

Reviewing an Essay Draft

On a separate sheet, write your name at the top, then "Review of Draft." Answer the questions with more than a "yes" or "no."

- (1) Does the draft fulfill the assignment? Does the essay inform and persuade us?
- (2) Copy down the sentence that you think is the thesis. Is it clear and thorough; does it take a stand? Does the thesis cover the ideas of the entire paper?
- (3) Who is the audience, and does the writer appeal to the audience? What might the writer do to be more appealing to the audience? How might the introduction catch the attention of this audience in a stronger way?
- (4) What are the main supporting points? Are they in an order of importance? Should any of them be omitted? Are they all backed up by facts and evidence?
- (5) Paragraphs: Which one is the best developed? Which ones need more development? Are the paragraphs clearly connected? Does each paragraph contain a topic sentence?
- (6) Which sentence is the strongest (that is, clear, forceful, memorable)? Which sentence is weakest, and why? Is there variation in sentence length, style?
- (7) Language: Which 3 words are most vivid and provoke the strongest response? List 3 words which are weak, vague, and/or unclear. Are verbs active and energetic? Underline linking verbs (is/are) that could be changed into active verbs. Is the vocabulary suitable to a college audience (not too simple, not too technical)? Are any words offensive to some member of the audience? Do any passages seem to be heavily borrowed from the original text, without adequate paraphrasing?
- (8) Tone. How does the writer come across—serious, humorous, satiric, persuasive, committed? Is the tone appropriate to the topic and audience? Is the tone consistent? If inconsistent, is there a good reason?
- (9) Objectivity. Does the writer show objectivity, presenting both sides yet arguing for his/her stand? Mark any passages that show bias, where the writer slants or distorts evidence unfairly. Does the writer over-use the words "I" or "my"?
- (10) Does the conclusion end the draft in a memorable way, or does the draft end abruptly and weakly? If you like the conclusion, why? How else might the essay end? Does the conclusion thoroughly wrap up the essay?
- (11) Overall, what are the strengths and weaknesses of the draft?
- (12) Citations: Do you see citations for each borrowed fact? Are these citations in the appropriate style? Does the essay end with a bibliography in proper MLA, APA, or CSE style?