Tips for Writing a Book Review

\**Keep this as a reference source for writing your book reviews this year* \*

1. Before you begin writing, make a few notes about the points you want to get across.
2. While you're writing, try thinking of your reader as a friend to whom you're telling a story.
3. Try to mention the name of the author and the book title in the first paragraph — there's nothing more frustrating than reading a review of a great book but not knowing who wrote it and what the title is!
4. If possible, use one paragraph for each point you want to make about the book. It's a good way to emphasize the importance of the point. You might want to list the main points in your notes before you begin. Start with a rough draft!
5. Try to get the main theme of the book across in the beginning of your review. Your reader should know right away what he or she is getting into should they choose to read the book!
6. Think about whether the book is part of a genre. Does the book fit into a type like mystery, adventure, or romance? What aspects of the genre does it use?
7. What do you like or dislike about the book's writing style? Is it funny? Does it give you a sense of the place it's set? What is the author's/narrator's "voice" like?
8. Try using a few short quotes from the book to illustrate your points. This is not absolutely necessary, but it's a good way to give your reader a sense of the author's writing style.
9. Make sure your review explains how you feel about the book and why, not just what the book is about. A good review should express the reviewer's opinion and persuade the reader to share it, to read the book, or to avoid reading it.
10. Do research about the author and incorporate what you learn into the review. Biographical information can help you formulate your opinion about the book, and gives your review a "depth." Remember, a book doesn't come directly from a printing press, it's a product of an author's mind, and therefore it may be helpful to know something about the author and how she or he came to write the book.