

Peer Review Guide: Informative/Expository

General Instructions

The goal of **peer review** is to provide feedback to the writer to assist in improving his/her writing by identifying strengths and areas of improvement that may not be apparent to the writer.

The following steps should help you with the peer review process.

A. Read the entire draft twice.

- Your first reading should provide you with an overall opinion about the quality of the essay.
- During your second reading, you will provide constructive feedback, that is, praise and specific suggestions for improvement, to help the writer revise.
- Get help with review and revision by using the “Prepared Comments” that follow. You can select feedback that has already been prepared for you and/or you can create your own feedback for your writer to read.

B. Reread your comments/feedback to make certain they are clear and specific.

Listed below are the different parts of the persuasive essay that you need to review and provide feedback for your writer. By following the directions carefully, you will make it easy for your writer to know where he/she has done well and where he/she has to revise for improvement.

1. Central/controlling idea

Locate and underline the writer’s central/controlling idea. If there is no central/controlling idea, ask the writer to provide one. Provide comments/suggestions to the writer to improve his/her central/controlling idea, as needed (see comments)

2. Main ideas/Examples

Locate and highlight the writer’s main ideas to illustrate his/her central/controlling idea. Is each main idea informative? Does each main idea relate to the central/controlling idea? Provide comments/suggestions to the writer to improve his/her main ideas, as needed. (see comments)

3. Illustrating the Details/Examples

Locate the supporting details, facts/examples to illustrate the main ideas in each paragraph.

- Highlight the strong supporting details of each paragraph. Let the writer know whether he/she has enough strong supporting details to make a convincing main idea. (see comments)
- Highlight weak points in the main idea. Provide comments and suggestions for strengthening them. (see comments)

4. Introduction

Locate and reread the introduction. The introduction should capture the reader’s attention and provide background information on the issue.

- Provide comments on how well the writer used a “hook” or attention getter at the beginning of the introduction. (see comments)
- If the beginning of the introduction is not interesting or just repeats the prompt, suggest ways to improve it. (see comments)

5. Organization of Body Paragraphs

Reread the body paragraphs to determine whether the writer builds the main ideas so that his/her strongest controlling idea is last.

- Highlight the strongest main idea. If it is not last, suggest a way for the writer to reorder the paragraphs more effectively. (see comments)

6. Transitions

Highlight the transitions in each paragraph. Make comments or suggestions to the writer to improve his or her transitions, as needed.

7. Conclusion

- Highlight the part of the conclusion where the writer emphasizes the importance of the topic that he/she stated in the central/controlling idea. If it is missing, suggest how the writer can achieve that. (see comments)
- Highlight the place where the writer states what he/she wants the reader to think about the topic. Provide comments and/or suggestions for improvement, as needed. (see comments)

Prepared Comments to Help Writers Revise

1. Central/controlling idea

- You have not stated your central/controlling idea. You need to add a statement that...
- This is your central/controlling idea _____. You should place it at the end of your introduction.
- Your central/controlling idea statement is vague. Tell me more specifically what your topic is.
- You have written a strong central/controlling idea that clearly states your topic. I really like....

2. Illustrating Details/Evidence

- This fact is informative.
- I like the research you used to explain...
- I like the source-based evidence you use to...
- You have put your details in a very engaging order.
- You only have a few details to support your controlling idea. You can improve this by adding additional details/evidence-facts, reasons, statistics. For example...
- This evidence does not relate to your main idea. Either eliminate it or relocate it to another paragraph with the same idea.
- This fact doesn't illustrate your reason/main idea. You need to ...
- It is unclear how your main ideas illustrate your controlling idea.
- These details do not make sense to me. Reread and revise them to make them clearer.
- I am not completely engaged. Your controlling idea needs to be supported with a greater variety of details.
- Rearrange your details to produce a stronger controlling idea by...

3. Introduction

- Your introduction is clear, contains general information about the issue and the central/controlling idea statement.
- You restated the prompt at the beginning of the introduction instead opening your essay with something vivid and exciting to read. I suggest you start with
- You can improve your introduction by including an interesting quote, statistic, anecdote, or startling fact as your attention getter.
- You did not provide any background information so your readers will begin to better understand the topic before you state your controlling idea. I suggest that you talk about...
- You are missing an introduction. I suggest that you...
- Your introduction is engaging and makes me want to continue reading.

4. Organization of Body Paragraphs

- Your first example is your strongest one. Reposition or move this paragraph to the end of body of your essay.
- Your last example is not informative or engaging. Make this your first body paragraph instead of your last body paragraph.
- Rearrange the order of your paragraphs so that you are building to your most convincing controlling idea. I suggest that you put....(suggest a more effective order for the paragraphs)

5. Transitions

- Instead of using "first", "second," and "third," you may want to use...
- _____ is a weak transition. Try replacing it with ..
- There are no transitions. Look at the beginning of each paragraph. Select a transitional word or phrase that will help the reader move from one idea to the next.

6. Conclusion

- You did not leave your readers with something to think about. What ideas do you think the reader should consider? My suggestion would be to...
- You did not summarize the essay. Restate the main ideas you discussed.
- Your conclusion is incomplete or missing. You should add a conclusion that emphasizes the importance of the topic.
- Your conclusion does a great job of bringing closure to your paper.

7. Language Use

- Your tone and voice are appropriate for your audience
- Your tone and voice are not appropriate for your audience. I suggest that you...
- Many of your sentences begin the same way. Use MY Editor to help you change the beginnings. To start, my suggestion would be to
- This word (or words) are repeated too often. I suggest that you substitute....
- Use MY Editor to locate places in your essay where you need to vary your sentence structure.

8. Mechanics and Conventions

- Use MY Editor to correct subject-verb agreement errors.
- Use MY Editor to correct your punctuation errors.
- Use Spellchecker to identify and correct misspelled words.