

College Writing 101

Making an Evaluation



Making an Evaluation

- I. Evaluating Mythopolis – short film
- II. Lecture: Making an Evaluation (NFG)
- III. Class Activity – View *The Wonder of Film*
- IV. Class Discussion: *Student's Essay on Juno*
- V. *Conclusion*

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Evaluations

- An evaluation is at bottom a **judgment**;
- You judge something according to certain **criteria**, supporting your judgment with reasons and evidence

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- Consumer Reports evaluates cell phones, televisions, cars etc.
- US News and World Report evaluate colleges and universities.
- Food Critics evaluate the best restaurants and
- We consult sources like these to make decisions

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We make evaluations in our daily lives:

- *what restaurant to go to*
- *what movie to see*
- *what teachers to take*
- *etc etc etc*

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**Read & Review *student's*
essay on Juno – (pps
197-205)**

- What were some of the things that you noticed about Heinekamp's essay?

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Key Features of Evaluations

—

- **A Concise Description of the subject:** Include just enough information to let readers who may not be familiar with your subject understand what it is; **the goal is to evaluate, not summarize.**

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- Heinekamp **briefly describes *Juno's* main plot points in her first paragraph only providing what readers need to understand the context of her evaluation.**

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It all starts with a chair, where Juno (Ellen Page) has unprotected sex with her best friend Bleeker (Michael Cera). Several weeks later, she's at a convenience store, buying a pregnancy test. Only sixteen, Juno faces the terrifying task of telling her parents that she is pregnant. With their support, Juno moves forward in her decision to give birth and give the child to Mark (Jason Bateman) and

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Vanessa (Jennifer Garner), a wealthy and seemingly perfect married couple looking to adopt.

Although the situations Juno's characters find themselves in and their dialogue may be criticized as unrealistic, the film written by Diablo Cody and directed by Jason Reitman, successfully portrays the

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- **Clearly Defined Criteria:**
You need to **determine clear criteria** as the basis for your judgment. In more formal evaluations, you may need to announce your criteria explicitly.
- Heinekamp evaluates *Juno* based on the power of its emotion and the realism of its situations, characters and dialogue

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- **A Knowledgeable Discussion of the Subject:**
To evaluate something credibly, you need to show that you know it yourself and that you have researched what other authoritative sources say.

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- Heinekamp cites many examples from *Juno*, showing her knowledge of the film.
- She also cites reviews from three internet resources, showing that she has researched others' views as well.

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- **A Balanced and Fair Assessment:**

An evaluation is centered on a judgment. It is important that any judgment be balanced and fair. Seldom is something all good or all bad. **A fair evaluation may acknowledge both strengths and weaknesses.**

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- Heinekamp concedes that Juno's situations and dialogue are unrealistic, but she says it nevertheless "reaches depths of emotions that are unusual for teenage comedies."

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- **Well Supported Reasons:**
You need to argue for your judgment, providing reasons and evidence.
- Heinekamp gives several reasons for her positive assessment of *Juno* -

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- Believability of its characters
- Intensely emotional scenes
- The strength of the main character as a role model – Her reasons are supported with many quotations and examples from the film

The Shared Wonder of Film



The Wonder of Film

On Film Analysis:

- <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/introliterature/chapter/how-to-analyze-a-film/>

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Writing an Evaluation:

- You can more effectively evaluate a limited subject than a broad one, One film in the Bond's series rather than a series of Bond films”...
- The more specific and focused your subject, the better you can write about it.

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- Consider the Rhetorical Situation (NFG):
 - Purpose
 - Audience
 - Stance
 - Media/Design

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- **Organizing an Evaluation:(NFG)**
- **Start with your Subject**
- **Start with your Criteria**

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How Summarizing helps:

- Summarizing a text helps us to see the relationships among its ideas and to understand what it is saying.
- When you summarize, you restate the text's main idea in your own words, leaving out most examples and other details

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Assignment III:

Select a film to analyze (*no documentaries or Disney films please*)

Create a powerpoint presentation of 1-3 slides to present the following information on your film (**Due next class**).

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Film Class Presentation

Film Facts (2 pts)

- Title of film
- Year film was produced
- Names of the actors
- Name of director

Genre (3 pts)

- What main genre does the film fall under? - romantic, historical, detective, thriller, adventure, horror, and science fiction.
- What sub-grouping does the film fall under? - action, comedy, tragedy, war and westerns.

Setting (3 pts) (*Setting* is a description of where and when the story takes place).

- Does it take place in the present, the past, or the future?
- What aspects of setting are we made aware of? - Geography, weather conditions, physical environment, time of day.
- Where are we in the opening scene?

Finally, why did you choose this film? (2 pts)

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- **Conclusion***