

Publishers' Bindings Online, 1815-1930: The Art of Books
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Guideline for Book Reports
Civil War Literature

Introduction

- Begin with a catchy quip or anecdote that catches the reader's attention.
- Provide the name of the author, the book title, and the main theme.
- How does the book relate to the Civil War?
- What genre (i.e., romance, mystery, thriller, adventure) does the book represent?
- What is your thesis about the book?

Summary of Content

- This should be a *brief* description of the story and its main characters. The analysis (below) is most important.

Analysis and Evaluation of the Book

- What was the author trying to do?
- How well did he/she do it?
- Was it worth doing?
- Did you enjoy it?
- Would you recommend it to another reader?
- Give examples to support your opinion.
- Organize into paragraphs that deal with single aspects of your argument. (Organize by themes, not the book's chronology.)
- Avoid excessive quotation and give a specific page reference in parentheses when you do quote. (Remember that you can state many of the author's points in your own words.)

Conclusion

- Sum up or restate your thesis or make the final judgment regarding the book.
- You should not introduce new evidence for your argument in the conclusion.
- Balance the book's strengths and weaknesses in order to unify your evaluation. (Did the body of your review have three negative paragraphs and one favorable one? What do they all add up to?)