

Critical analysis section.

The following comments were written in response to the requirements listed under “Article contents” of the “Reviewer’s guidelines for article submission.”

- “A strength of this book was that it was able to include historical facts in a story-like format, and the characters were very relatable. Another strength was that the historical facts were presented in a chronological manner that was easy to follow.”
- “A weakness of this text is the lack of explanation of the hardships the commoners faced, causing the book to feel strongly biased towards the royal family. Another weakness of this text is that very little emphasis is placed on the politics occurring during this time, a very important factor in this particular time in history.”
- “The time was right for a popular revolution. It is in this general description of the revolution era that Cadbury succeeds. Her descriptions of Marie-Antoinette’s journey from Austria to a new life in France are well constructed and detailed, particularly Marie-Antoinette’s “rebirth” as a Frenchwomen. Another strength is the telling of the family’s escape from Paris, which manages to create true suspense and avoids melodrama.”
- “One of the strengths of the author when describing the scientific techniques used is the terms are explained clearly enough so that one who has little knowledge could understand the process.”
- “A weakness presented by Cadbury is the apparent skepticism of the scientists, displayed when Cassiman found two identical mutations in the ancient DNA of the Hapsburg family and also two mutations in the DNA of the living relatives, and became extremely frustrated and wary of the reliability of his results. By including this frustration, Cassiman’s results in general become less exciting and shrouded in doubt.”
- “At the same time this section of the book is very weak in that it does not fully explain the methods used (leaving the reader somewhat confused) and it also fails to describe why even the smallest differences (in just two places) in the hypervariable region were grounds for the exclusion of a candidate to be Louis-Charles.”
- “Another one of the strengths is the relation of genetic testing to other historically important cases such as the Russian royal family and the first DNA testing used in a crime. By relating techniques being used to other events, the reader grasps the importance and usefulness of this technology.”