0:01 Hello! Welcome to our WR 121 class. As you know, this Module is talking about writing reviews. You’ve already read several reviews and you’ve seen how the best reviews are based on criteria. So, I just wanted to talk with you and get your minds thinking about the kinds of items that you might like to review. All of the reviews you’ve read so far are about simple items and that’s the best way to start developing our ability to figure out what criteria do we use to evaluate an item. This is a very simple form of evaluation. In later writing assignments you might be asked to evaluate vastly more complicated things than, say, some glue. This is the glue that you already read a review on, it just happened to be sitting here and I wrote that review for you so you could see the criteria I used was stickiness, and how well does it present, how does it compare price-wise to other items that are like it, and how easily does it come out. You may choose to review something else. Basically, this section of the class is asking you to slow down and look really clearly at items and things that you may have not broken. Let’s take a look at something else. This is actually two things. What it is is it’s an iPhone hidden inside of a case. So if you were going to be reviewing something like this, then you would want to choose one thing or the other, you can’t review both together.

2:20 So let’s just talk about the case, because, trust me, the simpler item to review would be the case. There are fewer criteria associated with the case than there are with the iPhone, which does almost everything. But, this particular case, this is the Otterbox case, and what makes an Otterbox case special?Or, what would we expect from any case? What’s the first thing you think of? We can’t really hear each other, so I’m just going to pretend you said that the #1 thing we want from a case for a delicate piece of expensive technology is for it to protect. Alright, well I’m happy to say I own this case and it’s battered. This case is messed up. Look, you can see where it has fallen so hard that the case is broken, not my phone, which is awesome because it turns out this case is extraordinarily protective. So that would be the first criteria that I would talk about in a review.

3:37 And also I need to mention- a little bit of a digression- but as you start your reviews always talk about how you are familiar with the item. Because earlier in your review you want to talk about how familiar you are with the item you are reviewing and then you want to make a statement about your overall opinion of it. Is it excellent? Is it so-so? Does it have good parts and bad parts? Does it stink? Is it dreadful? So it turns out, if I were to write a review about this Otterbox I would say that it’s awesome. It’s an excellent, excellent case. There is nothing that I particularly dislike about it. I could find what I dislike about it, to write a truly balanced review I could search. But it’s my opinion that if you aim in your reviews- and this part of the criteria for writing reviews in this class- that you reach a minimum of 200 words. That’s roughly about a page typed. Reach a minimum of 200 words and divide your sections into useful criteria. So as I was saying, I would say in this one, I would talk about how I know this case- I purchased it and that I have used it a great deal. It has fallen from very high heights, I have been running very fast with it, I have been skateboarding with it and it has fallen out of my hands because I’m foolish. I could say some of those things and I could even bring up personal anecdotes while I’m talking about relevant criteria, which ever criteria happens to relate to some little story I want to tell. This part of our writing class, as you’re writing reviews, really invites you to bring in your stories about things into these reviews.

5:36 So, one of the things I would talk about if I were to talk about it (the case), I would say that the styling of this particular case is really interesting because it has a rubber casing outside of a hard plastic casing, which is probably why, engineering wise, why it works so well, why it is just incredibly protective of it (the phone). I would say on the easy-to-clean side, it’s not the easiest to clean. It has little nooks and crannies that things get into and you have to take it off. It is not easy to pull the hard part (of the case) that I just showed you off, it’s not easy to do that. Luckily you don’t have to do it terribly often, although you do have to clean underneath this film that they have on the front. So I have to really think about my experience with it and get into it. I will say that I am particularly amazed at how well it protects from water. I live in Oregon and this phone has been rained on many, many times and it has always been protected. It is a remarkable case, it’s just a great case. I’m not trying to sell it to you and as you write reviews remember that you’re not trying to sell things, you’re just trying to talk about them authentically and find criteria. So another criteria I might use is that the feel of it allows it, in an average daily use, to not slip out of my hands usually. If I happen to be riding a skateboard in the rain, then it will fly out of my hands, but normal use the rubber doesn’t allow it to slip. So I’ve only gone over a few criteria. For the items you review hopefully you’re going to pick 5, that’s our magic number. Pick 5 criteria.

7:37 Now I want to talk about, let’s see. I’ve talked about glue, I’ve talked about the case, that’s particularly simple. Those are two simple items. Now some of you may have complex tastes, like for instance video games. I would read some video games before I delve in there to review them at some website that you discover that take consumer video game reviews. The criteria, what are the criteria for video games? Well, I literally have to think, like you. You just have to pause and think. Alright, what are the criteria I want? I want a video game to be exciting, I want it to have an interesting story. This (Red Dead Redemption) turns out to be one of my favorite video games and it has an incredibly interesting story. I think as you’re writing, since if you’re going to write about a complicated video game that has a narrative in it, don’t spoil it. If any of you watching this video that know this, there is like a big spoiler that could happen somewhere about 60% into the game that has to do with John Marston here. So, don’t spoil it for other people, just say it’s a complicated story line where the unexpected happens. That may be a good thing for you, or I could see some people writing a review about this game and saying “Eh, the unexpected thing happens and it’s not terribly excellent but I stayed with the game anyway and it came to a satisfying conclusion”. You could say those kinds of things.

9:07 So what was I saying, exciting, game play. So game play, this game actually has some very good game play, it’s very intuitive, easy to control- those are the kinds of things I would say. They make some great choices. They have a ‘deadeye’ option here, which makes it pretty easy to shoot just about anything from any distance. There are puzzles. That would be an entirely other criteria and I have to say there was one puzzle in here that stumped me. I was able to finish the game but there was one puzzle that was just too tedious. And I might mention something like that, that some of the puzzles turned out to not be worth it, that you had to do too much to get the puzzle and I wanted to get on with the story so I was unable to finish at least one of the puzzles associated with this. There are other things. You don’t necessarily have to spend time talking about packaging. You could if the packaging was really unique- it’s not (for this game). I would talk about the fact that this came with an awesome wall map, which is on a wall. So that would be something, any kind of special things about it you would want to include. So I hope that this video has kind of invited you or been an invitation for you to choose items to review in the next assignments. So as you see the next assignments this video has helped prepare you to dive into some of these other consumer websites or even to just do the reviews that you’re submitting to the Assessment Evaluator here. Good, I hope you’re having fun with this and we’ll carry on.

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