### Writing Map for a Review

**What you need to know before you write your review:** What is the item being reviewed? What tools are appropriate to review this item? (Using the ten tools of literary analysis might be a good place to start. Other tools exist for reviewing a video game, movie, or product.) What should I compare the item to? What are the negatives? What are the positives? What tone do I want to take?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sections of Review</th>
<th>Factors to Consider</th>
<th>Your Prewriting</th>
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| 1. Opening         | • Tone suggests your evaluation  
                     • Context (genre, definition)  
                     • Overview                   |                 |
| 2. Opening         | • Comparisons to similar products or experiences  
                     • Share your informed experience |                 |
| 3. Body analysis   | • Analysis using tool  
                     • If appropriate, tell both positives and negatives |                 |
| 4. Body analysis   | • Analysis using tool  
                     • If appropriate, tell both positives and negatives |                 |
| 5. Body analysis   | • Analysis using tool  
                     • If appropriate, tell both positives and negatives |                 |
| 6. Body analysis   | • Analysis using tool  
                     • If appropriate, tell both positives and negatives |                 |
| 7. Body analysis   | • Analysis using tool  
                     • If appropriate, tell both positives and negatives |                 |
| 8. Body analysis   | • Analysis using tool  
                     • If appropriate, tell both positives and negatives |                 |
| 9. Conclusion      | • Reiterate your judgment  
                     • Match the tone of the opening |                 |

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This review was published on Orson Scott Card’s website as part of his blog “Uncle Orson Reviews Everything.” Used with permission of OSC and Sherwood Smith.

A few months ago, I reviewed Sherwood Smith’s fantasy novel Inda, the first volume of a projected trilogy, and I believe I said very positive things.

So many fantasy novels take place in a space about the size (and with as much variety) as the state of Delaware. But in Fox, Smith opens up the novel into a wide, wide world, with enormous variety. Here we have nation within nation, layers of history, and a real sense that there are kingdoms and empires on several continents, with complex interactions among them, and wide variation in their cultures.

Every group has its own history, its own objectives, its own grievances. And Smith handles the relationships and machinations among them so deftly that you don’t realize you’re being given a course in politics.

The novel begins by plunging into the story about fifteen minutes after the end of the previous volume. I strongly recommend that you reread that last chapter of Inda before starting to read Fox. Otherwise, you’ll be as lost as I was. As with the first volume, Smith does not define things as she goes along: You’re expected either to remember or figure it out.

But the sense of dislocation is only momentary. Within a chapter or two I was fully reoriented, despite the months between volumes. And what a ride this new book is!

The novel begins by plunging into the story about fifteen minutes after the end of the previous volume. I recently read volume two, Fox, and I was very impressed. I savored every paragraph and continued to live in the book for days afterward.

I keep thinking that if I write a good enough review, the publisher or author will relent and let me read the next volume early. Like now. Please.

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