

How to Respond in Helpful Ways to a Peer's Draft

Keep this list of questions by your side as you're reviewing your classmate's draft -- on your own. Please know that these questions are suggestions or ideas to help you think of encouraging, truly helpful ways of responding. Responding does not mean criticizing -- it means helping your classmate do his or her best work. In addition, by answering these questions about your peer's draft, you'll improve drastically and quickly your ability to answer the same questions about your own draft.

- **The Assignment.** Does the draft carry out the assignment? How might the writer better fulfill the assignment?
- **The Title and introduction.** Does the title tell the reader what the draft is about? Does it catch the reader's interest? What does the opening accomplish in terms of hooking the reader's interest? How else might the writer begin?
- **The Thesis and Purpose.** What is the writer's purpose? How does the draft fulfill (or not fulfill) that purpose?
- **The Audience.** Who is the audience? How does the draft establish good will with the audience? How does it capture the interest of the audience?
- **The Rhetorical Stance.** Where does the writer stand on issues involved with this topic? What words or phrases in the draft indicate the values the writer holds with regard to this topic? How does the writer identify her cause with the interest or different values of her audience?
- **The Paragraphs.** What paragraphs are clearest? Best developed? Which paragraphs need further development? What kinds of information might help? Could the paragraphs be presented in a more effective way? What suggestions can you make for transitions between paragraphs that would make connections clearer and easier to follow?
- **The Words.** Circle the words that are particularly effective; underline those that are weak, vague, or unclear. Do any words need to be defined or replaced? Are there any potentially offensive words in the draft?
- **The Conclusion.** Does the draft conclude in a memorable way? Does it end abruptly? Trail off? Restate the introduction? How else might this draft end? If you like the conclusion, give two reasons why.