The process of reading, distilling and critiquing papers will go a long way in helping one improve as an author in one's own scientific writing. A good referee report describes &/or considers the novelty of the research, the technical quality of the experiments, data and analysis and whether the conclusions are adequately supported by the data presented. If possible, it should help the authors to produce a better paper, so if a revision is recommended, it should communicate specific ways in which the manuscript can be improved. Above all, the goal of the reviewer is to enforce the criteria of the journal. A referee report most typically contains two sections. The first is a short paragraph that

- Summarizes the paper to the editor
- Details one's overall thoughts about the manuscript
- Makes a recommendation to publish/reject/submit to another journal/publish after minor revisions etc.

The recommendation to publish/reject/revise should be justified with a discussion in the following section of the report. The discussion should describe, point by point, the items that the authors of the paper need to address in any revision, or places where the paper has fallen short, or where it stands out. At the end, the review should be something that if one received would make one feel that the referee had read, understood and carefully considered the work of the paper, regardless of the final recommendation.