a how-to book, a selection of recipes, a collection of anecdotes, etc. Give the title, author, place of publication, publisher, date of publication, and edition.

Answer the following questions in any order you wish, using complete sentences and paragraphs in any order you wish. Use quotations from the book to back up your statements.

1. What are the author’s credentials? Is he or she an authority in the field?

2. For what level is the book written? (novice, intermediate, advanced)

3. How were visual aids used? (photographs, maps, charts, graphs, tables) Were they helpful? Could more have been used?

4. Does the author cover all aspects of his topic or not? Remember that an author may deliberately choose to handle one aspect of a large topic in detail rather than the whole topic loosely. How current is the treatment? Did the author cover the material adequately, too lightly, or too deeply for his level of reader?

5. Does the author have any apparent prejudices or biases? Does he or she present different points of view or only one? Quote from the text to show his or her prejudices or objectivity.

6. How does the author make his or her points? (stories, specific examples, comparisons, contrasts, statistics, facts)

7. Is the author’s use of language easy, moderately difficult, or very difficult to understand? Are technical terms explained or a glossary provided?

8. Why did you choose this particular book? What were your expectations? Were they satisfied? Why or why not?

9. Use the pronoun “I” frequently in the paper but not in every single sentence.