Introduction to Theater Arts How to Write a Performance Review. The job of the theater reviewer is twofold. Your task is: 1. To convey your experience of watching a live performance to the reader who was not there. What did you see? Where? What was the theater like? What happened on stage? What surprised you? What was it like to see this particular performance? 2. To offer the reader your opinion of the performance – and help the reader to decide whether or not to go see it themselves. What worked for you? What didn’t? What was your general reaction? Do you think other people should go see this – and why or why not? The best way to learn how to write an effective theater review is to look at examples. Read the New York Times arts section. These examples need not only be about theater. Reviews are a genre unto themselves, and a good review of anything can be a model. Check out a book review, a review of a television pilot, a video game review. Which reviews do you find most useful? What makes a review interesting to read? How much information should you reveal up front – and when should you be wary of spoilers? Use these examples as models (not templates). Learn from them, but make your review your own. In short, write the kind of review that you would appreciate as a reader. While I hope that you enjoy the performances you see, you are also welcome to write a harsh or negative review of a production that you thought was lacking. Keep in mind, however, that any opinions you expressed must be substantiated with evidence. Don’t simply tell us: “I thought the show was boring.” Tell us why – and be specific. The more evidence-based and specific your writing is, the more effective your review will be. Try to focus on the production rather than the play. Your primary job is to talk about the success or failure of the actors, director, and production team in creating an effective theatrical experience. FORMAT Your review should be between 2 – 3 typed double-spaced pages long – no more, no less – in 12 point font. Please use one-inch margins on all sides, include your first and last name, and staple the paper. Use page numbers. Please make sure to include the date and location where you saw the production. Be sure also to attach a ticket stub and program to certify that you attended. If you attend a performance that does not use tickets or programs, please ask the box office manager to write up and sign a note – with their full name, email address, and telephone number, and your full name – certifying that you attended (I will occasionally call to confirm your attendance, so please be honest.) 1 GRADING Performance reviews will be assessed according to the following criteria: 1. Description: Does the author adequately describe the experience of attending the production? Does the reader understand what the show was about, what happened onstage, and what it might be like to attend? 2. Analysis: Does the reviewer clearly convey his or her opinion of the production? Are these opinions backed up by evidence and specific examples? Is the value of the production analyzed? 3. Structure, grammar, style: Does the review make sense? Is it well-written? Does the writing flow? Is there a cohesive structure? 4. Creativity and originality: Does the author’s voice shine through? What insights has the author brought to his or her analysis of the performance? Rent the music link down below https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2jWa9A3w2FQ