Review

Everyday Inventions: review for a university magazine

Full exam-style writing task with a complete model response. Original independent practice, not an official exam paper.

Your university magazine is inviting reviews of exhibitions that students might enjoy visiting. Write a review of the fictional exhibition Everyday Inventions. Describe the most interesting features, evaluate how successfully the exhibition explains its subject, and recommend whether it would be worthwhile for students with different academic interests. The exhibition includes working replicas visitors can handle, information panels that assume considerable scientific knowledge, and guides available to answer questions. You may add plausible details consistent with this situation. Write 220-260 words.

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Write your response on separate paper before studying the model below.

One possible response

Everyday objects, unexpected questions

When did you last wonder how a simple household device actually works? Everyday Inventions turns that question into an unusually enjoyable afternoon. Although the exhibition sounds as if it belongs exclusively to science students, its best moments have a much wider appeal.

The working replicas are the main attraction. Visitors can turn handles, change settings and see the results immediately, rather than simply admire objects behind glass. I particularly enjoyed comparing two mechanisms designed to perform the same job. Trying them made the advantages and compromises of each design easier to grasp than a diagram alone would have done. These opportunities to experiment also prompted lively conversations among visitors.

Unfortunately, the written explanations are less successful. Several panels introduce technical terms without defining them, making a supposedly familiar object seem unnecessarily mysterious. Students with a scientific background may appreciate the detail, but others could struggle to connect the vocabulary with what they have just observed. The guides help enormously: their willingness to answer basic questions prevents the exhibition from becoming intimidating. Nevertheless, visitors should not have to depend on finding a guide to understand every display.

I would recommend Everyday Inventions, especially to students who enjoy discovering ideas through practical experience. Science students will probably gain the most from the combination of models and technical detail. Those studying other subjects should allow extra time for questions and go with a curious friend. With clearer introductory panels, this engaging exhibition could become genuinely accessible to everyone.

This is an original model, not an official marked script. Other approaches can also meet the task.

Understand the task and model

Task and intended reader

The review addresses university students choosing an outing. It describes replicas, evaluates explanations and makes a recommendation differentiated by academic background. Added details, such as comparing mechanisms, are plausible features of the fictional visit and remain consistent with the prompt.

Plan

The title and opening question attract a magazine reader. The second paragraph develops the main strength, the third examines the limitation and the guides, and the final paragraph turns that evaluation into practical advice. Description supports judgement rather than dominating the review.

Content: explain effects

"Trying them made the advantages and compromises ... easier to grasp" explains why the hands-on feature matters. "Introduce technical terms without defining them" identifies a specific obstacle instead of merely saying the panels are bad. These cause-and-effect links make the evaluation convincing.

Communicative achievement

The direct opening question and advice to "go with a curious friend" suit an engaging magazine review. The criticism stays fair: technical detail may benefit science students, and guides help other visitors. The review is neither an advertisement nor an unqualified complaint.

Organisation and language

"Unfortunately" marks the move from strength to weakness; "Nevertheless" limits the praise for the guides. The past tense recounts the reviewer's visit, while the present describes features readers can expect. "Could become" makes the final improvement conditional, not a claim that it has already happened.

Alternatives and pitfalls

A different review could advise non-science students against visiting if the evidence supported that judgement. It must still address the exhibition's strengths, explanation quality and audience. Avoid a chronological account of every room, promotional claims without examples, or a recommendation unrelated to the evaluation. This model illustrates choices rather than guaranteeing a mark.

Check your own response

- Does my review help university students decide whether to visit?
- Have I evaluated specific features and their effects?
- Have I considered different academic backgrounds?
- Is the tone engaging but balanced?
- Does my recommendation follow from my evidence?
- Is my complete response 220-260 words?